

THE NECESSITY OF TEACHING ESP COURSE TO THE IRANIAN SEMINARY STUDENTS OF HAWZA ILMIYYA

Maryam Kazemian Jahromi

*Department of TEFL, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch,
Bandar Abbas, Iran
Email: saye2121@gmail.com*

Hajar Khanmohammad

*Faculty Member (Assistant Professor) at Islamic Azad University (IAU), Central Branch, Tehran,
Iran
Email: Hajar_khanmohammad@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the necessity of teaching Iranian seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya (traditional Shi'a centre, in which clerics are trained by studying classic texts in their original language), English for a specific purpose (ESP) course. Today the world is interested in English. Thus with the emergence of English as lingua franca of technology, education and research in global society, the demand for studying ESP course is increasingly necessary. One of the usages of English language teaching (ELT) is in Islamic seminary schools when they decide to go to other countries to preach Islamic thoughts. In this qualitative and quantitative study, the participants were selected based on the random sampling in Iran. Then the needs of teaching ESP course to 100 seminary students were investigated by means of questionnaires. Analysis of the results showed that it was necessary to teach ESP to seminary students in order to communicate with the communities and to preach Islamic principals.

KEYWORDS: ESP, Seminary students, Hawza Ilmiyya

INTRODUCTION

The most important and widespread language used in the world in international academic conferences to news reports is English. It is used for communication among native as well as nonnative speakers. Even though it does not have the greatest number of speakers in the world, it is the most widely used language in the world, and it will be used by more people in the future (Kitao, 1996).

Background of the Problem

Today, as a result of development in technology, computer and internet, the necessity of teaching English is more tangible. For example the internet is used all over the world as a useful source of information. People use internet in order to gain answers to their questions.

Since the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. Its development is reflected in the increasing number of universities offering an MA (master of art) in ESP (e.g. The University of Birmingham, and Aston University in The UK) and a number of ESP courses offered for overseas students in English speaking countries (Anthony, 1998).

As for a broader definition of ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) theorize, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p. 19).

Tsao (2011) states:

The demand for ESP has led some higher education authorities and administrators in Taiwan to claim that ESP should replace EGP, the long-existing practice of English language teaching in Taiwan's universities, and thus become the mainstream of college English education. The rationale behind their claim is presumably as follows: EGP is basic language learning to be studied before, but not during college; College English should be more advanced, more specialized, and match students' majors of study, particularly in technological universities where students are trained to perform on-the-job; and finally, compared with EGP, ESP is more effective in increasing students' learning motivation because it relates to their fields of study and caters to their needs.(p.127)

There are many types of ESP. English for the student of Hawza Ilmiyya is one branch of ESP which is necessary to be taught and be available among seminary students. In this case it is suffice to say that although the importance of English is widespread in the world and English is a language of communication and transferring culture, this important issue was ignored in some societies and schools. Islamic schools are one of the institutes where there is a lack of ESP which is of great importance and consideration for their students. There were some investigations in this area. Ratnawati (2005) referred to English and Islam as two absolutely different ways of looking at the world, and ELT, as Kermani (2005) pointed is effective in the political relations among countries. In line with Kermani, Aliakbari (2004), pointed to the culturally poor educational materials as the major reasons for weakness of ELT among Iranian high school students or theology schools and seminaries. Thus, these studies concluded that religion as a subdivision of culture doesn't have great influence on English as a foreign (FL) or second language (SL).

The purpose of this study is that Muslim students are required to know English in order to comprehend Islamic English texts without any need to translate them in Persian or Arabic. Also the ability of learning English is an aid for better functioning in responding to Islamic issues. Apart from these purposes, there is another advantage that Muslim students will be able to travel to overseas countries, to convey the message of Islam. As a result, the seminary students are required to know English and to develop the four language skills in order to preach Islamic culture.

The result of this research showed the necessity of teaching ESP courses based on the ESP purposes for seminary students by means of needs analysis of them. This study might be a beginning point for compiling an ESP book for seminary students.

As a result this study is useful for policy makers, teachers and theology institutions in order to compile ESP books in this area and also to prepare a specific methodology to instruct these courses. This study is useful for Islamic schools like Hawza Ilmiyya too. An important point is that today the necessity of learning English language is obvious in all fields of study. After Islamic revolution, teaching and preaching Islamic messages are more than before and Islamic issues need to be international in all over the world. So this research may produce a motivation for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawza Ilmiyya.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Importance of English

Talebinezhad and Aliakbari (2011) state that nowadays the necessity of English language teaching is obvious because world has a great interest in English, thus this new orientation made English an International Language (EIL). To overcome the inadequacies of the previous models of language teaching and to meet the needs of the learners, EIL opened new avenues for research and investigation.

Nur Nina (1996) states that English language has an important role as a conveyer of knowledge about Islam to the international community, indicating that there is a vital relationship between the English language and Islam.

Teaching English for Specific Purposes

English for specific purposes is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular career (like law, medicine) or for business in general. This term became popular, when there was an expansion in scientific, technical and economic activities. In this case, Simion (2012) states that since 20 years ago, course designers paid much attention to teaching English for Academic purposes. When communicational technology and business were developed, their attitudes changed to teaching for more specialized purposes embodied in courses called English for Specific Purposes (ESP). In fact this development comes from this fact that English has changed from simply being a foreign language into becoming a universal medium of communication in all walks of life.

Robinson (1991) states that English as a specific purpose is as a type of ELT (English Language Teaching), and as a “goal-oriented language learning” implies that the students have to achieve a specific goal in the process of learning. He also adds that in ESP teaching, needs-analysis and the learners' communication based on their fields of study should be considered.

Helsvig and kolegija (1990) indicate that the aim of Teaching ESP is improving students' skills of professional communication in English based on the area of their professional field. This type of teaching refers to the students' particular specialization.

Teaching English in Islamic countries

Although the importance of English is widespread in the world and English is a language of communication and transferring culture, this important issue was ignored in some societies and schools. Islamic schools are also the institutes where there was rather lack of ELT which is required vitally for the students. In fact peoples' religions should not hinder them from learning a foreign language. There are some investigations in this case. Alonzo(2011) states:

Not only is there a scarcity of teaching and learning materials like books and manuals in teaching English for Theology but there is also a lack of developed curricula and syllabi specially designed for teaching English to seminary students. Most seminaries in the country do not have a curriculum that meets the demands of their growing number of students in need of English proficiency training. (p.51)

There are four elements that are essential in producing teaching and learning materials in English for Theology. It is necessary to consider these elements prior to the production of the ESP material (Alonzo, 2011). He states that these elements are "(1) The problematic theological concepts for Asian seminary students; (2) the common language problems that Asian seminary students may encounter; (3) the language skill/s an Asian seminary student needs for his/her theological training; and (4) the help that an English program can offer to the seminary" (P.68-69). Moreover he suggests that Asian theological students had difficulty in comprehending theological concepts. It was because the students had language problems in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English. In fact the language skills that theological student needed for his/her seminary training was mostly found in the academic use of the English language.

Some Muslims believe that teaching English in their countries equals ignoring Islam (Pennycook, 1994).The establishment of a study in this case has an evidence to reject this claim. In fact a total of a 2000 studies conducted by 409 Kuwaiti undergraduates indicated that, Kuwaiti Muslim students well took positive attitudes toward learning English (Noori, 2012). AL-Seghayer (2011) states "Teaching English as a foreign language in our public schools in Saudi Arabia is an important step to increase our global understanding and competitiveness in an increasingly interdependent and competitive world"(p.1).

Rohmah (2012) suggests that integrating Islamic messages in the English teaching material might prevent students from feeling bewildered and might reduce their tension. Basthomi's (2011) states that it is possible to change the attitudes toward English and we should help students to have better attitude toward English and use English materials with Islamic themes or the lives of the Muslims in English speaking countries. Therefore the main issue is in fact material selection. According to the advice from some Islamic School communities in Indonesia, English language training should be pure, and there should be no interference with the Western values because they have some shortages in moral foundation and the teaching materials should be appropriate to an Islamic educational environment (Indonesia Australia Language Foundation, 2007).

Therefore, (Phillipson, 1992) claims that writers and teachers need to modify English which is an imperialistic language into an instrumental language. As a result, Teachers in Islamic schools can include the Islamic messages in their teaching materials while helping the students to master the targeted English language skills and components.

There is a struggle between the English language and Islam. Harris (1991, p. 90) refers to this struggle as follows "English is not just a language, any more than Islam is just a religion. The names of English and Islam, whatever else they may be, are names of two very big battalions when it comes to the international power struggle for control of the Middle East. "

Farouqi (1986) is one of the scholars who adopt the idea of Islamization of English. Farouqi (1986, p. 7) investigates the development of Islamic English and defines Islamic English as "the language modified to carry Islamic proper nouns and meanings without distortion and thus, to serve the linguistic needs of Muslim users of the English language". In fact it is evident that Farouqi's Islamic English is a method of reappropriating English in order to serve Muslim needs.

ELT and It's Necessity in Iran

Since English is considered as a dominant language all over the world, it is used for foreign trade, international conferences and the like. It is a means of communication. Today the necessity of teaching English is obvious for all the nations and Iran is no exception. Noori (2012) states that the necessity of English in the outer world is beyond the mind, because English is the dominant language of foreign trade, international conferences, for air traffic in international airports, and sea navigation. Therefore, governments have a policy in order to promote the export of non-oil products. In this case they make companies and exporters take advantage of this medium to introduce their goods and products to the world market. So far, English seems to have found its way right into the heart of Iranian society. The Iranian national TV has started broadcasting authentic foreign programs." Iran's cooperation with UN, Islamic conference relations, ECO, OPEC, and other regional and world organizations has made English an important thing "(Aliakbari, 2004, P.1-14). Moreover Iran has some relationship with English-speaking Countries such as US and UK.

Today the necessity of learning English language is obvious in all fields of study. After Islamic revolution, teaching and preaching Islamic messages are more than before and Islamic dogma need to be international in all over the world. So this research may produce a motivation for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawza Ilmiyya.

As a result teaching English is required in all nations especially in Iran that need to cooperate with other countries and also to attend in Islamic conferences.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do seminary students need ESP courses?
2. What are the needs of the seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya in studying an ESP course?

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The present study was a qualitative and quantitative one. The method of this research is descriptive. In this study one type of a questionnaire was prepared based on the ESP purposes, the seminary students' needs, the Idea of the people who worked in Hawza Ilmiyya and the experienced teachers of Hawza that they are familiar with the Islamic contexts teaching, and was given to three groups in order to analyze their needs. The groups under study included seminary students, their professors, and the people working in Hawza Ilmiyya. They were selected by random sampling. Also five Hawza Ilmiyya in Iran were chosen by random sampling as follow: that of Mashhad, that of Qom, that of Jahrom, that of Tehran and that of Esfahan. The researcher managed to analyze the needs of these groups to find out the necessity of teaching ESP courses in Hawza Ilmiyya.

Participants

In this research a random sampling technique was applied. The total samples were 100 seminary students from Iran. It is obvious that Iran has many cities and each one has many Hawses in it. First, the researcher selected five city of Iran based on random sampling. Second, she selected the main Hawza from each five city, and then she chose 20 seminary students from each of these five Hawses. So the total number reached 100 seminary students.

Instruments

The instrument used in this research was the questionnaires in collecting the data about the needs of the students. These questionnaires were prepared based on the seminary students' needs and the Idea of the people who worked in Hawza. In this case, the researcher consulted with the experienced teachers of Hawza that they are familiar with the Islamic contexts teaching, then according to their guidance, the nature and contents of the questionnaires were prepared. The teachers were also proficient in English language. They were as missionaries to preach the Islamic messages and they wrote Islamic books in English for other countries in this regard. In the next section there are some points about checking the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

Procedures

English teaching tailored for the seminary students of Hawza Ilmiyya is one branch of ESP. In fact seminary students required to know English to be able to convey the messages of Islam directly. As a result the researcher provided questionnaires to find out the necessity of teaching English in Islamic schools.

In this case, the researcher consulted with the people who were affiliated to the Islamic schools like the teachers, the people who work there and the seminary students. She spoke with the experienced teachers and professors of Islamic schools especially those who had PHD degrees. The researcher gathered their opinions and suggestions and examined them. In addition she used the Idea of two groups of males and females, because the attitudes of these two groups toward this issue were different. Also she considered the Idea of the people who did not know English

but they had a great knowledge in this case. The researcher also studied ESP texts and used their main points for this purpose.

According to the obtained information from ESP books and the opinions of the think tanks, the researcher prepared a number of points about ESP. Then she selected some of them as the questions of the questionnaires. The selected questions contained all the necessary points of this study.

Being prepared, the questionnaires were given to one group of students as pilot study. Then the results of piloting were analyzed using SPSS and a kind of reliability, Cronbach's alpha was obtained. As a result it was concluded which questions were suitable and good and which ones weren't. Also it was realized which one was difficult and had to be omitted.

For validating the questionnaires it was better to consider the answers of the questionnaires after piloting, as a result it was concluded that if these answers covered the purpose of the research or not. And if these questions were expressive of the main purposes of the research, it would show the necessity of teaching ESP for seminary students.

When the reliability and validity of the questionnaires were computed, it was the time of distributing the questionnaires in five cities of Iran: Qum, Esfahan, Tehran, Jahrom and Mashhad. The participants from these cities selected based on random sampling. The cities were themselves selected based on random sampling too. After selecting the participants, the researcher distributed the questionnaires. So they were given to the seminary students, their teachers and the people who work in Hawza. Finally, the researcher analyzed the needs of the students based on their answers by means of SPSS. So the researcher found out whether teaching ESP is needed in Hawza Ilmiyya or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analysis of the questionnaire

Reliability

Table 1 show the reliability of the items. Reliability is about consistency in the results of the measurement.

Table1: Reliability statistics of the questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.948	37

Table 1 demonstrates that in this study, cronbach alpha is .94. This result shows a good reliability and no item was decided to be deleted.

Validity

In this study the researcher used content validity and construct validity. Content validity of the items is distinguished based on the opinion of the specialists in the ESP courses, also ESP books and theories in this case help the researcher to provide a suitable and appropriate items. Construct validity is distinguished by applying factor analysis.

Factor Analysis results

Table 2: statistical factor analysis of the questionnaire: Rotated component matrix

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
p16	.952					
p13	.952					
p15	.952					
p18	.952					
p30	.794					
p14	.645					
p1		.945				
p6		.945				
p12		.945				
p11		.856				
p7		.592				
p17						
p10			.884			
p8			.884			
p9			.693	.586		
p21			.624			
p24						
p32						
p25						
p22				.862		
p19				.815		
p34				.767		
p20				.634		
p36					.741	
p27					.714	
p5					.662	
p26					.615	
p2					-.592	
p3					.572	
p35						
p33						.702
p23						.608
p28						.599
p29						
p4						
p31						
p37						

Table 2 shows the rotated component matrix which is a matrix of the factor loadings for each variable on to each factor. In fact rotation is a method used to simplify interpretation of a factor analysis. Numbers in this table show the degree of relationship between factors and their variables. The high degree of these numbers like .9 and .8 indicate the high relationship between the variable and its factor.

There are several things to consider about the format of this matrix. First, factor loadings less than .6 have not been displayed because we asked for these loadings to be suppressed. Second, the variables are listed in the order of size of their factor loadings. Before rotation, most variables loaded highly on to the first factor and the remaining factors didn't really get a look in. However the rotation of the factor structure has clarified things considerably: there are six factors and variables loaded very highly on to only one factor.

The next step is to look at the content of the items (questions) that load onto the same factor to try to identify common themes. Factor 1 contains p13, p14, p15, p16, p18 and p30. they are related to the same theme as "the needs of the seminary students to learn English", that it has shown by h1. Factor 2 contains p1, p6, p7, p11, and p12. It indicates "the necessity of teaching English in Hawza Ilmiyya" and it is shown by h2. Factor 3 contains p8, p9, p.10 and p21 that refer to "the importance of learning English in preaching Islamic culture". It is showed by h3. Factor 4(h4) contains p9, p19, p20, p.22 and p34 that refer to "the importance of the students' needs analysis in teaching and compiling an ESP book". Factor 5 (h5) contains p2, p3, p.5, p.26, p.27 and p36 that refer to "the importance of the relationship between the materials of the ESP books and the students' needs and interests". Factor 6 (h6) contains p23, p28, and p33 that refer to "the importance of the syllabus in learning English".

In fact all the questions in each factor are related to each other and also to their factors. These factors are the main purposes of this study. According to these factors and analyzing their components that how these questions are answered by the participants and also what their frequencies are, it is concluded that most of the participants agree with these factors and have positive attitudes about them. So the research questions are answered.

Chi-square

This table shows the result of chi-square in SPSS for the items of the questionnaire.

Table 3: Statistical analysis of Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	568.715 ^a	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	559.841	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.079	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	3700		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 27.59.

Table 3 show a list of assorted chi-square tests, most of which are of no interest to us. The one we should pay attention to is the first one, i.e., the Pearson Chi-Square statistic. Reading across that row show that the chi-square value is 568.7 with 36 degree of freedom. The next column notes that the probability of getting this sort of result on the basis of chance variation alone is 0 (p-value = 0). In this column, Asymp. sig (2-sided) show that how these two variables are dependent. When p-value is zero, as a result the hypothesis "Teaching ESP course for the Iranian seminary students of Hawza ilmiyya is not necessary" is rejected and also two variables are related. As a result, significance reported by the statistics is less than .05; we can reject the null hypothesis and accept that the difference between items is not accidental.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

According to the results of the present study it is concluded that today teaching English is necessary and this course is of a great importance all over the world. Based on the results of the study and analyzing the answers to the questions showed that these Islamic schools have a great need to syllabus for teaching English language. Also they need to prepare some ESP books in this case and a good method of teaching for seminary students.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of this study and the review of literature, we find out the importance of teaching ESP in Islamic schools. Now, the necessity of teaching this course is obvious considering the scope of ESP teaching and learning expanding all over the world. As the present research is a novel study that indicated the necessity of teaching ESP in Islamic schools to the seminary students to communicate with other communities and to preach Islamic principles. Hopefully this research may produce a motivation especially for Islamic schools in order to include ESP courses in Hawsa Ilmiyya.

Moreover these courses should be compiled under the supervision of EFL specialists in cooperation with the Islamic schools' principals. An important point is that this course should be a compulsory course in Hawsa Ilmiyya. In fact seminary students should study in this course the same as their other courses in Hawsa Ilmiyya and the ESP teachers are needed to be trained to teach in Hawsa.

Suggestions for further studies

Based on the results of the study, the following are recommended:

- (1.) Today other societies also need religious and they feel this need obviously. As a matter of fact, seminary students should themselves be aware this necessity. So, when they get aware of this requirement among the western societies, they will try to teach their language and culture to communicate with them and convey the messages of Islam. For this purpose they themselves should follow ESP. Also they should follow the main purpose of ESP that is teaching speaking, listening, writing, and reading.
- (2.) Include English for seminary students as a field in itself and make it a part of the ESP categorization.

(3.) Researchers should investigate upon developing teacher training affairs and specialization in ESP issues.

(4.) More teaching English materials for seminary students should be developed. These should be culturally considered and relevant to the multicultural classes in seminaries. Writers of such manuals or books should endeavor to create teaching materials in English for seminary students that are culturally relevant, transferable, reproducible, publishable and affordable in the Asian context.

(5.) It would be useful to have some investigations in preparing a special syllabus for this group of students.

(6.) It is necessary to instruct some teachers for teaching ESP course for this group of students.

(7.) It is better to compile an ESP book for seminary students and if these ESP books exist in the market, it will be necessary to do some investigations whether they are suitable for this group or not.

Limitations

The study has several limitations. First, the participants were dispersed in all the cities of Iran, consequently the researcher didn't have access to all of them because of the long distance and it was also difficult to gather all the participants in one place in order to give them the questionnaires. For this purpose, the researcher decided to provide a situation and divided the participants into some groups. Then she gave the questionnaires to one group of participants, which was chosen randomly, from Islamic schools of Qum. Also she sent the questionnaires to the second group of participants in Mashhad by mail. The third group answered the questionnaires by means of e-mail. Another problem that hindered the researcher was that the Islamic schools had different attitudes toward these questionnaires and most of them were reluctant to fill out the questionnaires fearing their belief would be attacked by western diverted cultures. As a result it was necessary to discuss with their administrators and refer them to the speeches of some prominent Islamic leaders such as Imam Khomeini. In convincing them, the researcher suffered a lot and finally they accepted to cooperate and filled questionnaire.

REFERENCES

- Aliakbari, M. (2004). The Place of Culture in the Iranian ELT Textbooks, in High School Level. *The Linguistic Journal*, 1, 1-4.
- Alonzo, R. (2011). Interfacing Theology, Culture, and the English language. *EDUCATION QUARTERLY*, December 2011, 69 (1), 50-71
- AL-Seghayer. (2011). *The importance of teaching English in public schools*. Arab News, Thursday 7 July 2011
- Anthony, L. (1998). *Preaching to Cannibals: A Look at Academic Writing in*. Engineering proceedings of the Japan conference on English for specific purposes.
- Basthomi, Y. (2011). *A critical reflection on the praxis at English departments in Indonesia: Learning working in and by paradoxes*. Paper presented at a Talk at the State Islamic College Kediri, Indonesia.
- Faruqi, I. (1986). *Toward Islamic English*. International Institute of Islamic Thought: Herndon, Virginia, U.S.A.

- Harris, R. (1991). *English versus Islam*. In Chan, M. and Harris, R. (Eds), pp. 87-100.
- Helsvig, J., & Klegija, V. (2001). *ESP-Challenges for Learners and Teachers in Regard to Subject Specific Approach*. Retrieved from <https://ojs.kauko.lt/index.php/ssktpd/article/view/99/96>
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learningcentred approach*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Indonesia Australia Language Foundation. (2007). *ELTIS design document*. Jakarta: Finney, D.
- Kermani, S. (2005). "Islam and English in the Post-9/11 Era: Introduction" *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 4 (2), 85–86.
- Kitao, K. (1996). why do we teach English. *The Internet TESL Journal*, II (4), April.
<http://iteslj.org/Articles/Kitao-WhyTeach.html>
- Noori, M. (2012). The Impact of Religionism of Iranian Muslim Collage Students on Learning EL Reading. *International Conference on Language, Medias and Culture, IPEDR vol.33 (2012) © (2012)*
IACSIT Press, Singapore
- Nur Nina, Z. (1996). *English & Islam*. An International Conference organized by the Department of English Language and Literature of the International Islamic University, Malaysia, December 20-22, 1996
- Pennycook, A. (1994). *English and Islam. The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language*. New York: Longman
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ratnawati, A. (2005). English and Islam: A clash of civilizations? *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 4(2), 103-18.
- Robinson, P. C. (1991). *ESP Today: A Practitioner's Guide*. New York. Prentice Hall
- Rohmah, Z. (2012). Incorporating Islamic Messages in the English Teaching in the Indonesian Context. *International J. Soc. Sci. & Education*, 2 (2).
- Simion, M. (2012). The Importance of Teaching English in the Field of Tourism in Universities. *Annals of the Constantin Brâncuși" University of Târgu Jiu, Economy Series, Issue 2/2012*
- Talebinezhad, M., & Aliakbari, M. (2001). Basic assumption in teaching English as an international language. *The Internet TESL Journal*, VII (7), <http://iteslj.org/>
- Tsao, C. (2011). English for Specific Purposes in the EFL Context A Survey of Student and Faculty Perceptions. *Asian ESP Journal*, 7 (2).

THE IMPACT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT VIA SKYPE ON IRANIAN AUTONOMOUS/NON-AUTONOMOUS EFL LEARNERS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Davood Mashhadi Heidar

Department of English, Khorasgan (Isfahan) branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
davoodm_tarbiatmodares@yahoo.com

Akbar Afghari

Department of English, Khorasgan (Isfahan) branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

This article investigates learner autonomy, foreign language learning, Web 2.0 technology and sociocultural theory (SCT) proposed by Vygotsky (1978). More specifically, the article seeks to examine the development of listening proficiency through dynamic assessment via Skype in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous English as a foreign language (EFL) learner at elementary level. The article showcases that online dynamic assessment (DA) informs the instructional process regarding specific areas where learners need improvement and in so doing allows for appropriate intervention to help learners overcome these problems. The results of the study indicate that DA via Skype permits to establish not only the actual level of learners' listening ability but also to examine the potential level of their listening development. The results also prove that both autonomous and non-autonomous learners equally benefit from DA via Skype.

Keywords: learner autonomy, dynamic assessment, listening comprehension, Skype

INTRODUCTION

Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a process-oriented/interactive approach to conducting assessments that is based on the Vygotskian principles of mediation and assistance in the zone of proximal development. DA offers learners assistance whenever necessary during the performance of the assessment task through collaborative dialogue. At the heart of Vygotskian and sociocultural approaches to language learning and DA are the concepts of mediation and social learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). These key components of DA have taken on special relevance with the advent of social networks and online communities through web 2.0 technologies that include an increased emphasis on user generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort.

Traditional assessment offers no scaffolding or social support for learning. Data from DA, by contrast, represents both the process and product of students' learning. DA is administered by an examiner who provides scaffolding, social support for learning, and intervention when a student fails. In other words, whereas traditional assessment measures independent performance (i.e.,

product), DA measures both independent performance and assisted performance (i.e., process). Independent performance is what the student can achieve alone; assisted performance is what the student can achieve with the help of the examiner.

DA, an interactive, test–intervene–retest model of psychological and psycho-educational assessment, gives the examiner the chance to form a closer relationship with the student that will foster learning. In DA, the examiner not only gives performance-contingent feedback, but offers instruction in response to student failure to alter or enhance student achievement.

Learner Autonomy

Learner Autonomy has been a buzz word in foreign language education in the past decades, especially in relation to lifelong learning skills. For a definition of autonomy, we might quote Holec (1981: 3, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 1) who describes it as "the ability to take charge of one's learning." On a general note, the term autonomy has come to be used in at least five ways (Benson & Voller, 1997: 2):

- for situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
- for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- for the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning;
- for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

One of the key aspects to consider in defining Learner Autonomy is whether we view it as a means to an end (learning a foreign language) or as an end in itself (making people autonomous learners). These two options are not mutually exclusive, both of them can be part of our views towards language learning or learning in general. As Lacey (2007) puts it, principles of learner autonomy could be:

- Autonomy means moving the focus from teaching to learning.
- Autonomy affords maximum possible influence to the learners.
- Autonomy encourages and needs peer support and cooperation.
- Autonomy means making use of self/peer assessment.
- Autonomy requires and ensures 100% differentiation.
- Autonomy can only be practiced with student logbooks which are a documentation of learning and a tool of reflection.
- The role of the teacher as supporting scaffolding and creating room for the development of autonomy is very demanding and very important.
- Autonomy means empowering students, yet the classroom can be restrictive, so are the rules of chess or tennis, but the use of technology can take students outside of the structures of the classroom, and the students can take the outside world into the classroom.

Language teaching is now seen as language learning and it has placed the learner as the center of our attention in language learning education. As the result of such considerations, the researcher considers Learner Autonomy as a variable to see how autonomous and non-autonomous learners differ from each other with respect to DA via Skype.

Theoretical Framework

Scholars assert that DA was originally inspired by Vygotsky's writings, in particular his thinking on the Zone of Proximal Development (e.g. Stenberg & Grigorenko, 2002; Feuerstein, Rand, Jensen, Kaniel & Tzuriel, 1987). Given that this study is conceptualized within the sociocultural theory (hereafter SCT) framework, the following section is exclusively confined to DA grounded in Vygotsky's theory.

Vygotsky regards development as an evolutionary as well as revolutionary process which is not linear and involves both progression and regression. He argued that even if development might contain some regression, it still contributes to general movement forward (Vygotsky, 1978; 1997a), i.e. development is a process that is always pushing individuals forward even if at times it needs to step backward (Lantolf, 2009).

Significance and Purpose of the Study

Despite the fact that the development of listening proficiency has been generally recognized as a crucial component of foreign language learning and teaching, many scholars contend that listening comprehension is often treated as a Cinderella skill of L2 instruction (e.g. Nunan, 1997; Vandergrift, 1997) and that research in this area is still in its infancy (Omaggio-Hadley, 2000:184). Furthermore, a lack of L2 listening studies has been repeatedly emphasized in many reviews of scholarship on the subject over the years (e.g. Ur, 1984; Rubin, 1994; Vandergrift, 2007). As a result, this study aims to apply DA via Skype to L2 listening instruction and takes a further step to investigate how differently autonomous and non-autonomous learners respond to DA via Skype. In fact this study is an attempt to give learners more chance of social learning by active engagement in exploring the web through dialogic collaboration. In other words, the main objective of the study is to make it possible to observe students' potential level of development and obtain a richer and more complete understanding of students' microgenetic listening development in DA.

Statement of the Problem

The L2 listening studies that have been conducted to date focus mainly on product-oriented investigations of listening comprehension that typically measure listening ability using quantitative research methods (e.g. Field, 2008; Rubin, 1994; Rost, 2002; Vandergrift, 1998, 2007). In this respect, Vandergrift (2007) remarks that quantitative approaches are able to tell us something about the product, i.e. the level of listening success, but they tell us nothing about the process; i.e. how listeners arrive at the right answer or why comprehension breaks down (p. 192). For this reason, Vandergrift claims that there is a pressing need for studies exploring listening processes through qualitative methods. As Vandergrift (2007) cogently puts it: "[...] listening processes are complex and they interact with different knowledge sources, human characteristics and other contextual factors in complex ways. These processes and their interactions need to be explored using in-depth qualitative methods to better understand how L2 listeners attain successful comprehension" (p. 206).

At the level of assessment, there has been published a relatively small number of studies that consider the assessment of listening ability (e.g. Ur, 1984, Buck, 2003; Flowerdew & Miller,

2005; Field, 2008). While discussing the purposes and the types of L2 listening tests (e.g. achievement, placement tests), Buck (2003) as well as Alderson (2005) articulate the acute need for the creation of new diagnostic listening assessments that will identify specific areas where learners need improvement, and in so doing will better inform the instructional process regarding learners' listening abilities.

Thus, the present study intends to address the afore-mentioned concerns articulated in recent L2 research by applying DA to listening instruction. That is, the study seeks to investigate the effect of DA-based instruction on the development of listening ability in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous learners at elementary level. What is noteworthy is that due to its reliance on mediated dialogue during the testing procedure, DA permits not only the diagnosis of specific sources of difficulty but also provides insights into the process of listening and promotes listening ability by tracking its development through microgenetic analysis, a specific qualitative method, proposed by sociocultural theory.

2. Review of Literature

Sociocultural theory (SCT) understands humans as "fundamentally socially organized entities" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) who learn to become autonomous by being social. For this reason the SCT paradigm "rejects the encapsulated and autonomous individual privileged in information processing and innatist theories" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) that do not take account of the fundamental role the sociocultural environment plays in human development. Within the SCT framework, it is argued that the development of humans "is mediated by others, whether they are immediately present as in the case of parents guiding children or teachers guiding students, or displaced in time and space, as when we read texts produced by others or participate in activities such as work, organized in specific ways by a culture" (Lantolf, 2007: 32).

As Lantolf and Thorne (2006) point out, the SCT framework understands mediation as "the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (p.79). Thus, from the perspective of SCT, humans do not interact directly with the world and the environment in which they live instead, they use culturally constructed artifacts "created by human culture(s) over time and [...] made available to succeeding generations, which can modify these artifacts before passing them on to future generations" (Lantolf, 2000:1). Culturally constructed artifacts include physical tools (e.g. technology, means of transportation, domestic utensils etc.) and symbolic tools (e.g. literacy, mathematics, language, etc.). Physical tools reinforce the power of humans' physical bodies whereas symbolic tools, primarily language, amplify humans' ability "to organize and communicate information and knowledge" while at the same time they "may influence, or regulate in some way, those who are the objects of [their] speaking" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006: 60). Haywood and Lidz (2007: 42) explain that "mediation is what good teachers and parents do when they promote high levels of mental functioning in their children [and learners]." Thus,

mediation in itself is a simple concept but has tremendous consequences for individuals' intellectual development, which has its beginning in the ZPD. For this reason, the SCT-oriented DA regards the ZPD as the arena of development and places the ZPD at the core of teaching/learning as well as socialization processes.

Indeed, as Haywood and Lidz (2007:74) observe, "nowhere in the field of human endeavors is Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development more relevant than in education." Vygotsky maintained that the driving motor of intellectual development is learning which creates the ZPD and which in turn triggers internal processes of development. In his writings, Vygotsky repeatedly highlighted the idea that instruction would not be necessary if it were not the source of intellectual development (e.g. Vygotsky, 1986, 1987). He claimed that instruction is good only when it promotes development and when it stimulates a range of functions that are ripening within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1987) and therefore, instruction should be adjusted to the ZPD rather than to the actual level of development (Vygotsky, 1991). Thus, for Vygotsky and his followers, it has always been important to understand how instruction, a socially constructed phenomenon, influences development; what type of instruction can be considered to be positive instruction; and to what extent instruction might promote development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary goal of this study is to investigate the role of DA in diagnosing and promoting the development of listening comprehension in a foreign language via Skype. This goal is realized through the following research questions:

- Q1. To what extent can online dynamic assessment via Skype enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level?
- Q2. To what extent can online dynamic assessment via Skype enhance the listening ability in non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level?
- Q3. To what extent does the effect of online dynamic assessment via Skype differ with learner autonomy?

As a result, the hypothesis of this study is stated below:

- H1. Online dynamic assessment via Skype will not enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level.
- H2. Online dynamic assessment via Skype will not enhance the listening ability in non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level.
- H3. The effect of online dynamic assessment via Skype does not differ with learner autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants, their age ranging between 11 and 15, were selected from among Iranian EFL learners at an English language institute in Tehran, Iran. The present study took in sixty elementary participants. In order to control the participants' proficiency level, an OPT and a

demographic information questionnaire were administered. In this study, two groups of participants were involved, autonomous and non-autonomous groups. The participants, taking the learner autonomy scale, were assigned to the autonomous and non-autonomous groups. Then both groups were taught through DA via Skype.

Instruments

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The OPT designed and developed by Allen (2004) was used to determine the participants' proficiency levels. It consists of listening and grammar sections. The listening section consists of 100 items. It took approximately forty minutes to complete the listening test. The grammar section consists of 100 items. Fifty minutes were allotted for completion.

Autonomous Learning Scale

Autonomous learning was measured by using Autonomous Learning Scale developed by Macaskill and Taylor (2010). The scale is a 12-item measure with two subscales measuring Independence of Learning, *I tend to be motivated to work by assessment deadlines*, [item 10] and Study habits, *I frequently find excuses for not getting down to work*, [item 2]. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) with higher scores indicating greater levels of autonomy, more independence and more positive attitudes to learning. For the purpose of clarification, the autonomous learning scale used in this study was translated into Persian.

The Design of the Study

The present investigation has a pre-test/enrichment program/post-test design. The specific procedure followed in this study is: first, the learners carry out the recall independently (e.g. NDA sessions) and then they repeat it but with mediation (e.g. DA sessions). In effect, during DA and NDA sessions there are two opportunities to assess microgenetic listening development: independent listening performance and mediated listening performance. The quantitative analysis of independent recall of the propositional content of the selected texts and the qualitative analysis of the mediational process through which the students and the mediator negotiate understanding of the relevant texts are carried out. Through this process the mediator is able to formulate fine-grained diagnosis of learner abilities, including most importantly, their problem areas with regard to listening comprehension. On the basis of the diagnosis obtained through mediated interaction, the enrichment session is organized. The design of the study is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Experiment design: assessment and enrichment Program sessions

ASSESSMENT	TASK DESCRIPTION	MATERIALS	MEDIATION OFFERED
Pre-test : NDA 1	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2	Text 1 : An authentic segment (audio format)	None
Pre-test: DA 1	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	Text 2 : An authentic segment (audio format)	Flexible interaction with the mediator
Enrichment program: 4 weeks (two tutoring sessions per week)			Flexible interaction with the mediator
Post-test: NDA2	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2	Text 3 : An authentic segment (audio format)	None
Post-test: DA 2	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	Text 4 : An authentic segment (audio format)	Flexible interaction with the mediator

Adapted from Poehner (2005)

Mediation or Flexible interactions involved researcher's leading questions, implicit and explicit hints, prompts, explanations.

Dialogs as listening materials

In order to provide listening materials that would correspond to the study requirements, it was decided to collect audio dialogs by English native speakers. L2 research regards dialogs as a valuable genre to be used in listening instruction because they represent "one of the few natural conversations conducted for the benefit of non-participants" (Buck, 2003:167). In this respect, the dialogs allow teachers to provide situations in which learners can pick up conversational rules and learn how to carry out conversational interactions.

Text Comprehension Measurement

To measure comprehension, this study implemented immediate oral text recalls. The participants were asked to recall in English as much as they could of what they were listening to with a special focus on the main ideas of the text. Then, the researcher identified the relationship between propositions (idea units) of the original text and the texts of participants' recall. In this fashion, propositions from students' immediate oral recalls that were closely related to propositions from the original text were counted and scored against the list of idea units designated independently by the raters before the study. The number of recalled idea units was viewed as evidence of text comprehension.

Oral Recalls Scoring and Analysis

The oral recalls of the learners were analyzed by the researcher for the total number of idea units (IU) accurately produced and subsequently for the number of main IUs, supporting IUs and details recalled. The recalls were scored against the list of IUs and only the information explicitly stated in the aural text was counted.

Data Analysis

To compare participants' performance on the pre-test and post-test a series of paired sample t-tests was run . An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, a descriptive analysis of the data for the hypothesis has been presented; then, the inferential analysis of the data has also been provided using tables and diagrams. The descriptive analysis of this study consists of a discussion of the mean, standard deviation and the standard error of measurement. Similarly, the inferential analysis of the data in this study consists of calculating the paired-sample t value between the pretest and the posttest of each group. An independent-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups.

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

Findings for Different Groups of the Study

The descriptive analysis of the data for different groups of the study has been summarized below. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the data of before-enrichment and after-enrichment scores for the autonomous group:

*Table 2: Descriptive analysis of the data for autonomous learners
(Paired Samples Statistics)*

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Autonomous Group				
DA Before	19.37	30	6.419	1.172
Enrichment				
Autonomous Group				
DA After	26.07	30	6.335	1.157
Enrichment				

As table (2) indicates, the mean for autonomous learners before enrichment is 19.37 ($\bar{X}=19.37$) while the mean for autonomous learners after enrichment is 26.07 ($\bar{X}=26.07$). The higher standard deviation of before-enrichment group indicates more variety among the scores from the mean. Finally, the amount of standard error is lower in the after-enrichment group scores.

Table 3 summarizes the descriptive analysis of the data of pre-test and post-test scores for the non-autonomous group:

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of the data for non-autonomous group
(Paired Samples Statistics)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Non-autonomous Group				
DA Pre-test	18.83	30	5.590	1.021
Non-autonomous Group				
DA Post-test	24.73	30	5.382	.983

As table (3) indicates, the mean for non-autonomous group before enrichment is 18.83 ($\bar{X}=18.83$) while the mean for non-autonomous group after enrichment is 24.73 ($\bar{X}=24.73$). The higher standard deviation of before-enrichment group indicates more variety among the scores from the mean. Finally, the amount of standard error is lower in the after-enrichment group scores.

Inferential Analysis of the Data

Findings of the Hypotheses of the Study

The first hypothesis of this study targeted the extent to which online dynamic assessment via Skype will enhance the listening ability in autonomous EFL learners at elementary level. The inferential analysis of the data for this hypothesis has been summarized in the tables below.

Table 4 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of before-enrichment and after-enrichment scores for the autonomous group:

Table 4: Paired-sample *t* value for the autonomous group (H1)

Paired Differences						
Pair 1	Mean	Standard	Std. Error	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Autonomous Group		Deviation	Mean			
DA Before						
Enrichment – Autonomous						
Group DA	6.700	4.669	.853	7.859	29	.000
After Enrichment						

As table (4) indicates, the observed *t* value for autonomous learners before and after enrichment is 7.859 ($t_{obs}=7.859$) which is much higher than the critical *t* value ($t_{crit}=2.045$ with the level of significance of 0.05 and degree of freedom of 29 $df=29$). This rejected the first null hypothesis of the study which meant that the enhancement of Iranian autonomous EFL learners' listening ability was affected by online dynamic assessment via Skype.

Table 5 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of pre-test and post-test scores for the non-autonomous group (H2):

Table 5: Paired-sample *t* value for non-autonomous group (H2)

Pair 1	Paired Differences				df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Std. Error Mean	<i>t</i>		
Non-autonomous Group DA Before Enrichment – Non- autonomous DA After Enrichment	5.900	4.172	.762	7.746	29	.000

As table (5) indicates, the observed *t* value for non-autonomous learners before and after enrichment is 7.746 (tobs=7.746) which is much higher than the critical *t* value (tcrit=2.045 with the level of significance of 0.05 and degree of freedom of 29 df =29). This rejected the second null hypothesis of the study which meant that the enhancement of Iranian non-autonomous EFL learners' listening ability was affected by online dynamic assessment via Skype. Table 6 summarizes the inferential analysis of the data of posttests of the autonomous and non-autonomous groups (H3):

Table 6: Independent samples test for autonomous/non-autonomous learners (H3)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	243	.624	.879	58	.383	1.333	1.518
	Equal variances not assumed			.879	56.522	.383	1.333	1.518

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the after-enrichment scores (post-test) for autonomous and non-autonomous learners. The sig. value for Levene's test for equality of variances was more than .05 which meant that equal variances were assumed. The value in the sig. (2-tailed) column was .383 which meant there was no significant difference in scores for autonomous (*M* = 26.07, *SD* = 6.335) and non-autonomous learners (*M* = 24.73, *SD* = 5.382). The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small (eta squared = .01).

CONCLUSION

The results considering the autonomous and non-autonomous groups presented a significant difference between the degree of the development of listening ability in these groups before and after the enrichment program. Therefore, DA via Skype as a catalyzer to facilitate the development of listening ability in elementary EFL learners could be regarded as beneficial. Accordingly, the effectiveness of such a treatment and the facilitative role it played in the development of L2 listening ability could be theoretically inspired by sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978, 1986). As Lantolf (2007) suggests SCT understands humans as "fundamentally socially organized entities" who learn to become autonomous by being social. For this reason the SCT paradigm "rejects the encapsulated and autonomous individual privileged in information processing and innatist theories" (Lantolf, 2007: 32) that do not take account of

the fundamental role the sociocultural environment plays in human development. Within the SCT framework, it is argued that the development of humans "is mediated by others, whether they are immediately present as in the case of parents guiding children or teachers guiding students, or displaced in time and space, as when we read texts produced by others or participate in activities such as work, organized in specific ways by a culture" (Lantolf, 2007: 32). Dynamic Assessment which is a process-oriented, interactive approach to assessment is grounded on the Vygotskian principles of mediation and assistance in the zone of proximal development. DA provides learners with assistance every time needed during the performance of the assessment task through collaborative dialogue. At the heart of Vygotskian and sociocultural approaches to language learning and DA are the concepts of mediation and social learning (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). These key components of DA have taken on special relevance with the arrival of social networks and online communities through web 2.0 technologies that embrace an amplified emphasis on user generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort.

In brief, this article illustrates how listening comprehension can be diagnosed and further development promoted through online DA via Skype within the ZPD. According to the results of the analysis shown in Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5, the hypotheses of the study are rejected. In other words, online DA via Skype led to the development of listening comprehension in Iranian autonomous/non-autonomous EFL learners at elementary level. This is, to a great extent, in line with Vygotsky's ZPD and SCT. The results also showcased that autonomous and non-autonomous learners equally responded to DA.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed with respect to the present study. The limitations described below may also be regarded as orientation for potential future L2 DA research and/or L2 listening. The first limitation concerns the length of the study. Despite the microgenetic nature of the present study, the development of learners' listening ability was tracked only within two-month period of time. The collection of data ended when the learners barely began to showcase some improvements in listening comprehension. Accordingly, further investigation that would track development of listening ability over longer periods would offer more insights and refine our understanding of L2 listening comprehension processes. The second limitation has to do with the extent to which the findings can be generalized to EFL learners. The number of learners participating in this study is rather limited for broad generalizations. Therefore, further empirical evaluations are needed to replicate the findings in different contexts. The future investigations can potentially replicate the design of the present study.

REFERENCES

- Ableeva, R. (2008). The Effects of Dynamic Assessment on L2 Listening Comprehension. In J.P. Lantolf and M. Poehner (Eds.), *Socio-cultural theory and the teaching of second languages* (pp. 57-86). London: Equinox Press.
- Ajideh, P., & Nourdad, N. (2012). The Effect of Dynamic Assessment on EFL Reading Comprehension in Different Proficiency Levels. *Language Testing in Asia*, 2 (4), 101-122.

- Alderson, J. C. (2005). *Diagnosing foreign language proficiency. The interface between learning and assessment*. London, Continuum.
- Antón, M. (2003). *Dynamic assessment of advanced foreign language learners*. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Association of Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC.
- Beauvois, M. (1992). Computer-assisted classroom discussion in the foreign language classroom: Conversation in slow motion. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25, 455- 464.
- Beauvois, M. (1993). E-talk: Empowering students through electronic discussion in the foreign language classroom. *The Ram's Horn*, 7, 41-47.
- Beauvois, M. (1997). Computer-mediated communication (CMC), technology for improving speaking and writing. In M. D. Bush & R. M. Terry (Eds.), *Technology- enhanced language learning* (pp. 165-184). Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company.
- Bodrova E., & Leong, D. J. (2007). *Tools of the Mind. The Vygotskian Approach to early Childhood Education*. 2nd edition. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Buck, G. (2003). *Assessing Listening*. 3rd printing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Budoff, M. (1987). The validity of learning potential assessment. In C. S. Lidz (Ed.), *Dynamic Assessment: An Interactional Approach to Evaluating Learning Potential* (pp. 52-81). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Donato, R. (1994). Collective scaffolding on second language learning. In J. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 33-56). Westport, CT: Ablex.
- Furstenberg, G., Levet, S., English, K., & Maillet, K. (2001). Giving a virtual voice to the silent language of culture: The cultura project. *Language Learning & Technology*, 5, 55-102.
- Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., Jensen, M.R., Kaniel, S., & Tzurriel, D. (1987). Prerequisites for Assessment of learning Potential: The LPAD Model. In C. S. Lidz (Ed.), *Dynamic Assessment: An Interactional Approach to Evaluating Learning Potential* (pp. 35 51). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005). *Second Language Listening: Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haywood, H. C., & Lidz, C. S. (2007). *Dynamic assessment in practice: Clinical and educational applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heather, J. (2003). *The validity of computer-mediated communicative language tests*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona.
- Kelm, O. (1992). The use of synchronous computer networks in second language instruction: A preliminary report. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25, 441-445.
- Kelm, O. (1996). The application of computer network in foreign language education: Focusing on principles of second language acquisition. In M. Warschauer (Ed.), *Telecollaboration in foreign language learning* (pp. 19-28). Manoa, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with network computers: Effects on quantity and characteristics of language production. *Modern Language Journal*, 79, 457-476.
- Lantolf, J. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 1-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Lantolf, J. P., & Poehner, M. E. (2004). Dynamic assessment of L2 development: bringing the past into the future. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1 (2), 49-72.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. (2006). *Sociocultural Theory and the Genesis of Second Language Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Metz, J. M. (1992). *Computer mediated- communication: Perceptions of a new context*. Paper presented at the Speech Communication Association annual conference, Chicago, IL.
- Nazari, B. (2012). Teach-to-Test Instruction of Dynamic Assessment: A critical Overview. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature*, 5(4), 56-68.
- Nunan, D. (1997). Listening in Language Learning. *The Language Teacher*, 21 (9), 47-51.
- Ohta, A. (2000). Rethinking interaction in SLA: Developmentally appropriate assistance in the zone of proximal development and the acquisition of L2 grammar. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language acquisition* (pp. 51-78). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2000). *Teaching Language in Context*. 2nd edition. Heinle.
- Oscos, A. (2003). *Jigsaw and free discussion in synchronous computer-mediated communication*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa.
- Poehner, M. E. (2005). *Dynamic assessment of oral proficiency among advanced L2 learners of French*. Unpublished dissertation. Pennsylvania State University, University Park.
- Rost M. (2002). *Teaching and Researching Listening*. Longman: Pearson Education.
- Rubin, J. (1994). A review of second language listening comprehension research. *The Modern Language Journal*. 78 (2), 199 – 211.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2002). *Dynamic testing. The nature and measurement of learning potential*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ur, P. (1984). *Teaching Listening Comprehension*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vandergrift, L. (1998). Successful and less successful listeners in French: What are the strategy differences? *The French Review*, 71 (3), 370-395.
- Vandergrift, L. (2007). Recent developments in second and foreign language listening comprehension research. *Language Teaching*, 40, 191–210.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society. The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1987). Thinking and Speech. In *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky. Vol. 1. Problems of General Psychology*. R. W. Rieber and A. S. Carton (Eds.). New York: Plenum.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1997a). The History of the Development of Higher Mental Functions. In *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky. Vol. 4. The History of the Development of Higher Mental Functions*. R. W. Rieber (Ed.). New York: Plenum.
- Walther, J. B. (1992). Interpersonal effects in computer-mediated interaction: A relational perspective. *Communication Research*, 19, 52-90.
- Walther, J. B., & Burgoon, J. K. (1992). Relational communication in computer-mediated interaction. *Human Communication Research*, 19, 50-88.

THE EFFECT OF PRE-READING ACTIVITIES ON THE READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE OF ILAMI HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Soghra Roshani

Department of English language Teaching, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

Akbar Azizifar (Corresponding Author)

Department of English language Teaching, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

Habib Gowhary

Department of English language Teaching, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

Ali Jamalinesari

Department of English language and Literature, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted for two purposes: (1) to compare the learners' comprehension ability before and after the implementation of two types of pre-reading activities, guessing reading content from asking pre-reading questions and vocabulary definition, (2) to investigate the learners' attitudes towards the implementation of two pre-reading activities. Research participants consisted of 60 grade- 10 students studying at Omol Habibeh high school in Ilam, Iran. A test of reading comprehension ability was administered to assign the subjects into two groups. The two groups were given different pre-reading activity, guessing reading content from asking pre-reading questions and vocabulary definition, respectively. The research instrument consisted of reading comprehension test (used as pre- and post- tests). The experiment using the two pre reading activities were carried out for 5 weeks two sessions a week. The data was analyzed statistically to identify means, standard deviation, and t-value. It was found that after implementation of the 2 pre-reading activities the subjects performed better in the post-test, at significant level of .05. When compared the results of the 2 pre-reading activities, it was found that the group receiving guessing meaning from pre-reading questions performed better than their counterpart who experienced vocabulary definitions, at .05. It was also found that both groups were satisfied with the activity they experienced. The following implications can be drawn for reading instruction depending on the finding of the study: 1. prior to implementing any pre-reading activity to the reading comprehension class, the teacher are suggested to analyze the curriculum, learners' language proficiency level in order to make a right choice of the type of pre-reading activities. and 2. To make the learner more interested in the reading activity, teachers are advised to select the reading texts that were in the range of interest, or topics related to their everyday life.

KEYWORDS: pre- reading, reading comprehension, post reading

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Reading as a major skill was ignored by pedagogues and researchers for a long period of time. Most of focus was placed on oral skills (listening and speaking). For example, the Audio lingual method which was developed in the United States during world war II when there was a need for people to learn foreign language rapidly for military purposes emphasized the oral skills, ignoring reading and considering it a passive skill which was given no emphasis at all.

When the Audio lingual Method failed in fulfilling its mission ,other teaching methods were devised and put to use. The Cognitive Method in the united states and the communicative Approach in Britain came into being during the late 1960s.Equal attention has been given to the four skills together(listening, speaking ,reading and writing).pedagogues and researchers started to put more emphasis on reading comprehension as a major skill for students of English all over the world.

Reading ,the mother of all study skills ,is a basic tool of learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life(Fry, 1997, p.9).As a matter of fact ,nearly all children begin school with the expectation they will learn to read ,and one of the most important things a child is asked to do is to read . Trelease (1989), perhaps the united states best-known advocate of reading aloud, indicated that by booking a child with reading ,you influence not only his future health and financial circumstances ,but also those of the next generation.

Nowadays English learning is essential because English is the international communication medium. The language is necessary for different activities, including education, politics, and socio-economics (Medgyes, 1994; Mckay, 2002). Its importance is well recognized in Iran. It is the need for curriculum and teaching process revision in order to prepare student for real life application in the information age. The teaching should accommodate the learners' development of the 4 language skills. Reading skill, in particular, is the most important skill in second or foreign language learning (Carrell, 1988). Sookchotirat (2005) suggested that reading skill is the most important skill as it is the basis of all the success in one's life. Good readers can gain more knowledge of any kind from reading. Reading makes the reader more knowledgeable, have wider perspectives and vision. Reading helps the reader get new ideas leading to cognitive development. When the readers transfer what they read to apply with their own idea a new perspective or idea is created. However, there have been problems in English teaching in all educational levels in Iran, including secondary and university level. Graduates of each educational level do not have reading ability they should have. Generally, it can be claimed that the problem was caused by the inadequacy of teaching and learning time. Teaching reading is a continuing process; it should be given continuously from the first to the highest educational level. Teaching reading to learners at very young age is, therefore, the basis for the higher level (Noysangsri, 1988). Chiramanee (1992) indicated that Iranian learners' reading ability was at a low level. It could be resulted from inappropriate teaching method, using outdated teaching techniques, which failed to help the learners understand the content of the reading materials.

Chandavimol (1998) suggested that in general practice of teaching reading, the learners would be assigned a reading task to read by themselves and do the post-reading exercises. In such reading activity, the teacher did not provide any activities that could motivate the reader or achieve better comprehension. Chatwirote (2003) suggested that the teachers could provide reading promoting activities, such as the activities that interest the learners. The activities should contain the reading objectives that suit the learners and teacher's interest. Reading the process of teaching reading, the teacher should have suitable steps of teaching reading. There should be a pre-reading step to prepare the reader before they read the whole material. The instructor should provide them with the pre-reading the learners did not have any background knowledge it would be the teachers' responsibility to provide the background knowledge to the learners in order that they could achieve the most comprehension from the reading. The teachers should provide the learners with various pre-reading activities that help them have certain amount of background knowledge about the reading text because the schema would help the reader get better comprehension (Graves, Watts & Graves, 1994), as shown in the following studies.

Yeeding (2007) investigated the effects of pre-reading activities on learners' motivation and reading comprehension ability. Results showed that the activities subjects were highly motivated, enthusiastic to read. After the experiment, they scored significantly higher. In another experimental study Taglieber, Johnson, and Yarbrough (1988) provided the experiment subjects with 3 pre-reading activities: guessing reading content from pictures, learning vocabulary before reading, and pre-reading question. The control group did not receive any of the 3 pre-reading activities. A pre-test and post-test were administered to both groups. It was found that the experimental subject performed better than the control group. In addition, the reading scores from the reading with guessing reading content from pictures, and pre-reading questioning were better than the reading with learning vocabulary before reading.

Statement of the Problem

Learning English as a foreign language is, undoubtedly, a complex and difficult process. comprehension is the ultimate goal of teaching reading. However, experience of that most students of the 10th grade are poor readers despite their exposure to English instruction for 4 years. Students, obstacles in reading comprehension may be partially attributed to non-linguistic factors such as lack of motivation and interest. Williams (1984) indicated that a teacher who starts the reading lesson by asking his students to read the passage on page sound so and then to answer the questions is hardly likely to motivate them. But a teacher who starts his reading lesson by giving his students a reason to read and providing them with some preparation can certainly arouse their interest in the topic.

Despite the importance and relevance of the pre reading stage in reading comprehension, it is often ignored in traditional reading instruction. Ciclo de estudos (2012) claimed that the following practical preceding activities may help address these problems: 1. Pre-questioning 2. Vocabulary Pre-teaching.

Results from the studies reviewed above made the researcher of the present study realize the significance of applying pre-reading activities in teaching reading comprehension. The present

research, therefore, was aimed at comparing the effects of 2 pre-reading activities-- guessing reading content from learning vocabulary before reading, and pre-reading questioning. In other words, the study would investigate whether the 2 pre-reading activities help the learners get better comprehension and to determine the extent of the effect on the learners' comprehension. It was expected that the results from the present study could be used to improve the learners' reading comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Can and to what extent guessing reading content from pre-questioning, and vocabulary activities help learners improve their reading ability?
2. Which among the two pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-questioning, learning vocabulary before reading) can best improve the learners' reading comprehension ability?

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted to compare the learners' reading comprehension before and after the treatment, i.e. learning reading comprehension with 2 pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-reading questioning and vocabulary definitions). It was also aimed to determine the learners' reading comprehension ability improved from experiencing teaching with guessing reading content from vocabulary compared with that gained from learning with pre-reading questioning activities. The learners' attitude and satisfaction towards the 2 pre-reading activities were also determined. The following research elements procedure was included in carrying out to obtain the research objectives.

Design

Among several designs, the one which seemed to fit best for the purpose of the present research was two phase tests for two experimental groups. The statistical procedure used in the study is that of Match T-Test (In fact two Match T-Tests are used: one for pre-reading questioning group and the other for vocabulary group and then results are compared).The Design of this study is:

G1 T1 X T2

G2 T1 X T2

G1 = pre –reading questioning group

G2=vocabulary pre-teaching group

The subjects were selected after results of the Proficiency test and they were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Participants were given pre-reading activities and the reading comprehension test in their regular English lesson with their regular English teacher. In total there were two classes and a teacher, and then the post test was administered after the treatment.

Participants

The participant in this study were 60 females tenth graders belonging age 15-16 years old Students. The study was conducted in one of the public school of Ilam . A Michigan test is used ,and 60 qualified students were selected to be classified randomly into two experimental groups because of their homogeneity and qualification for complementation of the research administration .Unqualified students Which acquired very different marks omitted. The scores sought from the pre-test were statistically analyzed using T-test for independent samples. The researcher, then, performed the experiment following the research design, one group were taking the reading comprehension with guessing reading content from pre-reading vocabulary definition, and the other taking the course with pre-reading questioning activities.

Instrument

Multiple choice tests and one sentence answer questions and True and False from English book 1,were given to students. Four choices were given for each test of multiple choice. The test items were written based on 5 reading texts. The test was administered to measure the subject's reading comprehension ability twice, before and after the treatment, i.e., once as pre-test and the other as post-test, respectively. In addition to the test of reading comprehension, a questionnaire was constructed to test the learner' satisfaction and attitude.It consisted of 17 test items which were in 5-point likert scale. All the test were designed to tap the subjects opinion and attitudes towards the treatment.

Data Collection Procedures

At the first step ,the researcher took a proficient-test and chose the qualified students to participating in the research and assigned them to two groups as experimental groups. As mentioned before ,the subjects were female gender.

For both the experimental and groups ,the teacher instructed the groups ,which lasted for five weeks, two sessions a week and 60 minutes per session. For G1,the teacher distributed the handouts which included questions for different kinds attached to the reading passage ,then asked some general questions in order to their students infer the main idea of the assigned reading. For G2 ,they introduced the key words and their definition, or using translation when it was necessary to clarify the meaning.

The pre-test and post-test were designed in the same forms for both groups. Each lesson started with a pre-reading activity which lasted approximately 10 minutes and was carried out immediately before the reading task. After the pre-reading activity all participants read independently without advice or help from the teacher and then proceeded with a reading comprehension test which included explicit and implicit (inferential) items. There was no time limit for reading the text or doing the test because the researcher did not consider reading speed a factor in determining the effects of pre-reading activities in this studny. After taking a reading comprehension test ,a questionnaire gives the information about the subject opinion and satisfaction toward the implementation of 2 pre-reading activities.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data was quantitatively analyzed. The statistical analysis was performed on two sets of data, as described below, comprehension test taken before and after the treatment, the pre-test and post-test scores, were computed to determine means, standard deviation, percentages, and difference between means or pre-and post-tests of each group. The difference between means of the first group was further compared with those of the second group to determine the significance difference between the two groups. Like the scores on reading comprehension test, the scores obtained from the questionnaire administered to the two subject groups were statistically analyzed to determine means, SD, percentages, differences between means between the two subject groups. The values obtained were subsequently interpreted for their satisfaction level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results related to reading comprehension before and after treatment

The reading comprehension test was administered to the two groups before and after the treatment. Group one received a type of pre-reading activity and group two the other type of pre-reading activity as described earlier. The results are presented in Table (1) and Table (2).

Table 1: Reading comprehension ability before and after treatment with guessing content from pre-reading questioning activity (N= 30)

Group 1	Total score	Highest score	Lowest score	X	S.D.	t	sig
Pre- treatment	10	8	3	6.8667	1.81437	7.681	0.000
Post-treatment	10	10	7	8.9000	1.15520		

Table (1) shows that the lowest, highest, and means scores on reading comprehension after the implementation post-test. The obtained results of post-test were found to be significantly higher than their pre-test scores, at sig level=0.05. It can be concluded that the pre-reading activity had positive effects on the subjects' reading comprehension. They scored statistically higher in the post-test than the pre-test.

Table 2: Reading comprehension ability before and after treatment with pre-reading vocabulary activity (N =30)

Group2	Total score	Highest score	Lowest score	x	S.D.	t	sig
Pre-treatment	10	8	3	6.3000	1.48904	4.958	0.000
Post-treatment	10	9	5	7.4667	1.33218		

Table (2) shows that the lowest, highest, and means scores on reading comprehension after the implementation post-test. The obtained results of post-test were found to be significantly higher

than the obtained from the pre-test, at $\text{sig}=0.05$. It can be concluded that the subjects achieved significantly higher scores in the post-test than the pre-test meaning that their reading comprehension ability was better after they had experienced the pre-reading activity. Considering Table 1 and Table 2, it can be concluded that the subjects performed statistically significantly better in the reading comprehension test after they had given the two pre-reading activities (guessing reading content from pre-questioning, and vocabulary activities), at 0.05. In other words, they had significantly higher level ability in reading comprehension. Results related to the effectiveness of guessing reading content from questioning activity and vocabulary activity

Besides investigating the effect of each pre-reading activity on the subjects' reading ability, the present study examined the difference in effectiveness of the 2 pre-reading activities on the subjects' reading comprehension ability. Table (3) shows the results of the comparison between the means scores of the pre-test and post-test of the 2 pre-reading activities.

Table 3: Effectiveness of guessing reading content from questioning activity and vocabulary activity.

Group 1 Difference between means of the pre-test and post-test after receiving guessing reading content from questioning activity		Group 2 Difference between means of the pre-test and post-test after receiving pre-reading vocabulary activity		T	sig
x	S.D.	X	S.D.		
2.0333	1.44993	1.1667	1.28877	2.447	.017

Table (3) shows that the difference between the means scores of the pre-test and post-test of the subjects experiencing the guessing reading content from questioning activity was 2.0333. The difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test of the subjects experiencing the pre-reading vocabulary activity was 1.1667. In other words, the students who received reading comprehension instruction with the guessing reading content from questioning activity gained more reading comprehension ability than the students who received the same reading comprehension instruction, but with the pre-reading vocabulary activity. Therefore, it can be concluded from the results that guessing reading content from questioning pre-reading activity was more effective in increasing learners' reading comprehension ability than vocabulary activity.

Discussion

The actual observations gained from treatment and statistical operation show that the difference between the performances of experimental groups in pre-test and post-test is meaningful, this discussion explains the results of two hypotheses of the study.

- The first hypothesis says that there are no significant difference in students' achievement between first and second applications for the pre-reading activities. Analysis of results provided evidence for rejection of the first hypothesis, and revealed that the use of the pre-reading activities while teaching Tenth Grade students reading comprehension texts

did lead to higher rate of comprehension, because the means of the experimental groups have significantly changed, for pre-questioning group in pre-test ($x=6.8$, $SD=1.81$) changed to ($x=8.9$, $SD=1.15$) in post-test. For vocabulary group in pre-test ($x=6.30$, $SD=1.48$) changed to ($x=48$, $SD=1.33$). Having compared the pretest and posttest scores of both groups, an increase in the post- test mean score of the experimental groups is noted. It can be concluded that the use of pre-reading activities is a valuable gift which teachers can give to their students as an efficient means for improving the students' achievement in reading comprehension texts.

- The second hypothesis states that pre-reading questioning activity does not facilitate reading comprehension better than vocabulary definitions.

The obtained results show that there is significant difference between mean of the two groups. Mean of post-test for G1 ($x=2.03$, $SD=1.44$) and for G2 ($x=1.16$, $SD=1.28$) show that pre-reading questioning was more effective in increasing learners' reading comprehension than vocabulary activity. This finding is consistent with the results of Gebhard (1987) whose study showed that by providing background knowledge on a reading selection, teachers can facilitate successful reading comprehension. It also provides opportunities to gain knowledge as well as recall already existing knowledge, which adds up to their reading experience. Carrell (1984, p. 335) points out that teaching new vocabulary is only effective if it is "integrated with both the student's preexisting knowledge and other pre-reading activities designed to build background knowledge". In addition to this, Carrell (1988, p.244) believes that vocabulary and schemata should be developed by "preteaching vocabulary and background knowledge concurrently". It is possible that if one group received vocabulary pre-teaching and pre-questioning simultaneously, more significant results might emerge. Further research will be needed to clarify this point.

Accordingly, a number of suggestions for teaching reading comprehension are presented based on the above discussion

- Prior to implementing any pre-reading activity to the reading comprehension class, the teacher are suggested to analyze the curriculum, learners' language proficiency level in order to make a right choice of the type of pre-reading activities.
- To make the learner more interested in the reading activity, teachers are advised to select the reading texts that were in the range of interest, or topics related to their everyday life.
- In conducting the reading class, teachers are suggested to give a clear explanation before starting to do each step of the reading comprehension activity.
- In order to incorporate the 2 pre-reading activities into the reading comprehension, the teachers are advised to be cautious with time allocation. The pre-reading activities should not take too much of the class time; rather a larger portion of the class time should be sacrificed to the main reading activities. Also a portion of the time should be allocated to post reading activities.

CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension was more significantly facilitated when reading was preceded by a discussion of the text topic than when reading was preceded by explanation of unfamiliar words to be encountered in the text. In this respect, Gebhard (1987) asserted that “short class discussions before students read can be directed at activating students’ existing knowledge and increasing sensitivity to the content of the reading material” (p. 23). Pre-reading questioning do not only provide an opportunity for students to consider their own experience in relation to the topic of reading, but will also help students “to develop a context in which to read and to develop expectations about what they will find” (Silberstein, 1994, p. 43). Furthermore, students will feel free to voice out their opinions without constraints. This finding is noteworthy because it runs parallel to some empirical evidence in favor of the differential effect of pre-reading activities on reading comprehension (Hudson, 1982; Johnson, 1982; Langer, 1984; Taglieber, Johnson & Yarbrough, 1988; Webb, 2009). This is in accordance with the schema-theoretic view of reading which holds that comprehension depends on readers’ background knowledge of the topic of a given text. Thus, if these readers are faced with highly unfamiliar content, especially materials with many culturally loaded concepts, comprehension will be difficult, if not impossible, due to the readers’ lack of appropriate background knowledge. Particularly, the studies incorporating vocabulary definitions as a pre-reading activity (Hudson, 1982; Taglieber et al, 1988) yielded similar results to those obtained in the present study. In fact, even though Hudson’s vocabulary activity included a prediction component, it did not surpass performance of those who did a read-test/reread-retest activity or a pictorial prediction activity.

Furthermore, Taglieber et al. (1988) explains that the poor performance of the vocabulary group might be due to the fact that the words were not related to the content of the reading selections. In contrast, the definitions of words presented in the pre- reading activity examined in the present study were those appropriate to their use in the reading text. Nonetheless, it seems to be no better than Taglieber et al’s pre-teaching vocabulary activity. One possible interpretation of such findings is that although knowledge of these words meanings was essential for adequate comprehension to occur, heightened background knowledge from the class discussion pre-reading activity made students more able to use context to arrive at a satisfactory meaning of the text even if they are not familiar with certain words in the text. Stanovich (1980), in his discussion of his interactive compensatory model of reading, cites evidence to support the view that contextual information may help readers compensate for poor word recognition. A second possible interpretation of the finding that vocabulary definitions was less effective than the class discussion may be the inadequacy of the set of words explained in the pre-reading activity. It is possible that the nine items presented before reading were not the only unfamiliar words likely to cause difficulty for students to understand the text. More importantly, the emphasis on vocabulary words for this group may have encouraged word-by-word reading, which may consequently have prevented students from using their background knowledge and context to predict the meaning of unfamiliar words and of the text in general, even though they performed better than the pre-test. A third possible interpretation may be found in students’ reactions to each of the two pre-reading treatments. The class discussion appeared to produce higher motivation and a more active involvement of the students in the activity. On the other hand, vocabulary definitions did not seem to be as appealing to students, most probably because it is a familiar technique to them, and also because it did not lend itself to much involvement on their part. Such

findings seem to back up Carrell's (1984) conclusion that "simply teaching lists of words or even words in context is not going to help students relate the new concepts to their old knowledge and to integrate the new words into their vocabularies" (p. 340). Although in the present study, the definitions of words presented prior to reading referred to the meanings intended by the context in which they occurred in the text, they seem not to have improved students comprehension as effectively as the prereading questioning.

In this regard, Hudson (1982) holds that even when words taught in a pre-reading activity are evocative of the content of a passage and may help students make predictions about it, there is no guarantee that this will surpass direct knowledge of the task at hand. In light of this, the vocabulary definitions activity, employed in the present study, could have been more effective if it had included a background knowledge component (Maghsoudi, 2012). In fact, Carrell (1984, 1988) proposed that instead of pre-teaching vocabulary for single reading passages, teachers should be pre-teaching vocabulary and background knowledge concurrently. Similarly, Beck et al. (1982) and Stevens (1982) both suggested that words should be taught in semantically and topically related sets so that word meaning and background knowledge develop concurrently. In contrast to the vocabulary definitions, the class discussion seemed to have had a more facilitating effect on students' comprehension of the text. A plausible explanation is that the information generated by the class discussion may have helped students either create or activate schemata that helped them understand the text. Thus, the discussion was beneficial both to students who already had some knowledge about the topic, in that it raised their awareness of such knowledge, and to students who had no prior knowledge, in that it helped them build awareness of new concepts. In both cases, class discussion seemed to have aroused subjects' interest and motivation through linking the topic of the text to their existing background knowledge. The present study supports Hudson's (1982) and Hammadou's (1991) contention that students may use their background knowledge about a reading selection to override problems they are having with the language. The success of the class discussion condition in the present study adds weight to Carrell's (1984) contention that for a pre-reading activity to be effective, it has to accomplish two main goals: providing background knowledge as well as evoking pre-existing knowledge. It also supports the view of schema theory asserting that activating or building readers' background knowledge prior to reading would improve reading comprehension. In this view, reading is the result of a two-way communication between the reader and the text, achieved through simultaneous interaction of bottom-up information processing and top-down processing. Meaning does not just reside in the text; it is rather constructed out of the interaction between the reader's background knowledge and the text itself. The construction of meaning suffers if a reader does not make effective use of his/her background knowledge base.

REFERENCES

- Carrell, P. L., and Eisterhold, J. C. 1983 "Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy", *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(4), 553-573.
- Carrell, P.L. (1984). *Schema Theory and ESL Reading: Classroom Implications and Applications*. *The Modern language Journal*, 68, 332-343

- Carrell, P. L., Devine, J., & Eskey, D., E. (1988). *Interactive approaches to second language reading*. Cambridge: CPU.
- Chandavimol, M. (1998). Reading Comprehension: An Active Engagement or a Passive Experience?. *PASAA*. 28 (December, 1998), 31-42.
- Chatwirote, B. (2003). *Teaching in elementary school*. Patanakarnsuksa, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Chiramanee, N. (1992). *Poor Reading in English as a Foreign Language: A Reading Problem or a Language Problem for Thai Students?* Ph.D. Thesis. University of Sydney
- Fry, R. (1997). *Improve Your Reading*. London: The Career Press.
- Gebhard, J. (1987). Successful Comprehension: What Teachers can do before Students Read. *English Teaching forum*, XXV (02), 24-25
- Graves, M., F., Watts, S., M., & Graves, B., B. (1994). *Essentials of classroom teaching Elementary reading methods*. U.S.A.: Allyn and Bacon.
- Mckey, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language: rethinking goals and approaches*. Oxford University Press.
- Medgyes, P. (1994). *The non-native teacher*. London: Macmillan.
- Noysangsri, P. (1988). *The problems in teaching English in secondary school*. Ramkamhang University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Sookchotirat, M. (2005). *Reading: Learning sooner, teaching well*. Nanmee, Bangkok, Thailand
- Taglieber, L. K., Johnson, L. L., & Yarbrough, D. B. (1988). "Effects of prereading activities on EFL reading by Brazilian college students", *TESOL Quarterly*, 22(3), 455-472.
- Trelease, J. (1989). *The New Read-Allowed Hand book*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Yeeding, S. (2007). "Using pre-reading activities to increase learners' motivation in reading comprehension": A case of 2nd year vocational students enrolled in the Electrical and Electronic Certificate Program at Industrial Technology College, King Mongkut. Pranakorn.

CROSS CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF HEDGES IN PERSIAN AND ENGLISH EDITORIAL COLUMNS

Azam Sedaghat

(Sobh-e Sadegh Institute of Higher Education, Isfahan, Iran)
E-mail: azam.sedaghat88@gmail.com

Reza Biria

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan (Isfahan) Branch,
E-mail: r_biria@yahoo.com

Yaghoub Asadi Amirabadi (corresponding author)

(Sobh-e Sadegh Institute of Higher Education, Isfahan, Iran)
E-mail: yaghoubasadi6@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Hedging is the most important aspect of the linguistic behavior of academic genres. The present study tends to investigate this phenomenon in journalistic language, a discourse type in which hedges occur commonly. The aim of this study is examining English and Persian social, economic and political newspaper editorials to consider the similarities and differences in the frequency of hedging devices in the two languages. 30 news articles, 15 in each language, were randomly selected from the social, Economic and political sections of the leading newspapers published in 2006-2012 in Iran and the United states. The result disclosed that English newspaper editorial use more hedges than Persian ones. English political editorials were more hedged than the economic and social ones, whereas, Persian economic editorials were more hedged than political and social ones. Students can benefit from courses in which they have opportunity to investigate the appropriateness of hedging roles and they will be familiar with the conceptual, cultural, social and psychological factors underlying them. Students who are studying English as specific purpose (ESP), and English as academic purpose (EAP) also will benefit from writing and reading courses if they consider textual hedging devices across various topics.

KEYWORDS: Hedging, contrastive analysis, economic, political and social editorial

INTRODUCTION

Hedging is a basic feature in academic discourse (Rounds, 2002) that enables academic writers to indicate their certainty and doubt towards their statements to show the amount of confidence they put on their claim, and to start a dialog with their readers. Hedging is also used to show the lack of certainty in truth value of the proposition stated by the writers. Through using hedges, writers leave some room for their readers to judge the truth value of an assertion. Hedges are defined as "the means by which writers can present a proposition as an opinion rather than a fact:

Items are only hedges in their epistemic sense, and only when they mark uncertainty" (Hyland 2002, p. 5) the research has provided various definitions for "hedging" or "hedges". Zuck and Zuck (2000) define hedges as "the process whereby the author reduces the strength of what he is writing" in case the reported news turn out not to be true (p. 172) Brown and Levinson (2004), define hedges as "a particle, word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is partial or true only in certain respects, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected", 145). Some examples of hedging are may, assume, unclear, and probably. Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) argued that hedging is "the mark of a professional scientist, one who acknowledges the caution with which he or she does science and writes on science" (p. 135).

Vanda Koppel and Crismore (2002), in their investigation of readers' reactions to hedges, concluded that students read hedged texts critically and with enthusiastically compare with the unhedged texts. Varttala (2000) has also emphasized the functions of hedging in research articles as the indicator of textual precision and interpersonal relationship.

The main sources of communication in academic Discourse have generally focused on genre analysis in recent years (Bhatia, 2005; Holmes, 2000; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 2002; Samraj, 2002; Varttala, 2001; Williams, 2000). However, these studies mainly deal with the rhetorical purposes that a text is supposed to satisfy. Additionally, there are numerous studies dealing with hedges, as a main element in interpersonal interactional metadiscourse (Myers, 2000; Salvager-Meyer, 2002; Skelton, 2000).

“Hyland (1998) categorized and organized interpersonal metadiscourse markers into five categories that hedges are one of them and actually it is subtypes of metadiscourse markers. In recent years, several studies have focused on hedges and metadiscourse markers. According to Biria&Mehrabi (2014) Persian editorial writers use frequent use of hedges because of their tradition of valuing and abiding by the rules of those in power without questioning them or without expressing uncertainty about social and, especially, religious issues.

On the other hand, the heavy use of hedges by the English editorial writers was related to their being more considerate and polite to their readers. A considerable amount of literature has been published in this regard. These studies indicated that different factors such as culture driven preference, genre-driven conventions and foreign language experience of writers interacted in choosing the interpersonal metadiscourse markers by the columnist.

Besides its major role in academic discourse, hedging has also been used in the context of casual and oral discourse (Coates, 2003; Horman, 2004; Intone, 2003; Stubbs, 2000). However, There have not been many cross-linguistic and cross disciplinary Studies on hedging in the related literature. The limited numbers of studies conducted in this area have shown that there are some variations in the use of hedges across languages (Clyne, 2000; Crismore et al., 2001; Vassileva, 2001; Yang, 2003) and across disciplines (Varttala, 2001).

Hedging has been studied in research articles; the present study aims to survey this feature in journalist language, a discourse that hedges are used mostly. The major part of newspaper lies in the editorial.

Errors in using hedges can cause ambiguity and misunderstanding and if unaware of this feature, the nonnative speakers may have difficulty in understanding the intended meaning of the author especially for those who want to understand the journalist texts. Thus, contrastive analyses of the occurrence of hedges in the journalistic genre will give more insight to L2 learners regarding the possible functions hedges may have in learning a second language. Hedges are needed in utterance to show the information imprecisely and uncertainly. In fact hedges use to prevent from embarrassing situation in matters one knows wrong.

The following examples taken from Varttala (2004) may clear this point:

- 1) John may go to Tehran.
- 2) Penguins are sort of birds.

In these examples *may* and *sort of* are hedges that impose fuzziness into the utterance and show that the writer wants to control the accuracy of what is being said. Despite the fact that modals auxiliaries show the hedges, the scope of these concepts conveying the meaning similar to the two hedges mentioned above items like adverbs possibly and presumably, adjective like probable, nouns like hypothesis, some verbs like suggest and appear. The hedging phenomenon, as a subtype of interpersonal metadiscourse, is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has been the concern of many scholars and viewed from such different perspectives as Politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Leech, 1983; Myers, 1989), Semantics (Lakoff G., 2001, 2002), logic (McCawley, 1981; Zadeh, 1972) and the nature of hedging (Hyland, 1995, 1997, 1998; Markkanen & Schröder, 2000; Varttala, 1999, 2001; Vassileva, 2001; Vold, 2006). Alternatively, of such perspective there are other distinct features dealing with the hedging which examine it within a contrastive framework in two or more languages. Clyne (1992) in a study considers the variations in the use of hedging writing academic papers. For instance, German researchers use more hedging in their academic texts than native speakers of English.

Similarly, Vassileva (2001) examined the similarities and differences in the degree of detachment in English, Bulgarian and Bulgarian English, drawing on three sections of research articles, namely, Introduction, Discussion and Conclusion and came to the conclusion that the degree of detachment was highest in English and lowest in Bulgarian English. In this connection, Burrough-Boenisch (2005) asked 45 biologists from eight different countries to critically read and amend the English in discussion sections of three Dutch-authored papers. He concluded that Dutch scientists tended to under-hedge. By studying of hedging in English and Persian academic articles we came up with the result that English articles were more hedge than Persian one.

Moreover, Atai and Sadr (2008) surveyed the occurrence of Hedging in the Discussion sections of English and Persian journals published in the field of applied linguistics. Their findings indicated that the variety of hedging used in the Discussion sections of English articles was significantly more than those used in Persian articles. What seems to be unanimously agreed upon in the

obtained findings is that in terms of the frequency and variety, the use of hedging devices in academic genre is language sensitive? These results make us aware of differences in term of using hedging in different languages. They have explained little about variation in use of hedging in other discourse types. In Journalistic prose, hedges are extensively used, and they may cause problems for nonnative speakers (NNS) who may be unaware of its functions.

Errors in the use of hedging in journalist can cause misunderstanding, ambiguity and vagueness. In fact, one may reach an incorrect conclusion about an intended meaning. Hedging phenomenon may therefore cause many problems for L2 learners in writing, reading and translating journalistic texts. Each language community has its own culture and norms which prescribe content, style and rhetorical structure (Árvay & Tanko, 2004). Learners awareness of such norms can help them to decode the authors meaning or to write for another community and controlling variation that may result in miscomprehension.

Studies on cross-linguistic and topic variations in journalistic texts can provide us with an accurate account of the differences not Only in terms of frequency but also in reference to the functions associated with these Devices in journalistic texts to understand about the L2 context norms. On this basis, this study aims to contrastively Analyze English and Persian newspaper editorials as a distinct type of Discourse in terms of the frequency of hedging devices. More Specifically this study sought to investigate what similarities and Differences can be seen in linguistic realization associated with Hedging used in Persian and English journalistic texts.

METHODOLOGY

Materials

The corpus of the study was 30 news articles, 15 in each language, were selected randomly from editorial parts of leading newspapers published in 2006-2012 in Iran and the United States. This study attempted to survey the type and frequency hedges employed in economic, social, and political articles in English and Persian newspapers. Accordingly, the corpus data were collected from the online archive (2006-2012) of the leading newspapers published periodically in Iran and United States. Using sampling from among 60 articles randomly, a total of 30 news articles, 15 in each language were selected. To have equal amount of data in both languages, the first 2000 words from each text were analyzed. The texts were chosen from the field of economy, political, and social. The type and frequency of the linguistics elements, such as hedges markers in a given texts maybe considerably influenced by the topic of the texts.” **Iran, Tehran Times, Hambastegi**” were remarkable sources of selecting the Persian news articles and the English articles were chosen from the leading American newspapers such as the “**Washington post, New York Times and USA**”(see appendix A).

Data collection procedures

From among 60 articles in the Economic, social, political sections of the newspapers, 30 news articles (15 from each language) were randomly chosen. Collected data were quantitatively analyzed to disclose their frequency occurrence in a given text and to realize whether there was an outstanding difference between two sets of corpus data in this respect.

Procedures

After choosing from the leading news the chosen parts were precisely read twice word by word in order to paper recognize and find the hedges. Afterward, the number of hedges was counted in each article and in each language separately. The hedges underlined, then, classified to the five types of hedges based on Salager-Meyer (1994) taxonomy. The taxonomy included five main types which are as follow:

1. Shields, such as can, could, may, might, would, to appear, to seem, probably, to suggest.
2. Approximates of degree, quantity frequency and time: e.g., approximately, roughly, about, often, occasionally, etc.
3. Authors personal doubt and direct involvement, expressions such as I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that...
4. emotionally-charged intensifiers, such as extremely difficult/interesting, of particular importance, unexpectedly, surprisingly, etc.
5. Compound hedges, the examples are: could be suggested, would seem likely, would seem somewhat.

The editorials were examined to identify hedging devices. Based on Varttala (2001) modal instances of hedging were identifying in the editorial. The types of hedges were recognized and recorded. For avoiding errors, all the editorials were examined twice.

Varttala (2001) modal divided hedges into five groups such as modal auxiliaries, verbs, nouns, adjectives, and other groups like if clauses. Nonnative reporting verbs are used to give description of the authors own research such as suggest and argue. Tentative cognition verbs like hope and suspect. Probability adverbs like apparently and probably show some tentative degree. Sometimes and often are adverbs of indefinite that author doing provide reader with exact information. Significantly and somewhat are adverbs of indefinite. About and almost are approximately adverbs that show imprecision on data. Possible is probability adjective.

The total number of hedging tokens in English and Persian were 871 and 621 respectively. 245 were used in economic, 207 in political, and 174 in social editorials. Table 1 below provides a summary of frequency of the hedges.

Table 1: Frequency of hedges in different text types of discourse

Language	Political	Economic	Social	Total
English	431	132	308	871
Persian	207	245	174	626

Persian and English editorials use hedging differently. Table 1 clearly shows English editorials used more hedges (871) than Persian ones (626), but regarding economic news Persian newspaper editorials tend to use more hedges rather than English ones (245).

This study adopts the classification proposed by Salager-Meyer (1994). Accordingly hedges classified to five types. Table 2 indicates the classification of hedges in both American and Iranian newspapers, as well as their frequency.

Table 2: Frequency and types of hedges in American and Iranian Newspapers

	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5	total
	Shields	approximates	Authors involvement	emotionally	compound hedges	
Persian	66	36	0	12	10	124
English	74	27	0	10	8	119

As it reveals from Table 2 (shields) hedging devices are the most frequently employed by both groups of writers, with English writers using 8 hedges more than the Persian writer. this finding correspond to findings of Adam Smith (2000) who believes type one hedges using more than other hedges in academics papers. Accordingly, Butler (2002) also says that modal auxiliary verbs (type one contained) occur in approximately one of every 10 words in newspapers. Recently, Hyland (2000) finds that 29% of all lexical devices in his corpus of biology are modal auxiliary verbs (related to type one in this study).however, Iranian authors prefer to use type 2 (Approximates) hedging devices through using this type, 9 hedges more than others.

Considering type 3 (personal involvement), we did not find any occurrences of this devices in both corpora. Type 4 frequency (Emotionally-charged intensifiers) hedges for academic were 10 and for Iranian was 12.Finally. Type five (compound hedges) frequency in English texts was 8 and for Iranians 10.

The results disclosed that some differences can be seen in using hedging between two groups of writer from different cultures. based on these differences American writers have higher preference for type 1, and 5, while Iranian writers tend to use of types 2 and 4.however, the prominent similarity between Persian and English newspapers is that there were not any hedging expressions using type 3.as Table 1 discloses, nearly 0% of Iranian and American newspaper writers using type 3 hedging (author personal doubt and direct involvement).

Table 2 bellow shows the frequency of occurrence for different types of shields in both English and Persian. It is clearly observed in the table that among different types of shields, Persian writers tend to use modals more than English writers. But, regarding Probability adverbs and Semi-auxiliaries, it is American writers who have higher preference for them. The table also indicates that totally shields are more frequent (102) in English newspaper editorials than Persian ones (94).

Table 3: Shields in English and Persian newspapers

Types of shields	Frequency	
Modals	Persian	29
	English	28
Probability adverbs	Persian	21
	English	32
Semi-auxiliaries	Persian	16
	English	24
Total	Persian	66
	English	74

Bellow there are some samples extracted from **Iran, Tehran Times** and **Hambastegin** newspaper editorials published in Iran and **Washington post, New York Times** and **USA** published in United States.

Sample 1:

Dabirehkole bank markazibabayaninkehhadehaghalkafayatsarmayehbankhabayad be hashtdarsadberesadgoftke bar asasehbazel do mitavanbehafzayeshhadehaghalkafayatsarmayeh bank ha be davazdahdarsadnizfekrkard.

Sample 2:

Vaghtinezamehbimehdarkeshvar ma zaifastvadarbakhsheshmadanshahedehtgheymathahastimpardakhteyaraneh be sooratehnaghdidarkeshvar be tolidmonjjarnakhahad shod.

Sample 3:

.....Barasaseh in gozareshmajmaheyatehmoaseseh ye sherkat dah milyardtoomanifaraboorsirandar ...

Sample 4:

Benazarmiresadmoshkelateghtesadibarayehbarkhi bank hayeamrikaiibamoshkelatfaravanimovajekkhahand shod.

Sample 5:

Shayehtarindalilehkanalhayehvaredkonanndeh ye panbeh be keshvarkhoshksalist.

Sample 6:

Aslitarinahdafeh in sherkatdarijadehmarakeztahghighatiijadmazareh...
Aslitarinraheeslahsakhtareh in moavenatvapishbord an dar...

Bozaorgtarinmojriyepororejhayehsakhtvasazdarkerman...

Sample 7:

.....In Iran the controversial bill **would** even benefit the underground economy.....

Sample 8:

Iran **recently** acceded to the Libson agreement for the quality and the criteria are credited to a certain country.

Sample9:

Accordingly, the Portuguese player made his desire to play in Spain public **recently** and the Spanish media believe that he **would** leave.....

Sample 10:

The UK official bank rate **could** fall below 2% as the government struggles to avoid the recession.

Sample 11:

Asked in a Financial times interview how Moscow **would** respond if the U.S and Iran were to focus on direct talks, Mr.Ryabkov said, "we **will** not have a word against this."

Table 4: Approximators in English and Persian

Approximates in Persian and English	Frequency
Persian	36
English	27

Sample 12:

Correa, who won a September referendum to increase his control over the economy, has struggle for **approximately** a year.....

Sample 13:

OPEC President ChakibKhelil says member state **will be** forced to **considerably** cut their oil output at an emergency meeting in Vienna, Press TV reported.

Sample 14:

It **would** seem that a coil production cut from.....

Sample 15:

He **believes** that the index of end price over the storage capacity **cannot** be an appropriate factor for offering banking facilities to employers in this sector and evaluating them.

Sample 16:

They **believe** that the UNSC is a venue for targeting Iran.....

Sample 17:

.....Produced by the Sahar universal Net work, the film is **about** the life of MusabibnUmair, a companion of prophet Muhammad(s).

Sample 18:

It is possible that the Norwegians thought their choice **would** avoid controversy rather than stirring it.

Sample 19:

Half of the groups were also told their decision **would** be discussed with a third party.

Sample 20:

It has been reduced by 18 percent and **will** be further controlled this year.

Sample 21:

...But "I think that coal **will** still be cheaper than natural gas" she said.

Table 5: Intensifier in English and Persian newspapers

Emotionally charged intensifiers	Frequency
Persian	12
English	10

Sample 22:

The pro-Israel lobby is **extremely** influential in France, regardless of who is president.

Sample 23:

Rafsanjani said, "The presence of occupying troops is **the most** important reason for insecurity in Iraq."

Sample 24:

This year, **the most prominent** and **probably** most deserving candidate was Bradley Manning, who really did do something against war, by releasing military film showing a flagrant U.S war crime in Iraq.

Table 6: Expression of personal involvement in English and Persian newspapers

Hedging Expression	Frequency
Persian	0
English	0

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it reveals from Table 2 (Shields) hedging devices are the most frequently used by both groups of writers, English writers using 7 hedges more than their Persian writers. This finding is matched with the finding of Adam Smith (1984) who states that type one hedge is the most

frequent hedging used in academic papers. Similarly, Butler (1990) searched that modal auxiliary verbs (included in type 1) occur in almost 1 of every 50 words in newspapers. However, Iranian writers by using type 2 (approximates) show their preference, 9 hedges more than other types.

As can be seen in type 3 (personal involvement), we did not get any occurrences of these devices in both corpora. Type 4 frequency (Emotionally charged intensifiers) hedges for Americans was 12 and for Iranian was 10. finally, type 5 (compound hedges) this hedges frequency in English texts was 10 for Iranian and 8 for Americans.

The results disclosed that in using hedging devices between two groups of writers from different cultures some differences exist. Considering these differences American writers for type one whereas Iranian writers favoring use of type 2 and 4. As it is mentioned before, the writers use hedging to show lack of certainty in truth value of the referential information. The way of using of the hedge markers are varied in newspaper texts and the writers must be aware of the ways to employ these markers. The findings of this study disclosed that some specific hedges are most commonly used by native English and Persian newspapers such modal verbs as might, could, may, and should. Salager-Meyer (1994) said: "hedging in scientific discourse is a necessary and vitally important skill", p. 149).

The total number of expression identified as hedges in the English newspaper editorials was 871 cases. Out of these cases, 292 occurrences which comprised 33.62% of all the hedges belonged to modal auxiliaries. The highest and the lowest frequencies of identified modal auxiliaries were 16.10% and 4.82% in the political and economic editorials respectively. "Would" with 114 occurrences in English editorials, was the most frequent modal auxiliary (38.04%), while "Would" had 23 occurrences in economic editorials. "Will" with 4 occurrences was the lowest (1.46%). Table 7 below, clearly indicates that modal auxiliaries are mostly used in political editorials (38.01%) rather than Economic and Social ones. The table also shows that among different types of modal auxiliaries the verb *Tavanestan* is the most frequent auxiliary in Persian editorials.

Table 7: Frequency of occurrence of modal auxiliaries in Persian editorials

Modal aux. verb	Political	Economic	Social
Tavanestan (can/could)	31	24	33
Momkenbudan (may/might)	10	3	2
Khastan (will)	3	5	4
Bayestan (should/ must)	2	0	4
Total	46	32	43
	38.01%	26.44%	35.53%

Dahl (2005) discuss that national culture influences the written discourse conventions and is the main reason for differences in texts across languages. It is inferred that description of hedges depends on understanding cultural matters. Another reason for variation in use of hedging is linguistic and sociological perspectives. The English community welcomes hedging in writing because unhedge refers to what the author says is accepted as a fact. Therefore there is not any reason to use personal ideas. In Persian this expectation is different. According to Fairclough (2004), modality in discourse is important which show how speaker/writer understands themselves in relation to other members of the society.

Frequency of hedging forms in English newspapers

There are significant differences between the frequencies of hedges. The findings show that English use more hedges than Persian. The English political editorial use more hedges than social and economic. Although Wierzbicka (1999) contends the idea that Western cultures are more assertive than the Oriental ones, the findings in this study revealed that in journalistic discourse, English authors seem to be less assertive than their Persian counterparts, though they may be more assertive in other settings. Although Persian editorial authors use less hedging devices and are a little more frank than their English counterparts; this is not mean that Persian authors want to show more authority or is impolite. It seems that their perception of society and of cultural factors is different from their English counterparts. Another reason for the differing use of hedges by authors may be due to the culturally determined paradigms and frameworks that influence writers' rhetorical choices.

CONCLUSION

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that, based on the analysis of English and Persian newspapers, English editorials used more hedges than Persian ones. This difference refers to cultural variation between two communities. Besides, another reason related to discourse consideration. Students can benefit from parts they have opportunity to survey and disclose the correctness of hedging roles and are aware of cultural, social factors underlying them.

Acknowledging some limitations of this study, certain suggestions can be made for further researches. First, this study conducted to find the differences and similarities regarding hedging phenomenon in English and Persian social, economic and political newspaper editorials. Further research can focus on hedges in research titles in English and Persian articles. Second, other researchers can consider hedges in other eras as, sport or other global issues.

REFERENCES

- Abdollahzadeh, E. (2007). *Writers' presence in English and Persian newspaper editorials*. Paper presented at the 34th International systemic
- Árvay, A., & Tanko, G. (2005). A contrastive analysis of English and Hungarian theoretical research article introductions, *IRAL*, 42, 71- 100.
- Atai, M. R., & Sadr, L. (2009). A cross-cultural study of hedging devices in discussion section of applied linguistics research articles, *TELL*, 2 (7).

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1988). *Politeness some universal in Language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1979). Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena. In Esther N. Goody (Eds.), *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*, (pp.56-289). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burrough-Boenisch, J. (2006). NS and NNS scientists' amending of Dutch scientific English and their impact on hedging, *English for Specific purposes*, 24, 25-39.
- Clyne, M. (1991). The sociolinguistic dimension: The dilemma of the German-speaking scholar. In H. Schroder (Eds), *Subject-oriented texts*
- Clyne, M. (1995). The sociocultural dimension: the dilemma of the German- speaking scholar. In T. Sheen & R. Whitely (Eds.), *Subject-oriented texts: Languages for special purposes and textTheory* (pp. 49-68). Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter
- Coates, J. (1987). Epistemic modality and spoken discourse. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 85, 100-131.
- Crismore, A. Makkannen, R., & Steffensen, M. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasive writing: A Study of texts written by American and Finnish
- Crystal, D. (1995). In search of English: A traveler's guide. *ELT Journal*, 49, 107-121.
- Dahl, T. (2005). Textual Metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of National culture or of academic discourse? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36(10), 1807-1825.
- Davoodifard, M. (2007). *A Contrastive Analysis of Hedging in English And Persian Research Articles: Linguistic and Cultural Variations Across Languages and Disciplines*. An unpublished thesis, University of Esfahan, Iran. *IJAL*, Vol. 12, No. 1, March 2009 219
- Furlough, N. (2004). *Analyzing Discourse: Textual analysis for social Research*. London: Routledge.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Horman, L. A. (1989). The evaluative consequences of hedges, hesitations, and intensifiers: Powerful and powerless speech-styles. *Human Communication Research*, 15, 383-406.
- Hyland, K. (1994). Hedging in academic writing and EAP textbooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13(3), 239-256.
- Hyland, K. (1996a). Nurturing hedges in the ESP curriculum. *System*, 24(4), 477-490.
- Hyland, K. (1996b). Talking to academy: Forms of hedging in science research articles. *Written Communication*, 13, 251-281.
- Hyland, K. (1996c). Writing without conviction? Hedging in science research articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 17, 433-454.
- Hyland, K. (1998). *Hedging in scientific research articles*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Hyland, K. (1998). The author in the text: Hedging scientific writing. *Hong Kong Papers in Linguistics and Language teaching*, 18.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Metadiscourse in introductory course books. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18, 3-26.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Scientific claims and community values: articulating an academic culture, *Language and Communication*, 17(1), 19-31.
- Hyland, K. (1999). *Hedging in Scientific research articles*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

- Hyland, K. (1998). Disciplinary Discourse: writer stance in research articles. In C. N. Candlin and K. Hyland (Eds.), *Writing: Texts, Processes and Practices* (pp. 99-121). London: Longman.
- Lack off, G. (1988). Categories and Cognitive Models (*Series A. PaperNo. 96*). Trier: L.A.U.T.
- Lack off, G. (1987). Frame Semantic Control of the Coordinate Structure Constraint, *CLS* 22, part 2, 152-167.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (2011). *Hedging: A challenge for Pragmatics and discourse analysis*. Lehrstuhl für Sprachwissenschaft, II. Retrieved July 1, 2007, from: [220 Hedging in English and Persian Editorials: A Contrastive Study](http://www.sw2.euw-frankfurt.de/Publikationen/Hedging/markkane.html) [http:// www.sw2.euw-frankfurt o.de/Publikationen/ Hedging/markkane.html](http://www.sw2.euw-frankfurt.de/Publikationen/Hedging/markkane.html).
- McCawley, J. D. (1987). Fuzzy Logic and Restricted Quantifiers, *Philosophy and Grammar*, 101-118.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1995). Hedges and Textual communicative function In medical English written discourse, *English for Specific Purposes*, 13, 149-170.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1999). *I think that perhaps you should. A study of Hedges in written scientific discourse*. Retrieved April 18, 2007 From: <http://www.msu.edu/abbottb/formal.htm>
- Skelton, J. (1989). The care and Maintenance of Hedges, *ELT Journal*, 42(1), 37-43.
- Swales, J. M. (1999). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research Setting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tahririan, M. H. (1997). *Reading Journalistic English*. Tehran, Iran: Payame Noor University.
- Varttala, T. (2000). Remarks on the communicative functions of hedging In popular scientific and specialist research articles on medicine, *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(20), 177-200.
- Varttala, T. A. (2008). *Hedging in scientifically oriented discourse: Exploring variation according to discipline and intended audience*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Tampereen Yliopisto, Finland.
- Vassileva, I. (2006). Commitment and detachment in English and Bulgarian academic writing, *English for Specific Purposes*, 20, 83-102.
- Vold, E. T. (2008). Epistemic modality markers in research articles: a Cross- linguistic and cross-disciplinary study, *International Journal Of Applied Linguistics*, 16(1), 61-87.
- Wierzbicka, A. (1998). *Emotions across language and cultures: Diversity and universal*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zadeh, L. (1974). Fuzzy-Set: Theoretical Interpretation of Linguistic Hedges, *Journal of Cybernetics*, 2 (3), 4-34

Appendix A. Selected Newspapers

Tehran Times is Iran first English daily newspaper based in Tehran. It was founded after Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. This newspaper covers domestic, political, social, foreign, and sport news along with commentary. Tehran Times has turned into a reliable source of news for hundred of foreign media outlets and envoys from various countries based in Tehran who want to learn about the country's current events. Its site (www.tehrantimes.com) is among the most frequently visited websites with over 10,000 visitors each day."

New York Times is an American daily newspaper founded in 1851 and published in New York City. It is regarded as a national newspaper of record. It is third in national circulation, after USA Today and The Wall Street Journal. It is organized into three

different sections; namely, News, Opinion, and Features. The News includes themes on International, National, Business, Technology, Science, Health, etc. Opinion contains Editorials, Opinion Articles, and Letters to the Editor. The third section, Features, consist of such parts as Arts, Movies, Theater, and Travel. Its website (www.nytimes.com) is one of the most popular American online newspaper websites".

Hamshahri" is published by the municipality of Tehran, and founded by Gholamhossein Karbaschi. It is the first colored daily newspaper in Iran and has over 60 pages of classified advertisement. The newspaper is distributed within the limits of Tehran municipality. It has a daily circulation of over 400,000 copies, which is on par with major American daily newspapers such as the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Boston Globe*, and *Chicago Tribune*.^[1] Based on the results of a domestic poll of how citizens of Tehran view television and print media which were released by Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance *Hamshahri* was the most read daily in Tehran with 44.1% in March 2014.^[2]

Iran Daily "historically known as Persia, Iran was one of the greatest empires of the ancient world, which was frequently invaded. Iran's hereditary monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, fled the country in 1979 after decades of corrupt and authoritarian rule, and mounting religious and political unrest. Exiled Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to lead an Islamic revolution and formed the world's first Islamic republic the same year. An eight-year war with Iraq followed.

In the elections of 1992 and 1996, former president Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's support increased and at the presidential election of 1997 Mohammad Khatami, Rafsanjani's cultural adviser, succeeded him. Khatami promised greater freedom and tolerance and was supported mainly by women, younger voters and intellectuals.

In June 2005, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, former mayor of the capital, Tehran, and famous for his conservative approach and for rolling back reforms put in place by modernists before him was elected president. He has not been shy of confronting the West and has pushed ahead with a national nuclear programme that has brought international condemnation."

Appendix B. List of selected Opinion Articles

Tehran Times Articles

- 1. Silo-Sazan Persian GEO Elucidates Problems Facing Silo Building Industry; 20 October 2008**
- 2. Sanction are used as a tool to destabilize independent states; 13 November 2012**
- 3. Homeless rate decreasing in NYC; Survey; 10 March 2009**
- 4. Britains's drivers most uptight; 5 August 2006**

Iran Daily Articles

- 1. Reservation about Money Laundering Bill; 9 November 2007**
- 2. Miller Grabs First Victory of Season, 30 December 2007**
- 3. Gasoline Plan's Security Fallout Examined; 14 May 2007**
- 4. Gossip Could Influence Generosity; 17 April 2008**
- 5. President Vows to Check Inflation; 7 April 2008**
- 6. Gas price Makes Coal King Energy Source; 28 December 2006**

TRANSLATING HEDGES IN POLITICAL TEXTS: A CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF A PERSIAN POLITICAL SPEECH

Somaye Delzandehrooy

Faculty member at Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan

ABSTRACT

With the internationalization of politics the role of translators translating political texts as well as their translations of such texts has been highlighted. Christina Schäffner (2008: 3) talks about the political experts and scientists discussing the "potential consequences" of translating political texts. Thus translating hedges-the words which make things vaguer or less vague- in political texts becomes important as well since politicians usually make use of hedges in order to relieve themselves of the responsibilities for their statements (Schäffner, 1998:179). In this study the English translations of hedges in a political speech are studied based on Fraser's (2010) classification. To this end, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech on "The world without Zionism" and its three translations by Nazila Fathi, in The New York Times Tehran bureau, Aljazeera and MEMRI websites are chosen as the case of study. The results show that different strategies are adopted by the translators such as deletion, translation by the same hedge and translation of non-hedged expression to a hedged ones, or translation of hedged expressions to non-hedged ones; hence modifying the scope of precision and force expressed in the original text.

KEYWORDS: hedges, political text, translation, Ahmadinejad

INTRODUCTION

The sensitivity of political texts and hence their translation arise from the fact that firstly they are regarded as authoritative texts taking their authority from the relation between the reader and the author whose word is "law" (Newmark, 1982: 375-379). Secondly, the internationalization of politics has foregrounded both the status of political texts and their translators' role. This sensitivity makes the translator's job more critical whose product might have consequences unpredictable. That is why Baker (2006) states that political conflicts involve translation and interpretation. This situation gets worse when translating "hedges" which are used by the original author to evade responsibility for what they say or to attenuate the force of the utterance. That is why Newmark (1982) emphasizes on the translator to be very cautious and objective in translation of authoritative texts; hence political texts. According to him the translator should be "sensitive and a critic of language" as well as being able to write well himself (1982: 375).

What are hedges?

According to Fraser (2010: 201) "hedging" is a "rhetorical strategy" whereby the speaker shows a lack of commitment to the truth value of the utterance. Therefore hedges can be defined as any device that qualifies the writer's commitment to the truth of what is being communicated. Hedges

are used to weaken the truth value of an utterance. For instance, compare the sentences: "I don't think I'm responsible." and "I'm not responsible."

As Hovy states (2004: 2) the uses of hedges were firstly examined by Weinerich who called them "metalinguistic operators". It was in 1966 that hedges became the topic of linguistic investigation and in 1972 that they were called *hedges* by Lakoff. He maintains that hedges are some lexical expressions that are used to shift the borderlines within the "prototype theory"¹ of Rosh (1973). Taking up Zadeh's "fuzzy set theory", Lakoff states that the boundaries of concepts in any natural language is fuzzy and not clear-cut (1973: 151). He has provided a list of such concepts and renewed his wordlists over and time again not considering the effect of context on the meaning/function of words (Hovy, 2004: 2). It was Clemen (1997/1998) who took the context into account and said that hedges are 'achieved primarily by setting utterances in context rather than by straightforward statement' (2004: 2). He defined hedges as 'everything that in a way modified the truth-value of a sentence, the commitment of the speaker or commented on the sentence as such' (2).

As Fraser puts it when a speaker uses hedge she actually does an "intentional action" to modify the content/force of the full value of utterance (2010: 202). In other words, the speaker shows lack of commitment to "either the full category membership of a term in the utterance (content mitigation) or to the intended illocutionary force of the utterance (force mitigation)" (2010: 201). Thus two general purposes can be defined for hedges: 1- attenuation of an undesirable effect on the hearer; hence being more polite in the utterance; 2- avoiding providing the expected information thus being evasive and vague in the utterance (2010: 205).

Hedges in political texts

According to Fraser not much research has been done on hedges in political text except one by Partington. Translation of hedges in political texts as well is discussed in a few studies including the one by Schäffner (1988) in her article "Hedges in Political Texts: A Translational Perspective". In her study she has used Pinkal's classification of hedges: modifying hedges, quantifying hedges, specifying and despecifying hedges. She believes that in political discourse, hedging devices function to "relieve the authors of some responsibilities for their statement" (1988: 179). In this regard Fraser, holding the same view, quotes Partington who suggests that hedging is only one of the strategies for evading, others being bald on-record refusal to answer, claims of ignorance, referring the question, refusal to speculate, stating the answer is well-known, and claiming that the question has been answered already (2010: 206).

Fraser's classification of hedges

Unlike other researchers who have classified hedges into numerous sub-categories, Fraser has sufficed to the distinction between content and force hedging. He believes that the focus of hedges can vary from word, to a phrase, the entire sentence, or the intended illocutionary force of the utterance, or its perlocutionary effect, as shown below, (2010:203)
That is a kind of [bird]

He has a somewhat [elevated temperature]

As far as I can tell, [you don't have anything to fear from him]

I must request that you stop talk while the music is playing. [Request]

I think that she is pretty much guilty. [Perlocutionary Effect on hearer]

Then he introduces his classification of hedges as:

Propositional hedges

about, actually, almost, approximately, as it were, basically, can be viewed as, crypto-, especially, essentially, exceptionally, for the most part, generally, in a manner of speaking, in a real sense, in a sense, in a way, kind of, largely, literally, loosely speaking, more or less, mostly, often, occasionally, on the tall side, par excellence, particularly, pretty much, principally, pseudo-, quintessentially, rather, real, really, regular, relatively, roughly, so to say, somewhat, sort of, strictly speaking, technically, typically, very, virtually

Illocutionary force hedges include (204-205):

- Impersonal pronouns: One just doesn't do that.
- Concessive conjunctions (although, though, while, whereas, even though, even if, ...)

Even though you dislike the beach, it's worth going for the view.

- Hedged performative: I must ask you to sit down.
- Indirect Speech Acts: Could you speak a little louder.
- Introductory phrases – I believe, to our knowledge, it is our view that, we feel that: I believe that he is here. *Believe and think* are hedges only when they express a verifiable fact and not an opinion (Schäffner: 1988: 187).

• Modal adverbs perhaps, possibly, probably, practically, presumably, apparently:
I can possibly do that

- Modal adjectives (possible, probable, un/likely...): It is possible that there is no water in the well.
- Modal noun (assumption, claim, possibility, estimate, suggestion...)

The assumption is that you are going to go.

- Modal verbs (might, can, would, could...): John might leave now.
- Epistemic verbs (seem, appear, believe, assume, suggest, think...): It seems that no one wants to go.
- Negation: Didn't Harry leave? [I think Harry left]; I don't think I'm going. vs. I'm not going. [Former hedges the meaning of latter]
- Reversal tag: He's coming, isn't he?
- Parenthetic construction: The picnic is here, I guess.
- If clause: If true, we're in deep trouble.
- Agentless Passive: Many of the troops were injured. (by Ø)
- Conditional subordinators (as long as, so long as, assuming that, given that...): Unless the strike has been called off, there will be no trains tomorrow.

- Progressive form: I am hoping you will come.
- Tentative Inference: The mountains should be visible from here.
- Conditional clause implying permission (if you don't mind my saying so, if I may say so): If you don't mind me saying so, your slip is showing.
- Conditional clause as a metalinguistic comment (if that's the right word...): His style is florid, if that's the right word.
- Conditional clause expressing uncertainty about the extralinguistic knowledge required for a correct interpretation of the utterance (if I'm correct, in case you don't remember): Chomsky views cannot be reconciled with Piaget, if I understand him correctly.
- Metalinguistic comment such as (strictly speaking, so to say, exactly, almost, just about, if you will): He has an idea, a hypothesis, if you will, that you may find interesting.

He also mentions Salager-Meyer's (1995) *compound hedging devices* which include:

- Modal with hedging verb: It would appear that...
- Hedging verb with hedging adverb/adjective: It seems reasonable that...
- Double hedges: It may suggest that this probably indicates...
- Treble hedges: It seems reasonable to assume that...
- Quadruple hedges: It would seem somewhat unlikely that it may appear somewhat speculative that...

Hedges in President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Speech

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad delivered a speech to an Islamic Student Associations conference on "The World Without Zionism." The conference was held in Tehran, at the Interior Ministry. The Persian text was taken from Islamic Republic of Iran's Presidency Website (<http://www.president.ir/fa/1/0/1384/8>). There were 72 hedges in the president's speech. Based on Fraser's classification, these hedges belonged both to propositional and illocutionary force hedges. However, the Persian text being published in a report format has probably lost some introductory hedges which might have been used by the president. Out of the 72 hedges 49 belonged to the illocutionary force hedges and 23 to the propositional hedges.

Translation of hedges in political speech

Considering language as "social practice", Fairclough (in Munday 2008: 42) believes that *ideology* is best expressed through language especially when it is "disguised". *Hedging*, most specifically in political texts, as discussed earlier is one way of expressing and at the same time implying one's own and/or society's ideology since using it, the speaker/author tries to both express his or the dominant ideology of the society and evading the responsibility for what he says or writes. So, hedging actually could be regarded as a kind of style through which ideology is expressed. This is why among different stylistic features recognized by Van Dijk, more emphasis is put on "lexical style" or "lexical choice" since it demonstrates the writer's "perspective and evaluation" (in Munday 2008: 45).

In the case of a president being the speaker, speaking on behalf of a nation, thus apparently expressing the ideology of that nation, the style, particularly lexical style, he chooses to do so becomes critically important; hence its translation. Therefore the translation of hedges in a political speech delivered by a president is of great importance and any changes in the hedges would mean a shift in the ideology expressed by the SL speaker.

The use of hedges has been so important that their manipulation even in the same language; i.e. intralingual translation to use Jakobson's term, has had some consequences leading even to war! This has been the case with rewriting the dossier prepared by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's inner circle of advisers which led to the war against Iraq in 2003. In this dossier the hedge "*might be able to*" in the claim made by the intelligence service "Iraq might be able to launch chemical and biological weapons within 45 minutes" has been over and over rewritten, reducing hedging from uncertainty to certainty. Thus *intelligence has suggested* changes to the more certain *indicates* and conditional *would be able to* becomes *may be* and finally shifts to simple indicative *are*. Therefore the reader believes that the speaker has been sure of the truth value of the proposition (Munday, 2012: 6).

This shows the significance of the translation of hedges when it comes to politics and the critical role the translator has in this regard.

In the next section the translation of hedges in Mahmud Hmadinejad's speech and the shifts it has involved in its three translations thus leading to a change in overall ideology either in its intensifying or its reducing intensity will be discussed.

The translation of hedges in the president's speech

Three English translations of this speech are selected for the present study. One is done by Nazila Fathi (published in NY Times), the other by Aljazeera website (<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/15E6BF77-6F91-46EE-A4B5-A3CE0E9957EA.htm>), and the third one by Memri website (<http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/1510.htm>). The translation by Fathi is done from the Persian full text published on ISNA website, yet not complete, but the translation by Memri website is done from the excerpts of ISNA's report on the speech. Aljazeera's translation was a report on the original speech selecting only some parts, hence not as complete as the other two translations.

Table 1: translation of different hedges in the three translations

Hedges	Propositional hedges	Illocutionary Force Hedges									Total
		If clause	Hedged performative	Impersonal pronouns	Mod adverbs	Mod verbs	Epistemic Verbs	Mod Adj.	Agent-less passive	Participle	
Persian Text	23	7	4	7	2	19	1	6	2	1	72
Fathi	4	1	1	2	-----	12	1	5	1	1	19
Aljazeera	-----	-----	-----	1	-----	3	-----		1	-----	5
Memri	11	4	3	4	-----	9	-----	3	1	1	36

As shown in the table 1, in none of the translations the same number of hedges is reproduced. However, Memri's translation, being more complete than the other two, not complete though, has reproduced 36 of the total 72 hedges in the original. In what follows each translation is discussed

separately to see how the hedges are treated in the translations and consequently what effect they have created.

Fathi's translation

In her translation a few paragraphs from the beginning and the end of the original report are not translated hence the non-translation of 23 hedges in these paragraphs. Moreover, in one case she has made implicit the original if clause (...: اگر کسانی از فشار نظام سلطه...): Anyone who recognizes...). In two cases she has changed the hedge (must/should) to non-hedge form (need to) thus changing the scope of precision in the original for Must means that you are required to do it for moral, law or custom or it is a certainty, or a physical necessity, while Need to means it is necessary, to stop something bad from happening, or something worse happening and with regard to the context of the speech changing the hedge to "need to" conveys a connotation which does not exist in the original that implies a sense of "should" rather than "must": (باید and باید ببینیم واقعا ماجرا فلسطین چیست). Regarding the translation of propositional hedge (بسیار/very), Fathi has not translated this hedge in two cases: (بسیار امیدوارم: I hope; عنوانی بسیار ارزشمند: this valuable title) which in turn lessens the determinateness intended in the original. On another occasion Fathi has again used a non-hedged form for a hedged one translating "مجبور" to "occupying" again lessening the force of the original. There are two occasions as well where the propositional hedge is changed to illocutionary force hedge but not creating a certain effect on the translation.

Aljazeera's translation

The translation posted on Aljazeera's website was quite different from the other two translations in the sense that in Baker's (2006: 71-72) terms, "selective appropriation" has been done in this translation; that is, certain sentences have been selected and included in the translation while others were excluded. Moreover, it had commented on the original speech quoting others' comments as well. Out of 7 hedges existing in the parts Aljazeera has translated 5 are reproduced. On one occasion the impersonal pronoun (هر کس) has changed into (any leaders in Islamic umma) thus specifying what was not meant to be specified and intended to remain fuzzy.

Memri's translation

Compared to the other two translations, Memri's translation is quite more complete yet some parts are not translated as in the other two. A specific feature of this translation was the translation of non-hedged forms to the hedged ones which occurred in eleven cases; e.g. (تاسیس) and we **can** find no literature about it). In all these cases especially the ones adding the propositional hedge "very" the tone of the translation has intensified. On the other hand there are also four cases where the opposite has occurred; i.e., the hedged are translated to the non-hedged ones: (و این) and this is attainable). However in all these cases the sense has not changed hence the original intention not modified.

CONCLUSION

Hedges make the statements fuzzier or less fuzzy and politicians make use of hedges to avoid the responsibility for what they say. In this research the study of three translations of the speech made by President Ahmadinejad on "The World Without Zionism" shows that non-translation of hedges which are used by the president to make things less fuzzier than fuzzy, make the translations less intense modifying the original intention and thus ideology represented through words and lexicons. Of the three translations, Memri's translation of hedges was closer to the original; however his changing the non-hedged to the hedged ones has intensified the original tone of speech making the speech more sensitive which addresses the superpowers in the world which, in turn, could have led to a war if precautions were not taken. This in turn proves what Newmark mentions about the translators of political texts to be "sensitive and critics of language" otherwise the speeches made by the politicians are reflected in a modified way; the consequences being unpredictable sometimes.

REFERENCES

- Baker, M. (2006). *Translation and conflict: A narrative account*. GB: Routledge
- Fraser, B. (2010). "Chapter 11. Hedging in political discourse". In *Perspectives in Politics and Discourse*, Okulska, Urszula and Piotr Cap (eds.), 201-214.
- Hovy, D. (2004). "Hedges". Retrieved June 12, 2012
<http://www.dirkhovy.com/portfolio/papers/>.
- Lakoff, G. (1973). Lexicography and generative grammar I: Hedges and meaning criteria. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 211, 144-153.
- Munday, J. (2008). *Style and ideology in translation: Latin American writing in English*. New York: Routledge.
- Munday, J. (2012). *Evaluation in translation: critical points of translator decision-making*. London, England & New York, NY: Routledge.
- Newmark, P. (1982). The translation of authoritative statements: A discussion. *Meta*. 27(4), 375-391.
- Schäffner, Ch. (2008). 'The Prime Minister said ...': Voices in translated political texts. *Synaps*, 22, 3-25.
- Schäffner, Ch. (1998). Hedges in political texts: A translational perspective. In L. Hickey, (Ed.). *The pragmatics of translation*. GB: Cornwell

FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION AND EFL LEARNERS' WRITING PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF COLLABORATIVE OUTPUT TASK OF DICTOGLOSS

Fatemeh Mehdiabadi

*Department of English Language Teaching, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Gorgan, Iran*

&

*Department of English Language Teaching, Gorgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Gorgan,
Iran*

E-mail: fa.mehdiabadi@gmail.com

Ali Arabmofrad (Corresponding author)

*Assistant Professor at Golestan University, Department of English Language and Literature,
Gorgan, Iran*

E-mail: a.arabmofrad@gu.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

Focus-on-Form (FoF) instruction have become one of the most talked-about topics in the field of language teaching and learning when scholars found that when second language learning is entirely based on meaningful input and interaction, some linguistic forms cannot nurture. One of the most well-known FoF activities on which the present study focused is output-oriented task of dictogloss. Among the substantial body of research investigating the effect of dictogloss on language learning, little attention has been given to the effect of collaborative dictogloss task on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' writing skill. This study is an attempt to consider the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on EFL learners' writing skill. Forty pre-intermediate EFL learners in Sama institute in Iran participated in current study and they were randomly assigned to two groups (control and experimental). A composition writing test was used to measure participants' writing performance and TEIQU questionnaire implemented to examine their initial emotional intelligence. Then, the experimental group applied collaborative dictogloss task which focused on form and meaning of the text, while control group was taught under the conventional approaches which did not put any emphasis on the collaborative dictogloss. Although the finding of present study did not support previous studies reporting the effectiveness of dictogloss task in different aspects of writing skill, it revealed the fact that collaborative output task of dictogloss did not have any significant effect on learners' writing performance.

KEYWORDS: *FoF Instruction, Collaborative Dictogloss Task, Writing Performance*

INTRODUCTION

Developing writing ability, as a communicative skill, has been considered as a difficult task since a large number of students make a lot of mistakes and errors in their written texts and cannot create a coherent text. This inability in writing skill may have different reasons. One of them seems to be due to teaching instruction and error correction. Largely, the concerns of EFL teachers in Iranian institutes is the written products of students while the process of how to construct and formulate is not paid much attention, that is they mostly apply product approach of writing in classrooms and encourage the students to write down on the proposed topic individually. According to Elley, Barham, Lamb and Wyllie (1976) if teaching instruction is based on traditional approach, the learners will lose their motivation, and see writing classes as a difficult and boring one. To solve this problem, teachers need to take a different view towards writing instruction and can employ collaborative tasks which are originally supported by the social constructivist view of Vygotsky (1978).

In this regard, Juwita and Aryuliva (2013) found that collaborative output tasks can be applied for promoting learners' motivation, the accuracy in the production of language and activation of learners' prior knowledge in the classroom. Further advantages of collaborative task may be related to motivation which positively influences learning. Previous studies indicate that the learners in collaborative tasks would show higher motivation than those in whole-class doing the task individually (Liao, 2006; Pishghadam & Ghadiri, 2011). Extensive studies in second language learning support the use of tasks which need learners to produce output collaboratively (Mayo, 2002). Lesser (2004), for example, believed that learners generally perform better while working together rather than working alone.

According to Nassaji "using collaborative tasks requiring learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of language, e. g. the use of dictogloss can be (regarded as a means of integrating) (FoF) and communication by process" (as cited in Abbasian & Mohammadi, 2013, p. 1371). Dictogloss task involves the students in collaborative reconstruction of written texts and make them, in either tasks, equally focus on form as they collaboratively construct the texts (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). Moreover, they suggested that the dictogloss led the students to notice and reconstruct complex syntactic structures. Lee (2001) focused on the collaboration feature of the dictogloss task and proposed that a collaborative output task of dictogloss help learners be more pleased, have good feelings when they are working collaboratively and consequently learn to use language effectively. Therefore, there seems to be a good reason to use collaborative dictogloss as an appropriate activity to improve learners' writing performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Focus on Form Instruction

Recent developments in the field of second language learning have brought about changes in pedagogical approaches in second language instruction. Over the past few decades, after the introduction of communicative approach (CA), the focus of classroom instruction has shifted from an emphasis on knowledge of rules and grammar to communicative ability in real-life

encounters and use of language within communicative contexts. While some researchers in communicative approach put emphasis on communication and fluency and claim that when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in real life communication, second language acquisition takes place automatically (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), others state that it is necessary to have particular attention to form (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Ellis, 2000; Long, 1991; Norris & Ortega, 2000). They believe that when second language learning is completely based on experiential and meaning-centered instruction in classrooms, some linguistic competence levels of second language cannot develop as well. Meaningful input and opportunities for interaction allow learner to achieve fluency but not necessarily accuracy in the target language (Ellis, 2000; Long 1991; Williams, 1999). Seemingly, there is a need to make a balance between the traditional approach which entirely focuses on forms and the communicative approach which put emphasis on meaningful communication in real context (Park, 2004, Long & Robinson, 1998) and consequently focus on form instruction was adopted as a new approach which primarily focused on noticing forms in communicative context.

Long (1991) presented Focus-on-form instruction (FoF) for the first time as an attempt to “overtly draw students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication” (pp. 45-46). FoF instruction can be effective in improving learners’ interlanguage grammar and linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2001). According to Nassaji “using collaborative tasks requiring learners to get involved in deliberate and cooperative comprehension and production of language, e. g. through the use of dictogloss can be a way of integrating (FoF) and communication by process” (as cited in Abbasian & Mohammadi, 2013, p. 1371). Dictogloss task can be used both individually and collaboratively which get involved the students in collaborative reconstruction of written texts and students in either tasks focused equally on form as they collaboratively constructed the texts (Lapkin & Swain, 2001). Moreover, they suggested that the dictogloss led the students to notice and reproduce complex syntactic structures.

Collaborative Dictogloss Task

Among the considerable number of studies on focus on form instruction, perhaps the most interesting ones are those that in light of Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning and output hypothesis, have taken into account the value of meaningful social interaction in language learning process (Swain, 1998, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Based on the sociocultural theory on the role of collaboration in language learning and psychological area, the present study used dictogloss as a type of focus on form collaborative task for developing learners’ writing. Dictogloss is an integrated skill and collaborative activity was originally assisted the learners to improve their grammar knowledge and was first proposed by Wajnryb in 1990 which suggested a major change from traditional dictation (Jacobs & Small, 2003). According to Wajnryb, while involved in the task of dictogloss “students individually try to write down as much as they can, and subsequently work in small-groups to reconstruct the text; that is, the goal is not the goal to reproduce the original, but to ‘gloss’ it using their combined linguistic resources” (p. 12).

Dictogloss has two very important features. One is the use of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to do a dictogloss activity completely. In the dictation

stage, learners listen to their teacher read a text. In the reconstruction stage, they speak to their group mates in the target language, and write a reconstructed version of the text. In the analysis and correction stage, they must read the original text. Another important feature is providing learners with opportunity to reflect on their use of the target language. In order to do a dictogloss task, learners must rewrite the contents of the original text. In the reconstruction, they talk about the language of the text they are reconstructing (Mayo, 2002).

According to Swain (1998) reconstruction of a text collaboratively, may push students beyond their current interlanguage to more native like forms. Learners not only acquire new knowledge but reinforce what they already know. This activity helps them to have a more active role in the class and facilitates the class management (as cited in Todeva, 1998). Dictogloss has been the subject of a number of studies that supported the use of the task (Brown, 2001; Kooshafar, Youhanaee & Amirian, 2012; Kowal & Swain, 1994; Nabei, 1996; Storch, 1998, Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Kuiken and Vedder (2002a), for instance, investigated the effect of interaction between ESL learners through dictogloss task on the acquisition of the passive form. The qualitative analysis showed that interaction stimulated noticing to construct the new linguistic structures. The findings of a bunch of other studies indicated that in dictogloss activity, reconstructing the texts in groups enables the students to solve linguistic problems that lied beyond their individual abilities (Donato, 1994; Kim, 2008; Kuiken & Vedder, 2002a; Storch, 2002; Swain, 1998; Swain, 2000; Swain, 2006; Swain, 2010; Swain & Lapkin, 2001, 2002).

Pishghadam and Ghadiri's (2011) investigation focused the effect of form versus meaning-focused tasks on the development of collocations among Iranian Intermediate EFL learners. The results revealed the fact that FFI group (dictogloss task) had a significantly better performance on the collocation test. In a more recent study Kooshafar et al. (2012) focused on the use of cohesive devices to create a coherent text through dictogloss technique. Two techniques of dictogloss and explicit teaching were used to examine which group was more successful in using correct conjunction in their writing composition test. The results of the study pointed to the conclusion that dictogloss technique seems to be more effective. Jabbarpour and Tajeddin (2013) also compared the effects of three FoF tasks of input enhancement, individual output and collaborative output on the acquisition of English subjunctive mood. The study indicated that the influence of both input and collaborative output activities were greater than the individual output task and also emphasized the importance of using collaborative activities and interaction in the process of English structure acquisition.

While these studies, among many others, have provided us with valuable insights into the effect of dictogloss on different skills, there are a small number of studies on its impact on learners' writing skill. Abbasian and Mohammadi (2013), for example, examined the effect of dictogloss on intermediate level students' writing skill based on content, organization, vocabulary, language usage and mechanics and found that dictogloss technique improved learners' organization and mechanics whereas content, usage and vocabulary didn't improved significantly. Since writing seems to be a major problem of many EFL learners in Iran, especially those at the higher levels of learning incapable of organizing their ideas in texts to create a meaningful writing, it seems that more research is needed in this field to encourage using such collaborative task during the

language teaching course in English classrooms in lower level e.g. pre-intermediate. Collaborative dictogloss may nurture and develop students' competence in writing through group works and take an active role in their own learning. Since it is apparent from the literature on FoF that there is a paucity of research in the Iranian educational context in writing ability in general, present study is aimed at finding the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on what discussed above, the problem which is going to be examined in present study is to see if collaborative dictogloss is effective in learners' writing performance. In line with this problem this question will be answered:

1. Does collaborative output task of dictogloss have any effect on EFL learners' writing skill?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 40 male and female students in Sama language institute (SLA) in Iran, participated in this study. The students were Persian native speakers and had taken English for three to four years. There were two intermediate classes, one taken as the experimental group with 20 students and the other the control group with 20 students and they varied in age from 13 to 16 years. Students at advanced levels were not included because they were informative on meaning and structure of the words to write a text coherently. Students at lower levels were excluded as well, since they have difficulty in using correct structures and vocabulary. (Kooshafar et al., 2012).

Instruments

To reveal the effect of collaborative dictogloss task on writing performance, the following instrumentations were used:

Dictogloss texts

The texts were taken from Anecdotes in American English book by Hill (1980). According to Read (2006) the selected texts were short and simple because students had to keep the texts in their short term memory to remember them during the process of reconstructing. Furthermore, in preparing the texts, great care was taken to choose all texts appropriate for pre-intermediate level students in terms of their level of difficulty and the vocabulary. To this aim, two experienced teachers were asked to check all the texts whether students would know the meanings of most of the words in the texts at this level. The researcher first picked a 162-word text for the training session. However, when reading the text for the first time during the training session, the participants expressed that it was long. For the second reading, the text was reduced to approximately 120 words.

Composition Writing Test

Learners wrote composition writings prior and after the experiment. The pretest and the posttest of writing had exactly the same format but different content. The reason for having different

content in the pretest and posttest was to eliminate the retention effect that the pretest may have on the subjects' performance on the posttest. The time allotted to students to write the text was 30 minutes.

Writing Scoring Criteria

To analyze key aspects of writing, the Jacobs' ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel & Hughey, 1981) was employed. The checklist focuses on the five broad categories: mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.), language use (grammar), content, organization, and vocabulary. The response scales range from excellent to poor. The validity of scale is accepted through a wide large number of raters and composition researchers. All the writing sheets were marked by two teachers and if the given scores of the two raters were not the same, the mean of the two scores were calculated as the final score.

Procedure

First the writing composition pretest was administered to all subjects one week prior to the treatment and before the dictogloss training session. The participants in two groups were required to write a composition pretest within 30 minutes. Then collaborative dictogloss was used in experimental group. The treatment contains four major steps:

Preparation/warm-up: Learners were randomly divided into 3-member groups by the teacher before the dictogloss task began. All the students were given small pieces of paper to individually write down bits of information. Each group was given a single sheet of paper on which one of the members of the group would write the final version of the reconstructed passage. Students then were prepared for the dictogloss activity by introducing them to the topic of the dictogloss text. Any unfamiliar vocabulary items in the text would be explained at this stage.

Reading the text: The short text was read twice at natural speed to the students by teacher. The first time students just listened to become orientated to the topic, and while in second time they were expected to note some key words which they needed to reconstruct the original text.

Reconstruction: The small-groups worked together, pooling their notes to reconstruct the story they had heard and teacher monitored their interaction to make sure that every student was contributing. Students were supposed to pay more attention on structures and meaning. One member of each group wrote out the text. The time given for students to reconstruct the text was around ten minutes.

Analysis and correction: Finally, the texts were compared to the original text, analyzed and corrected by all the students with their teacher's assistance. The teacher would randomly ask a student from each group to read what they wrote and the rest of the class listened and expressed their opinion on whether the reconstructed sentences were semantically and syntactically similar to the original text. During the correction, the teacher asked them to correct the text. When the students were not able to offer correct answers and explanations, the teacher explained the mistakes. This process went on until all the sentences were accepted by the students and teacher. The modified sentences were put on the board and the students were asked to edit their own text.

In control group, the teacher introduced the topic and asked them to write about a topic. Teacher then checked the participants' writing and corrected them. Finally the posttests were administered to both groups of students in Week 10. The students were not informed when the posttest would be given. The posttest given to all the groups was exactly the same and it had exactly the same format as the pretest. They were supposed to write an essay with the intention of examining how collaborative dictogloss may effect on their writing performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To check the reliability of the writing scale, the internal consistency reliability of writing was checked by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient and it was found that the reliability of writing pre-test was and post-test was 0.80.

Inter-rater Reliability

Due to the fact that "rating on writing test in academic context vary considerably" (Hamp-Lyons, 2003, p. 174) inter-rater correlation coefficient was calculated for both group of pretest and posttests. The results as indicated in Table 5.1, revealed a high positive correlation between the rating of raters in both pre- and posttests, so there is no significant difference between the scores of the two teachers.

Table 1: Inter-rater Correlation of Raters

		N	Correlation
Pair 1	A.pre.C & B.pre.C	20	.96
Pair 2	A.pos.C & B.pos.C	20	.94
Pair 3	A.pre.E & B.pre.E	20	.97
Pair4	A.pos.E & B.pos.E	20	.98

Note. A = Rater A; B = Rater B; E = Experimental group; C = Control group

Testing the research Question

The research question was to examine whether collaborative task of dictogloss on learners' writing performance. The descriptive statistics for the writing pre-test and post-test in both experimental and control groups are detailed in Table 2. Based on the following table, the mean scores for the writing skill in experimental and control groups, respectively, are 75.35 and 76.73 as well as post-test scores of experimental and control groups, respectively, are 79.43 and 77.53.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Writing Pretest and Posttest

		Experimental	Control
Pre-test	Mean	75.35	76.72
	SD	12.84	9.42
Post-test	Mean	79.42	77.52
	SD	13.32	8.66
	N	20	20

A comparison of the means of pre and posttest of experimental and control groups demonstrated a gain score of 4.07 (79.42 - 75.35) for experimental and a gain score of 0.8 (77.52 - 76.72) for the control group. Therefore, the initial look at the mean differences of experimental and control groups indicates that the experimental group outperformed the control group.

In the next step, an independent t-test was conducted to determine whether any significant difference might be observed for the writing pre-test of both groups. The results of the independent t-test, as presented in Table 3, indicate that there is not any significant difference between experimental and control groups' scores on the writing pretest ($t(38) = .38$, $P = .70 > .05$). This means any changes in the mean scores of the groups in the posttest were unlikely to be attributed to preexisting differences among the groups and, instead, could be due to the different treatments they received.

Table 3: Independent Samples Test of Writing Pre-test and Post-test

Table 3: Independent Samples Test of Writing Pre-test and Post-test									
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Pre-test	.614	.438	.386	38	.702	1.37	3.56	-5.83	8.58
Post-test			-.535	32.62	.597	-1.90	3.55	-9.13	8.60

The results of the independent t-test, as depicted in Table 3, indicate that there is not any significant difference between experimental and control groups' mean scores on the writing post-test ($t(33) = -.54$, $P = .60 > .05$). As observed in figure 1, the pre-test average of writing skill for experimental group is more than control group.

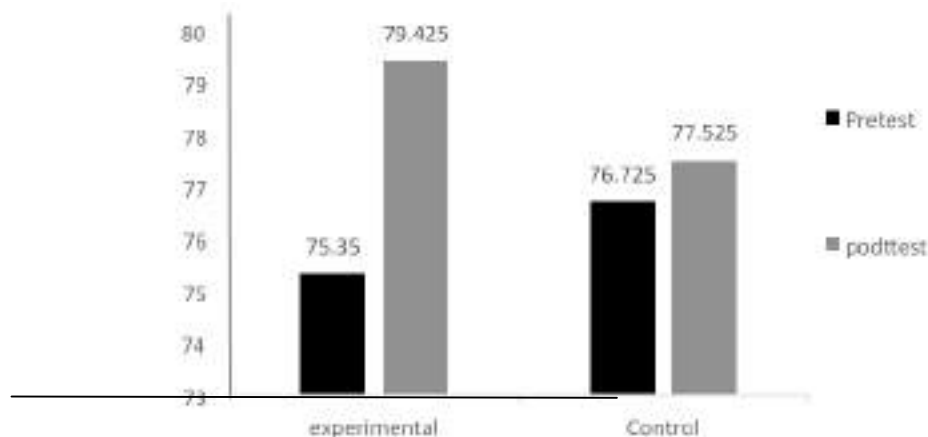


Figure 1: Pretest and posttest means for writing

Discussion

The purpose of present study was to examine the effect of collaborative output task of dictogloss on learners' writing performance. The research question asked whether the collaborative output dictogloss task had an effect on EFL learners' writing skill. To test the research question the data was calculated by descriptive statistics and independent t-tests for pre and posttests. An initial look at the descriptive statistics, revealed that the mean of writing in posttest was higher than the pretest in experimental group. However, the results of the analysis showed that there is no difference between writing pretest and posttest scores. Thus, it can be concluded that collaborative dictogloss did not have any significant effect on pre-intermediate learners' writing skill. This finding is consistent with the finding of Kuiken and Vedder (2002a) who found that dictogloss did not significantly improve students' performance. However, the findings do not support some FoF research studies that have reported better performance in producing forms correctly during dictogloss task (Lapkin & Swain, 1998; Lim & Jacobs, 2001a). Moreover, it is inconsistent with Jacobs and Small (2003) and Abbasian and Mohammadi (2013) who reported the positive effect of dictogloss on writing performance. However, more research is needed to examine the application of collaborative dictogloss task in an EFL context.

The reasons for this finding could include some unsystematic errors which were unobservable in some students such as tiredness and reluctance. Moreover, it may be difficult for pre-intermediate students to focus on both form and the meaningfulness of the text. This explanation is supported by Van Patten claim that lower-level students find it difficult to focus on meaning and form immediately (as cited in Tragant & Munoz, 2004). The results, on the other hand, are in line with Khatib and Derakhshan's (2011) study. They asserted many EFL teachers are not proficient enough to elaborate and explained the difficulties for the students. Thus, another evidence for such result is that the teacher might not be enough proficient enough to correct and analyze the problematic area for the students. Additionally, the limitation of the time may affect the written production of the students. If the study time had been longer, the results might have been different. The last reason seems to be due to the class size which may not big enough to enable teachers to address students' problem areas both verbally and nonverbally.

The result of present study is in harmony with Kuken and Vadder's (2002b) study which did not prove the effectiveness of dictogloss on their learners L2 progress. However, it is in contrast with output hypothesis and Vygotsky's theory. Output hypothesis, provided the theoretical underpinning on FoF instruction, and suggests that when learners are pushed to produce output, their language proficiency can be improved by engaging them produce language through metatalk and interaction. In this regard, Swain (1998) and Lapkin and Swain (2000) claimed that involvement in collaborative activities may promote the learners' accurate production of the target forms (as cited in Nemati & Arabmofrad, 2014). According Vygotsky's theory learners may achieve a higher level of language competence and reconstruct their knowledge through collaborative work and corrective feedback and interaction (Esteve & Cañada, 2001).

CONCLUSION

The result of this study seems to not support previous studies that have declared dictogloss task as an effective instruction in improving language skills and especially in writing achievement. It seems that more studies are needed to examine the application of collaborative dictogloss task in an EFL context. Moreover, due to some limitations further investigation warrant in future research studies. The number of the participants in this study was limited, so maybe the findings cannot be generalized for all the EFL students in Iran. Besides, the limitation of time of the study may have affected the written production of the pre-intermediate students. If the interval period had been longer, collaborative dictogloss task might have improved learners' writing performance. It is also advisable to replicate this study for students at higher levels of language proficiency, since it may be difficult for pre-intermediate level students to focus on form and meaning simultaneously.

REFERENCES

- Abbasian, G., & Mohammadi, M. (2013). The effectiveness of dictogloss in developing general writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(6), 1371-1380.
- Brown, P. (2001). The interactive dictation. *The Language Teacher*. Retrieved from: <http://www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/articles/2001/07/brown/>
- Donato, R. (1994). Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In J. Lantolf, & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 33-56). Norwood NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998). Pedagogical choices in focus on form. In C. J. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp.197-296). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Elley, W., Barham, I., Lmb, H., & Wyllie, M. (1976). The role of grammar in a secondary school curriculum. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 10, 5-21.
- Ellis, R. (2000). Task-based research and language pedagogy. *Language Teaching Research*, 4(3), 193-220.
- Ellis, R. (2001). *Form-focused instruction and second language*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

- Esteve, O., & Cañada, M. D. (2001). La interacción en el aula desde el punto de vista de la co-construcción de conocimiento entre iguales. In Muñoz, C. (Ed.), *Perspectivas Recientes en la Adquisición de Lenguas* (pp. 73-84). Barcelona: Barcelona University.
- Hamp-Lyons, L. (2003). Writing teacher as assessor of writing. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Exploring the dynamics of second language writing* (pp. 162-189). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, L. A. (1980). *Anecdotes in American English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jabbarpoor, S., & Tajeddin, Z. (2012). Enhanced input, individual output, and collaborative output: Effects on the acquisition of the English subjunctive mood. *Revista Signos*, 46, 213-235.
- Jacobs, G., & Small, J. (2003). Combining dictogloss and cooperative learning to promote language learning. *The Reading Matrix*, 1, 1-15.
- Jacobs, H., Zinkgarfs, S., Warmuth, D., Hartfield, V., & Hughey, J. (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- Juwita, A. E., & Aryuliva, A. (2013). The use of dictogloss method in teaching listening a history exposition text at senior high school. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 50-58.
- Khatib, M., & Derakhshan, A. (2011). A complementary-compensatory approach to teaching focus on form/S in EFL/ESL classrooms. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(7), 865-874.
- Kim, Y. (2008). The contribution of collaborative and individual tasks to the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92, 114-30.
- Kooshafar, M., Youhanaee, M., & Amirian, Z. (2012). The effect of dictogloss technique on learner's writing improvement in terms of writing coherent text. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(4), 716-721.
- Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1994). Using collaborative language production on the collaborative dialogue between Korean as a second language learners. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(2), 211-234.
- Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2002a). The effect of interaction in acquiring the grammar of a second language. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37, 343-358.
- Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2002b). Collaborative writing in L2: The effect of group interaction on text quality. In: G. Rijlaarsdam, M. L. Barbier, & S. Ransdell (Eds.), *New directions for research in L2 writing* (pp. 168-187). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Lee, L. (2001). Online interaction: negotiation of meaning and strategies used among learners of Spanish. *ReCALL*, 13(2), 232-244.
- Leeser, M. (2004). Learner proficiency and focus on form during collaborative dialogue. *Language Teaching Research*, 8(1), 55-81.
- Liao, L. (2006). A flow theory perspective on learner motivation and behavior in distance education. *Distance Education*, 27(1), 45-62.
- Long, M. H. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In de Bot, K., Ginsberg, R., & Kramsch, C. (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Long, M. H., & Robinson, P. (1998). Focus on form: theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 15-41). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Mayo, M. (2002). The effectiveness of two form-focused tasks in advanced EFL pedagogy. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12(2), 156-175.
- Nabei, T. (1996). Dictogloss: Is it an effective language learning task? *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 12(1), 59-74.
- Nemati, M., & Arabmofrad, A. (2014). Development of interlanguage pragmatic competence: Input- and output-based instruction in the zone of proximal development. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(2), 262-270.
- Norris, J. M., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning* 50(3), 417-528.
- Park, E. S. (2004). *Constraints of Implicit Focus on Form: Insights from a study of input enhancement*. Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, 4(2). Retrieved from World Wide Web: <http://journals.tc-library.org/index.php/tesol/issue/archive>.
- Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A. (2003). Trait emotional intelligence: Behavioral validation in two studies of emotion recognition and reactivity to mood induction. *European Journal of Personality*, 17, 39-57.
- Pishghadam, R., & Ghadiri, S. (2001). Symmetrical or asymmetrical scaffolding: Piagetian vs. Vygostkian views to reading comprehension. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* [online], 7(1), 49-64.
- Read, J. (2006). Teaching Grammar through Grammar Dictation. ESOL Forum Archive. Retrieved from: <http://intranet.usc.edu.au/wacana/4/read.html>
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Storch, N. (1998). Comparing second language learners' attention to form across tasks. *Language Awareness*, 7(4), 176-191.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook, & B. Seidhofer (Eds.), *Principles and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 125-144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (1998). Focus on form through conscious reflection. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 64-81). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 97-114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (2006). Language, agency and collaboration in advanced second language learning. In Byrnes H. (Ed.), *Advanced language learning: the contribution of Haliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London: Continuum.
- Swain, M. (2010). Talking it through: Languaging as a source of learning. In R. Batestone (Ed.), *Sociocognitive perspectives on second language use and language learning* (pp. 112-130). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(3), 320-337.

- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2001). Focus on form through collaborative dialogue: Exploring task effects. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 99-118). Harlow: Longman.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2002). Talking it through: Two French immersion learners' response to reformulation. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37, 285-304.
- Todeva, E. (1998). Non-traditional focus on form activities in Japanese EFL classes: Collaborative dictogloss. *NUCB Journal*, 1(1), 47-58.
- Tragant, E., & Munoz, C. (2004). Second Language Acquisition and Language Teaching. *International Journal of English Studies*. Retrieved from: www.um.es/dp-filologia-inglesa/ijes/vol4n1/10-Tragant&MuNoz.pdf
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wajnryb, R. (1990). *Grammar dictation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, J. (1999). Learner-generated attention to form. *Language Learning*, 49(4), 583-625.

AN INVESTIGATION OF THEORY APPLICABILITY IN TRANSLATOR TRAINING BY MEANS OF TRANSLOG

Somaye Delzendehrooy

Faculty member of Vail-e-Asr University, Rafsanjan, Iran
delzende@vru.ac.ir; somayeh_delzendeh@yahoo.com
Tel: 03913202331

Parvaneh Ma'azallahi

PhD student of Translation Studies at AllamehTabataba'i University & Faculty member of Vail-e-Asr University, Rafsanjan, Iran
Email: parvaneh_607@yahoo.com; maazallahie@mail.vru.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

The majority of translation training departments in our country have largely excluded translation theories from the practice of translation teaching; while it is not the same case for translators' training centers abroad. The present study has been intended to examine the effect of incorporating translation theories in teaching translation upon translations done by students. For this purpose, an excerpt of "The Road to Oz" has been chosen as children literature that abounds with charactonyms and it has been given to two groups of students one of whom has been taught no theories concerning translation of children literature; while, the other has been exposed to theories related to translation of children literature with special attention to proper names. Next, all students were required to translate the source text at a computer site on separate personal computers under monitoring of the examiner into Persian and their performance was recorded in Translog User; then, it has been interpreted by means of data provided by Translog Supervisor. Finally, it has been concluded that inclusion of translation theory in translator training programs is necessary because it leads to higher quality of translations and also more conscious and confident translators; moreover, it contributes to formation of a systematic pedagogical framework for translators training, because it provides good and necessary hints for those in syllabus designing as well as translator trainers to conduct their training having this point in mind.

KEYWORDS

Translation theory, translator training, translation quality, children literature, Translog.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, there are many universities offering translation programs at undergraduate and graduate levels in Iran. However, it appears that the undergraduate program of translation does not benefit from a well-established pedagogical system in terms of syllabus as well as assessment and such a situation has not been unique to Iran. Formerly, many translators' training centers around the world suffered from the same situation to the extent that scholars as House (1981: 32)

had criticized unsystematic nature of translation training programs in which teachers selected a text without explaining the reason of such a selection and distributed it among students and "snared at them and led them into errors". The translation assessment of such a text was done in the next session when students read their translations sentence by sentence and the teacher asked for better versions and at last offered the only "correct" translation to the class. In such a procedure, neither the syllabus design nor the assessment activity followed a systematic pedagogical framework. This trend has been developed in many centers around the world; however, it is still a common procedure in many translators training programs in our country and the majority of translation classes are conducted in such a method.

Considering translation training centers in Europe, Clazada Perez (2004: 119) attributes the evolution of translation training programs to "the connection made between theory and teaching practice". Such a connection seems missing in most of educational systems of translators training departments in our country; evidently, because many instructors and even students believe in the dichotomy between translation theory and practice and maintain that translators "are not made but are born" in Nida's words (1981: 46). Hence, any theoretical instruction is regarded as a waste of time. Such a dichotomy has been questioned by many scholars, including Hatim (2004:3) who states that "theory and practice are ultimately complementary and, particularly in a field such as translation, the distinction needs to be re-examined" or Landers (2001: 31) who points out that even literary translators are not born but are made and some others as Beeby (1996:63) believe that translation is different from riding a bike in which knowing how muscles work makes no difference to a cyclist and theory can provide guidelines for teachers to help students learn this skill. Yet, teachers are responsible for determining how much theory must be integrated to the course without changing the class into a theoretical one. He refers to this amount of theory as "threshold of termination" and puts forward that teachers should "make a distinction between pure theory, on the one hand, and processes and principles, on the other".

For Beeby (1996), integrating theories into translation classes does not form a methodology for teaching translation theory but a methodology for teaching translating. It can be concluded that most of disagreements made upon the integration of theory in translation teaching originates from such a belief that translation should be learned through practice and theories serve no purpose in this field; while, if theories are incorporated to introduce principles and methods rather than abstract ideas less resistance is witnessed.

Although some researchers as Beeby (1996: 12) claim that "translation teaching has not developed as fast as one might expect" and lacks clearly defined objectives and specific pedagogical framework others as Perez (2004) and Giles (2009) who believed in the potential benefits of theory in translators as well as interpreters training attempted to incorporate theories in teaching translation in order to offer an objective pedagogical framework for translation trainers.

Perez (2004: 121) has developed a tentative syllabus based on "seven important trends in Translation Studies", including:

focusing on (mostly 'discrete') units of language..., focusing on the communicative nature of texts..., focusing on communicative aims through texts..., focusing on the link between translation and target cultures..., focusing on the 'new translation ethics'..., focusing on the translator as a rational and emotional being ... and focusing on translation corpora.... (Perez, 2004:121)

Perez's tentative syllabus is formed to implement the above seven trends or theories practically in the translation practice taught in a class. This syllabus includes five units each of which focuses on one of the trends mentioned above and includes material corresponding to these trends. For instance, the first unit which focuses on 'discrete' units of language provides students with the table of contents of a computing manual to translate or the third unit which focuses on communicative aims through texts encourages students to translate any European Parliament speech. As a result of such a syllabus, students are familiarized with different translation theories including ones offered by Vinay and Darbelnet (1997) or Reiss (1989) and Nord (1997) and made flexible in decision making.

In another effort to incorporate theory in the practice of translation teaching, Giles (2009: 43) who believes in translation as a skill to be learned has provided some models for translators as well as interpreters training. He points out that theories have been excluded from training programs due to the general belief that theories are "useless, abstract and too remote from the actual practice of translation and interpreting"; while, they "can help trainees advance better and faster towards mastery of their professional skills" and the primary benefit of them lies in "their explanatory power which gives reassurance to students who experience doubts and difficulties", Giles (2009: 17,32). He adds that whatever theory is taught to students it helps them have better understanding of translation phenomenon, translation difficulties, translation strategies and tactics provided that theories are directly relevant to students needs, easy to grasp and simple. These theories should be implemented repeatedly throughout the course and after students' sensitization and adopting theories developed by other translation instructors or researchers is one of the ways through which such theoretical components are found.

According to Shuttleworth (2001: 499-500), methods and principles are better terms than theories since they are "euphemistic formulations" which emancipate syllabus designers from "formal theories as a series of statements intended as research tools rather than an aid for the translator" and translation theories should be viewed "as a means of encouraging informed reflection on the translation process" rather than "as a static body of knowledge which needs to be imparted" and any translation course in order to be relevant to students needs has to form an agenda for itself, according to which it addresses the uppermost questions for students and "expose students to a range of varying opinions on controversial issues of translation and demonstrate that translating is not completely an ad hoc and subjective activity".

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

According to Baker (1991: 37) any academic training of translators requires among others "a strong theoretical component" that induces students to "reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another".

Therefore the present study intends to investigate the two following questions:

Do the academic trainings of translators require theoretical components?

Does the incorporation of theoretical components can lead to higher quality of translations?

In order to do this, the performance of translation trainees have been recorded by Translog which is, according to Buchweitz and Fabio (2006: 242), "software developed at the Copenhagen School of Business which ... logs all keyboard and mouse actions as tasks are performed on an ordinary word-processor interface".

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A group of sixteen junior students majoring in English Literature were recruited. Eight of these students passed the course of Literary Translating (I) in the previous semester (Group A); while, the other group was supposed to pass this course in the coming semester (Group B).

The syllabus of Literary Translating (I) was designed to familiarize students with literary translation in three different chapters, the first of which deals with peculiarities of literary translation and its differences with non-literary translation and the second and third chapters are concerned with methods and principles related to translation of fiction and children literature respectively. In these two chapters some problematic fields as translation of proper names, neologisms, titles and charactonyms were introduced to students and strategies related to them were discussed. At last, some excerpts of texts including certain translation problems as neologisms or proper names were given and students were asked to translate the text considering principles, theories and strategies taught before. Students' translations were evaluated based on principles and methods introduced.

Such theories were developed based on the understandings that Giles (2009) believes any theories must provide. These understandings are as follows:

Understanding *phenomena*: Why do authors write the way they do? Why do speakers make ungrammatical sentences? What does it mean to 'understand' a verbal statement? How are written or oral statements perceived and processed by the human mind?

Understanding *Translation difficulties*: Why is it difficult to re-express the same message in a different language? Why is there linguistic interference between two working languages during translation or interpreting? Why do interpreters in the booth sometimes fail to understand very simple source speech segments?

[illegible]

Figure 1: Linear representation of a Persian translation

Instead of teaching everybody in the same way by using the traditional methods of setting an assignment and asking students to hand in a text, which he/she subsequently marks and hands back and discusses in class, he/she can use Translog to teach collectively with an individual emphasis. At the beginning of the course, each student gets a copy of the Translog User program containing all the assignments for the course with a brief instruction in how to operate the program and how to submit assignments as log files. Then the teacher proceeds to look at the creation of the text with each individual student focusing on processing aspects as well as on final solutions. Each student's particular learning needs are addressed, and all problems are addressed from a process-oriented perspective. However, this software was originally designed for research purposes in translation field because the detailed real-time information recorded by it makes it possible to empirically test hypotheses about a correlation between cognitive processing and time

lapse and also its replay function can serve as a powerful instrument for eliciting rich and accurate process information in this field.

Source texts

All sixteen subjects were required to translate a single English text into Persian which was an excerpt of the text "The Road to Oz" by L. Frank Baum. This text has been chosen because of charactonyms as well as geographical proper names which signify specific connotations. Eight out of sixteen subjects were taught theories related to translation of children literature and particularly translation of proper names in children literature in the previous semester. These theories were intended to familiarize them with differences between children and adult literature in terms of literary prestige, content, structure, public recognition as well as translation methods and strategies applied by translators. Based on these theories, rewriting or adaptation of children literature in another language is as a sort of loyalty to the source text and students were required to pay special attention to proper names; both character names and proper names of geographical places, because such names carry significant connotations and go beyond merely identifying characters and perform specific functions as "amusing readers, imparting knowledge and evoking emotions" in children literature, according to Jan Van Collie (2006: 63).

The city of beasts

*When noon came they opened the **Fox-King's basket** of luncheon, and found a nice roasted turkey with cranberry sauce and some slices of bread and butter. As they sat on the grass by the roadside the **Shaggy Man** cut up the turkey with his pocket-knife and passed slices of it around.*

*"Haven't you any dewdrops, or mist-cakes, or cloudbuns?" asked **Polychrome**, longingly.*

"Course not," replied Dorothy. "We eat solid things, down here on the earth. But there's a bottle of cold tea. Try some, won't you?"

*The **Rainbow's Daughter** watched **Button-Bright** devour one leg of the turkey.*

"Is it good?" she asked.

He nodded.

"Do you think I could eat it?"

"Not this," said Button-Bright.

"But I mean another piece?"

"Don't know," he replied.

*"Well, I'm going to try, for I'm very hungry," she decided, and took a thin slice of the white breast of turkey which the **Shaggy Man** cut for her, as well as a bit of bread and butter. When she tasted it **Polychrome** thought the turkey was good—better even than mist-cakes; but a little satisfied her hunger and she finished with a tiny sip of cold tea.*

"That's about as much as a fly would eat," said Dorothy, who was making a good meal herself. "But I know some people in Oz who eat nothing at all."

"Who are they?" inquired the Shaggy Man.

"One is a scarecrow who's stuffed with straw, and the other a woodman made out of tin. They haven't any appetites inside of 'em, you see; so they never eat anything at all."

*"Are they alive?" asked **Button-Bright**.*

"Oh yes," replied Dorothy; "and they're very clever and very nice, too. If we get to Oz I'll introduce them to you."

"Will the Scarecrow scare me?" asked Button-Bright.

"No; 'cause you're not a crow," she returned. "He has the loveliest smile you ever saw—only it's painted on and he can't help it."

Luncheon being over they started again upon their journey, the Shaggy Man, Dorothy and Button-Bright walking soberly along, side by side, and the Rainbow's Daughter dancing merrily before them.

Sometimes she darted along the road so swiftly that she was nearly out of sight, then she came tripping back to greet them with her silvery laughter. But once she came back more sedately, to say:

"There's a city a little way off."

"I 'spected that," returned Dorothy; "for the fox-people warned us there was one on this road. It's filled with stupid beasts of some sort, but we musn't be afraid of 'em 'cause they won't hurt us."

"Never mind," said the Shaggy Man; "as long as I carry the Love Magnet every living thing will love me, and you may be sure I shan't allow any of my friends to be harmed in any way."

This comforted them somewhat, and they moved on again. Pretty soon they came to a signpost that read:

"HAF A MYLE TO DUNKITON."

"Oh," said the shaggy man, "if they're donkeys, we've nothing to fear at all."

"They may kick," said Dorothy, doubtfully.

Procedure

Twenty subjects, top ten students of two classes selected based on their transcripts, were given a leaflet in which they were provided with a very brief introduction to Translog and assured that they would not be graded or mentioned anywhere; moreover, they were required to be punctual and use either *Hezare* or *Pouya English to Persian Dictionary* at the test session. These two dictionaries have been preferred due to such features as being up to date and user-friendly.

Sixteen students participated in the test and were asked to translate the text into Persian. It is noteworthy that they were questioned if they have any familiarity with Translog, if they can assess their ability of typing as a good, average or weak typists and lastly if they have any translation experiences except the actual translation activities done in translation classes.

None of the participants had any familiarity with Translog, all of them assessed their command of typing as average and they had no experience of translation except translations done in classes. Moreover, they were told that the source text is an excerpt of children literature and they are supposed to translate it for the children of seven to nine years old.

The task was carried out under the same condition and with access to the same tools (the same dictionaries, separate computers, the internet access) and the researcher remained in the room during the whole session. It is noteworthy that no explanation regarding how to translate proper names was given to questioners and upon completion, participants were asked to save their translations.

Data analysis

One of the objectives of this paper is to assess whether final translation output of students differs when exposed to translation theories concerned with translation of children literature or not. For this purpose, data provided by Translog supervisor has been analyzed in correlation with translation quality assessment model proposed by Katharina Reiss (2000).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, we will present statistics obtained from the Translog file in two separate tables each of which represents the performance of Group A (those who have not passed Literary Translating I) and Group B (those who have passed Literary Translation I).

Next, the translation quality of each group is considered in relation to time results provided by Translog and finally time used for revision of translation will be calculated based on Translog information to see if revision has any role in the quality of translations offered by students or not.

Table 1: Statistical Data concerning keystrokes and time related to Group A and Group B performances

Student	TUE ¹	TP ²	TE ³	CN ⁴	ME ⁵	TPPM ⁶	DU. ⁷
S01/ GA	4202	2541	189	1407	65	20.50	02:03:55
S01/ GB	3228	2753	162	0	313	20.08	02:17:05
S02/ GA	3480	2754	201	235	284	26.04	01:45:45
S02/ GB	2536	2189	115	0	232	15.45	02:21:39
S03/ GA	2898	2578	230	0	90	25.21	01:42:14
S03/ GB	2245	1842	95	0	308	13.43	02:17:10
S04/ GA	3807	2929	488	219	171	39.83	01:13:32
S04/ GB	3776	2564	230	903	79	25.57	01:40:11
S05/ GA	3430	2923	210	0	297	22.45	02:10:11
S05/ GB	3952	3125	410	13	402	24.22	02:09:02
S06/ GA	3216	2583	220	403	10	29.35	01:27:59
S06/ GB	3052	2566	226	0	260	19.24	02:13:20
S07/ GA	2864	2099	200	503	58	23.40	01:29:42
S07/ GB	2907	2653	176	04	74	35.43	01:14:52
S08/ GA	4157	3277	706	74	100	48.42	01:07:40
S08/ GB	3324	2911	226	0	187	39.26	01:14:08

¹Total User Event

²Text Production

³Text Elimination

⁴Cursor Navigation

⁵Text Production Per Minute

⁶Duration

As the above table presents, Group B have spent more time translating the source text except for two cases; i.e. S05 and S07, although time differences between these two students and their counterparts in group A is too small.

Interestingly, figures related to total user events, text production keystrokes, text elimination keystrokes, cursor navigations and text productions per minute are higher for Group A in comparison with Group B. So, what did group B use the extra time for? The answer for this question is either for revision of translation or for reflecting upon translation strategies to use before offering the final product.

In order to understand if group B spent more time for revising their translations or not revision keystrokes can be calculated and compared with group A's. Owing to the statistics provided by the Translog software, this figure can be simply calculated by adding the total revision keys (a Translog figure which includes backspace, mouse and cursor movements), dividing that figure by the total keystrokes and, finally, multiplying by 100. This way, we obtain the number of revision keystrokes per hundred keys logged. The following table represents this figure in percentage:

Table 2: Total keystrokes, text production keys and revision keystrokes

Student/group	Total revision keys	Total keystrokes	Revision keystrokes
S01/ GA	1661	4202	39.52%
S01/ GB	475	3228	14.71%
S02/ GA	720	3480	20.63%
S02/ GB	347	2536	13.68%
S03/ GA	320	2898	11.04%
S03/ GB	403	2245	17.95%
S04/ GA	878	3807	23.06%
S04/ GB	1212	3776	32.09%
S05/ GA	507	3430	14.78%
S05/ GB	826	3952	20.90%
S06/ GA	633	3216	19.68%
S06/ GB	486	3052	15.92%
S07/ GA	761	2864	26.57%
S07/ GB	254	2907	8.73%
S08/ GA	880	4157	21.16%
S08/ GB	413	3324	12.42%

As the above table presents, the percentage of revision keystrokes is significantly lower for group B except in two instances; hence, it appears that Gile's (2009: 32) claim of " I believe the main positive effects of theoretical components in a training program should be sought in their *explanatory power* and in the reassurance it can provide to students who experience doubts and difficulties" is proven because group B who benefited from theoretical instructions concerning how children literature is and how it should be translated have had less revision keystroke and made translational decisions more confidently.

It appears that longer time of translation in spite of less number of text production keystrokes originates from longer cognitive processes that group B has undergone. In other words, it can be claimed that the results of this part proves the claim of Baker (1992: 58) who declared that " ... theoretical component... induces students to reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another".

Such a longer process can be attributed to retrieving the theoretical information concerning how to translate the source text; however, this very claim can be tested by means of Think aloud protocol in another research.

As the next step, the present study intends to examine if longer time used for translation has led to higher quality translations or not. For this purpose, Persian translations were assessed based on Reiss model which includes three categories, i.e. examination of the ST in terms of text-type, examination of the TT in terms of linguistic elements and lastly examination of the TT in terms of extralinguistic elements. *The City of Beasts* as a form- focused text, in Reiss's words (2000), requires a SL-oriented translation method which creates an analogous form for creating a corresponding impression in TL. All of eight students attending GB in this study have adopted such a translation method while the ones forming GA were either inconsistent in translation method or adopted a literal method which fails to recreate an analogous form in the TL.

According to Reiss (2000) optimal equivalence should be evaluated at different levels of semantic, lexical, grammatical and stylistic. Therefore, at linguistic category of translation criticism, "equivalence of semantic elements, adequacy of lexical elements, correctness of grammatical structures and correspondence of stylistic elements" are evaluated to see if optimal equivalence is obtained or not, according to Reiss (2000: 43-66). Considering optimal equivalence, Kade notes that "there are parallels between languages on the level of langue [...]", (cited in Reiss, 2000: 49), but "the act of translating involves choosing the optimal equivalent from among the potential equivalents on the level of parole [...]", (ibid). In other words, "all those possible equivalents of a word in isolation are potential equivalents, while the optimal equivalent is determined by the microcontext and macrocontext" of the text, according to Manafi (2005: 60).

Regarding translation criticism at linguistic level, equivalence of semantic elements is achieved when meanings of the original text are preserved in translation; adequacy of lexical elements is accomplished when a translator deals with 'technical terminology,' 'special idioms,' 'metaphors,' 'idiomatic usages,' 'proverbs' and 'untranslatable words' in a competent way; correctness of grammatical structures is achieved with due attention is given to differences in the linguistic systems of two languages and transpositions lead to optimal equivalence and correspondence of stylistic structures occurs when "the differences between colloquial and standard or formal usage, standard, individual and contemporary usage as well as deviations from normal language usage" is observed, Reiss (2000: 43-66). However, Reiss (2000:86) believes that no comprehensive evaluation of translation is possible unless all the factors including extralinguistic ones are considered. These factors are: immediate situation, the subject matter; the time factor, the place factor, the audience factor and the speaker factor, (see Reiss, 2000). Examination of *The city of Beasts* in terms of text-type as well as examination of Persian translations in terms of linguistic and extralinguistic elements reveals the following information concerning translation quality of students under study:

Table 3: Translation quality and time spent

Student/group	Translation Quality	time spent
S01/ GA	Inadequate	02:03:55
S01/ GB	Adequate	02:17:05
S02/ GA	Fairly adequate	01:45:45
S02/ GB	Adequate	02:21:39
S03/ GA	Inadequate	01:42:14
S03/ GB	Fairly adequate	02:17:10
S04/ GA	Inadequate	01:13:32
S04/ GB	Adequate	01:40:11
S05/ GA	Inadequate	02:10:11
S05/ GB	Fairly adequate	02:09:02
S06/ GA	Inadequate	01:27:59
S06/ GB	Fairly adequate	02:13:20
S07/ GA	Fairly adequate	01:29:42
S07/ GB	Fairly adequate	01:14:52
S08/ GA	Fairly adequate	01:07:40
S08/ GB	adequate	01:14:08

As the above table shows, four out of eight translations offered by Group A are inadequate because they fail to achieve optimal equivalence has been achieved at both linguistic and extralinguistic categories; moreover, conventions of children literature as covered in translation theories concerning this genre have not been observed. While, Group B has offered four adequate and four fairly inadequate translations because they more or less succeed in achieving optimal equivalence at both linguistic and extralinguistic categories. Considering theories introduced, these students managed to achieve optimal equivalents by transferring the connotations implied in the ST proper names and producing an adequate translation in terms of some extralinguistic factors as the speaker, audience as well as some linguistic factors as correctness of grammatical structures.

It can be concluded that theoretical familiarity with translation task can lead to "better understanding of translation phenomena, difficulties and strategies or tactics" as Gile's asserts (2009: 17). However, he claimed that theoretical incorporation in translation teaching can lead to faster performance of translators that is not proven by the results obtained in this study. To see the difference between performance of these students, two translations belonging to group A and group B students are given:

شهر حیوانات

وقتی که ظهر شد زنبیل ناهار روباه پادشاه را باز کردند. در آن یک بوقلمون کباب شده با سس قره قاط چند تیکه نان و کره بود. روی سبزه های کنار جاده نشستند. بعد مرد پشمالو با چاقوی جیبی اش بوقلمون را تیکه تیکه کرد و هر تیکه ای را به یکی داد.

دختر رنگین کمان با اشتیهای زیاد پرسید آیا نوشیدنی شبم کیک مه یا کلوچه ای ابری نداری؟

دروتنی گفت: معلومه که نداریم. ما روی زمین فقط خوراکی های جامد میخوریم ولی یک بطری چای سرد هم هست میخواهی امتحانش کنی؟

دختر رنگین کمان محو تماشای غنچه ای زرنگ بود که با اشتیهای زیاد پای بوقلمون را میخورد. ازش پرسید: خوشمزه ست؟ غنچه ای زرنگ که سخت مشغول خوردن بود بارضایت سری تکان داد.

دختر رنگین کمان گفت: منم میتوانم بخورم؟

غنچه ای زرنگ گفت: نه این را که نمیتوانی بخوری.

دختر رنگین کمان گفت: خوب منم منظورم یک تیکه دیگه ست.
گفت: فکر نکنم.
آخه خیلی گرسنه ام. رنگارنگ گفت: باشه ببینم میتوانم با سهم خودم سیریشم
سهمش تیکه‌ی کوچولویی از سینه‌ی سفید بوقلمون بود. آنرا با کمی نان و کره مزه کرد. دید خیلی خوشمزه تر از کیک مهی هست
که دوست دارد. اما از بس کم بود سیر نشد. یک ذره چای سرد هم نوشید و غذایش را تمام کرد.
درتی که داشت غذای خوشمزه‌ای برای خودش درست میکرد گفت: اینقدر کم بود که یک مگس هم راهم به زور سیر میکرد
ولی جای شکرش باقیه چون در شهری به نام غذ مردمی هستند که هیچی نمیخورند.
مرد پشمالو با تعجب پرسید: اینها دیگه چه جور آدمهایی هستند؟
درتی گفت: یکی مترسک هست که شکمش از گاه پر شده و یکی دیگه هم جنگلانی هست که از حلبی ساخته شده است. آنها
اصلاً اشتیایی برای غذا خوردن ندارند برای همین هیچی هم نمی‌خورند.
غنچه‌ی زرننگ پرسید: حالا که هیچی نمی‌خورند زنده‌اند یا نه؟
درتی جواب داد: البته که زنده‌اند تازه خیلی باهوش و بامزه هم هستند. هر وقت رفتم شهر غذ آنها را به شما نشان می‌دهم.
غنچه‌ی زرننگ پرسید: مترسک من راهم می‌ترساند؟
درتی به غنچه نگاه کرد و گفت: نه آخه تو که کلاغ نیستی. مترسک قشنگ ترین لبخندی دارد که تا حالا دیده‌اید و البته روی
صورتش نقاشی شده و خودش نمی‌تواند آنرا تغییر دهد.
ناهار خوردنشان تمام شد و به سفرشان ادامه دادند. درتی مرد پشمالو و غنچه‌ی زرننگ بامانیت در کنار هم راه می‌رفتند و
دختر رنگین کمان با خوشحالی و سرور در جلوی آنها راه می‌رفت. گاهی رنگارنگ مثل برق از کنار همه رد می‌شد که کسی
اورانمی‌دید. گاهی هم آرام آرام حرکت می‌کرد و به همه لبخند می‌زد. اما یک دفعه به آرامی برگشت و گفت: به ذره که جلوتر بریم
میرسیم به یک شهر.
درتی گفت: آره میدانستم. افراد روباه هم هشدار داده‌اند که در این جاده چند حیوان احمق هم وجود دارند. ولی جای هیچ ترسی
نیست چون به ماکاری ندارند.
مرد پشمالو گفت: اصلاً فکرش را هم نکنید تا مرا دارید غم ندارید اجازه نمیدهم حتی یک مو از سر دوستانم کم شود.
بالین حرف کمی خیالشان راحت‌تر شد و به راهنشان ادامه دادند تا اینکه به یک تابلوی راهنما رسیدند که روی آن نوشته بود:
نیم مایل دیگر تا شهر الاغها
مرد پشمالو گفت: اگر اینها همه الاغ باشند پس دیگر اصلاً نمینترسیم.
درتی با شک و تردید گفت: ولی ممکنه لگدم بزنند.

In what follows, a sample of translation done by a student of group B is given:

هنگامی که ظهر فرا رسید آنها سبد ناهار کینگ فاکس را باز کردند و یک بوقلمون سرخ شده‌ی خوبی به همراه سس زغال
آخته و تکه‌هایی نان و کره پیدا کردند. به محض اینکه روی علف‌های کنار جاده نشستند شاکی من بوقلمون را با چاقوی
جیبی‌اش برید و بین بقیه تقسیم کرد.
پلیکروم مشتاقانه پرسید شما قطره‌های شب‌نم کیک‌های غباری یا کلوچه‌های ابری ندارید؟
دراسی جواب داد: البته که نه. ما چیزای جامد رو می‌خوریم که اینجا روی زمین هستند. ولی چای سرد هست امتحان کن
نمیخای؟
دختر رین بو باتن برایت را نگاه کرد که که پای بوقلمون را خورد. او پرسید خوشمزه هست؟ او سری تکان داد. فکر
میکنی من تو نم بخورمش؟
باتن برایت گفت: نه این رو ولی منظورم تکه‌ی دیگری هست جواب داد: نمیدونم. بسیار خب میخام امتحان کنم چون خیلی
گرسنمه. تصمیمشو گرفت، و به تیکه نازک از سینه بوقلمون رو گرفت که شاکی من برای او برید. به همراه یه کم نون و
کره وقتی که امتحانش کرد پلیکروم فکر کرد که حتی بهتر از از کیک‌های غباری هست. ولی یه کم گرسنگیشو برطرف
کرد و او با جرعه‌ای از چای سرد تمام کرد.
درسی که داشت برای خودش غذای خوبی آماده میکرد گفت: اون به اندازه‌ی که یه مگس میتونست بخوره. اما من میدونم
که بعضی از آدم‌ها در ازون هستند که هرگز چیزی نمی‌خورن.

شاگی من پرسید: کیا هستن؟ یکی از اونها مترسکی هست که با کاه پر شده است یکی هم وود من است که حلبی هست و اشتها ندارن پس هیچوقت هم هیچی نمیخورن. باتن برایت پرسید: آنها زنده‌اند؟ دراسی جوا داد: اوه بله و آنها خیلی زرنگ و خوب هستن. اگه اوزون رفتیم بهت معرفی‌شون میکنم. دراسی پرسید مترسک منو میترسونه؟ او جواب داد: نه چون شما کلاغ نیستی او دوست داشتنی‌ترین لبخندی ست که هیچوقت تموم نمیشه. ناهار تموم شد و شاگی من و دراسی و باتن برایت درکنار یکدیگر و هوشیارانه سفرشون رو به به پیش گرفتند و دختر رین بو شادی کنان و به دنبال اونها و گاهی هم به سرعت در امتداد جاده میدوید. که از دید خارج میشدند در حالی که سکندری میخورد بر میگشت و با خنده ی پرافتش به آنها سلام می‌کرد یک بار با جدیت برگشت و گفت شهری در بیرون از جاده هست. دراسی برگشت و گفت من به آنها مشکوکم برای اینکه مردم فاکس به ما گفتند که فقط یکی روی این جاده هست. با احمقانه با حیوانی چارپا از بعضی از گونه ها پر شده است. ولی ما نباید از اونها بترسیم به ما آسیبی نمیرسونن. شاگی من گفت: مهم نیست تا زمانی که من عشق مگنت در من باشد هر موجود زنده‌ای منو دوست خواهد داشت. و شما هم مطمئن باشین که من اجازه نخواهم داد که دوستانم به هیچ نحو آسیب ببینند. این حرف آنها را تا حدی راحت کرد و انها به حرکت ادامه دادند مدتی بعد یا یک علامت پستی رو به رو شدند: نیم مایل مانده به دانکیتون. شاگی من گفت: اگه الاغ ها هستن ما هیچ ترسی نداریم. دراسی با تردید گفت: اونا ممکنه لگد بزنن.

It is noteworthy that in both translations some instances of mistranslations are visible; although, the group A students offer a higher quality translation. The same is more or less true for the other students of group A who were familiar with the requirements of translating children literature.

CONCLUSION

According to the preceding parts, it can be understood that software programs as Translog can be well applied in researching the process of translation and are able to assist translation researcher to achieve more reliable results based on objective statistics provided; moreover, it can be concluded that translation theory has been inappropriately excluded from teaching syllabus in translator training centers of our country because it can help students understand the phenomenon of translation, difficulties of this task and also how to tackle such difficulties better.

Based on the aforementioned findings, it can be concluded that theories can influence on the performance of translation trainees and yield higher quality translations; although, inclusion of them in translation teaching programs does not lead to faster translations. Furthermore, one should make a distinction between theories of translation as abstract statements useful for research purposes and translation theories which focus on specific translation approaches and strategies. This study appears to prove that any theoretical instruction aimed for solving specific translation problems and doubts of students can lead to higher quality of translations.

It is noteworthy that in order to obtain the ideal results concerning research questions as ones proposed by the present study, a think aloud protocol test can be included as well. Such a study can be better conducted if it is performed by higher number of subjects. Furthermore, conducting a pre-test to assess language proficiency as well as typing command of participants could be

beneficial. Moreover; a process-oriented examination of participants' activities by means of Think aloud Protocol could yield more reliable results.

Except for one case, it is not clear if participants have attempted consulting the Internet to get access to information concerning connotations of proper names in "The Road to Oz" or not. It appears that considering this issue could have led to considerable results. Although the participants were required to use either *Hezare* or *Pouya English to Persian Dictionaries*, the effect of dictionaries on the final translations could have been minimized if a certain English to Persian Dictionary had been uploaded on the Translog User. Two participants; i.e. S01 and S03 in Group A, admitted that they are too slow in any kind of performance; hence, a personality test to determine how quick witted the participants are could have helped the researcher in the choice of subjects in order to minimize the effect of personality traits upon the final results.

REFERENCES

- Baker, M. (1992). *In other words: A course book on translation.*: London, England & New York, NY: Routledge.
- Baum, L. F. (1909). *The road to Oz*. Retrieved from: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/485>.
- Beeby L. A. (1996). *Teaching translation from Spanish to English- Worlds beyond words*. Canada: University of Ottawa Press.
- Buchweitz, A. & Fabio, A. (2006). Cognitive Adaptation in translation: An interface between language direction, time, and recursiveness in target text production. *Letras de Hoje. Porto Alegre. 41*(2), 241-272.
- Carl, M. (2000). Translog-II: A program for recording user activity data for empirical reading and writing research. Denmark: Frederiksberg. Retrieved from <http://www.lrecconf.org/proceedings/lrec2012/summaries/614.html>.
- Carl, M. (2011). Patterns of shallow text production in translation. Denmark: Frederiksberg. Retrieved from <http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=Patterns%2Bof%2Bshallow%2Btext%2Bproduction%2Bin%2Btranslation.%2B&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCkQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Ffmt-archive.info>
- Collie, J. V., & Verschueren, W. (2006). *Children literature in translation: Challenges and strategies*. The United Kingdom: St. Jerome.
- Gile, D. (2009). *Basic concepts and models for interpreter and translator training*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Hatim, B. (2004). *Teaching and researching translation*: England: Pearson.
- House, J. (1981). *A model for translation quality assessment*. Tübingen: Narr.
- Landers, C. (2002). *Literary translation: A practical guide.*: The United Kingdom: Multilingual Matters .
- Manafi, S. (2005). Criteria for translation criticism. *Translation Studies*, 10, 49-66.
- Newmark, P. (1996). *About translation*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Nida, E. (1981). Translators are born and not made. *The Bible Translator*, 32 (4), 401-5.
- Nord, Ch. (1997). *Translating as a purposeful activity. Functional approaches explained*. Manchester, England: St. Jerome.

- Perez, C. (2004). Applying translation theory in teaching. *Perspectives: Studies in Translology*, 12 (2), 119- 133.
- Reiss, K. (1989). Text types and translation assessment. In A. Chesterman (Ed.), *Readings in translation theory* (pp. 115-187). Helsinki, Finland: Oy Finn Lectura Ab. 115-187.
- Reiss, K. (2000) Translation criticism: The potentials and limitations, Translated by E. F. Rhodes. Manchester, England: St. Jerome.
- Shavit, Z. (1986). *Poetics of children literature*. Athens, Greece: University of Georgia Press.
- Shuttleworth, M. (2011). The role of theory in translator training: Some observations about syllabus design. *Meta : journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal*, 46 (3), 497-506. Retrived from <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/004139ar>
- Translog tutorial, available from: <http://www.translog.dk/default.asp?id=20>
- Vinay, J.P., & Darbelnet, J. (1997). [originally 1958]: *Stylistique compare du Francais et de l'anglais: ethod de traduction*. Montreal, Canada: Beauchemin.

THE EFFECT OF INSTRUCTING MNEMONIC DEVICES ON IMMEDIATE VERSUS DELAYED VOCABULARY RETENTION

Parisa Ashouri

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, Iran
Email: ashouri_parisa@yahoo.com*

Massood Yazdani Moghadam

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Tehran South Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
Email: mym1300@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners frequently ask their teachers what strategy or technique to use in order not to forget the lexical items. In this study, the researcher made an attempt to find out the effectiveness of mnemonic devices as a memory strategy on the learners' vocabulary retention. For this purpose, 60 Iranian EFL acquirers at pre-intermediate level of language proficiency, were selected and participated in this study. There was no limitation regarding their age. To ascertain the homogeneity of the learners, the researcher implemented Preliminary English Test (PET) as a pretest. The participants were assigned into two groups of 30, experimental and control. The experimental group was instructed 80 pre-selected words through mnemonic devices, but the same vocabularies were instructed to the control group in a traditional way. To answer the first question, the mean scores of both experimental and control groups were compared on the immediate posttest. The result demonstrated that instructing words through mnemonic devices is more influential than through the traditional methods. To answer the second research question, the researcher compared the mean scores of the experimental group on the immediate and the delayed posttests. The result revealed that learners' delayed recognition of second language vocabulary is not affected by the passage of time, it means that words learned via mnemonics instruction were retrieved well both in the process of immediate and delayed retention. This study shed light on the fact that memory strategies like mnemonics are of great application and importance in the process of short term and long term retention of EFL learners. Therefore, mnemonic devices should be given prime attention by both EFL material developers and instructors as a potentially efficient technique for vocabulary instruction, acquisition, and long term retention at foreign language improvement.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary, Mnemonic Devices, Immediate Retention, Delayed Retention

INTRODUCTION

The key factor for most of the learners in second or foreign language learning is how to communicate with each other. Vocabulary is one of the foremost constituents of language that helps learners communicate efficiently. The significance of lexical items is so fundamental and in this regard, Akmajian et al. (2010: 13) state that one of the most significant parts of linguistic

structure is the word. According to them, “anyone who has mastered a language has mastered an astonishingly long list of facts encoded in the form of words. The list of words for any language is referred to as its lexicon”. The biggest issue that almost all teachers were dealing with was that most of the Iranian EFL learners often complain that they cannot remember many of the words they have learned before; they typically find vocabulary learning difficult. Many students also confess that they usually memorize the word list through repetition, explanation, translation and other conventional techniques. Hence, they have low motivation in learning a second language. Because of that, students need to know some strategies and techniques to learn, retain, and recall vocabulary in different conditions. As a conclusion, it is crucial for the teacher to select a technique that is interesting and exciting to the students and impressive in reinforcing students’ vocabulary learning and retention. Khan (2008: V) declared that mnemonics are derived from “Mnemosyne, ancient Greek goddess. A memory aid or pertaining to aiding the memory. Often considered to be a code, device, acronym or formula to facilitate memory or understanding”. According to Shmidman and Ehri (2010:160), “Mnemonics are effective when they speed up learning, reduce confusion among similar items, and enhance long term retention and application of information”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Significance of Vocabulary in English Language Teaching (ELT)

The gradual improvement of the second language lexical items is an essential part of the practice of acquiring a foreign language. However, for a long time, vocabulary was ignored facet of language instruction. Since 1980s, it has found its path in the core curricula and the importance of its instruction became noticeable (Allen, 1983, Carter, 2002).

Instructors came to the conclusion that for developing four skills of language (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) in the acquirers, they have to train them the new or unfamiliar vocabulary words. For instance, we can consider Field (2002: 242) who stated that in the pre-listening phase in the classroom the “pre-teaching of all important new vocabulary in the phase” is noteworthy. Knowing the words and expressions is also beneficial for developing the reading skill. Grabe and Stoller (2001: 196) highlighted that “reading fluency depends on knowing a fairly large number of words so that a reading task itself is not too difficult”. They also noted that the learners should become familiar with the extensive amount of vocabularies in a routine manner if they want to become the fluent readers. Consequently, Vocabulary knowledge is vital to the reading comprehension. “Comprehension is far more than recognizing words and remembering their meaning” (Sedita 2005: 1); however, if learners do not sufficiently understand the meaning of lexical items in the text, in this way communication is impracticable. It is also apparent that to the second or foreign language learners being able to speak fluently is the main goal. In this case, they need to have access to a large amount of vocabularies and phrases. Kramsch (2002: 20) indicated that, “not being able to continue speaking because of a lack of vocabulary is a threat to one’s positive face, but asking for help may be perceived as a threat to one’s negative face”. Generally speaking, vocabulary instruction is an obligatory segment of training language to the students. Understanding a massive amount of lexical items can aid

learners to become better language acquirers and also aid them to gain more self-confidence in their communication.

The significance of vocabulary has been emphasized by many investigators. In this way, Zimmerman (1997: 5) states that, “vocabulary is the most important aspect of second language learning. The more you know the better chance to understand the language or make yourself understood”. Nation (2001: 9) emphasizes that, “second language learners need to know very large numbers of words. While this may be useful in the long term, it is not an essential short-term goal”. He also emphasized the efficiency of acquiring words and expressions with their translation in different ways such as flash cards and word lists.

Vocabulary Retention

Retention of the words has always been one of the concerns of the second or foreign language learners. They utilize different techniques in order to memorize the lexical items. For instance, some of them prefer to repeat the words whereas others use flash cards and look at them every now and again. As a result, Vocabulary retention is a matter of great importance to the learners. In this regard, Decarrico (2001: 291) states that instructors can motivate learners in order to “check for an L1 cognate, study and practice in peer groups, connect a word to personal experience or previous learning, say a new word aloud when studying, use verbal and written repetition, and engage in extended rehearsal” .

Up until now different definitions have been presented for the term ‘retention’. Vocabulary retention can be defined as “the ability to recall or remember things after an interval of time. In language teaching, retention of what has been taught may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002: 457). They also added that, “immediate retention is the remembering of something shortly after studying it. The ability to remember something some time after it has been studied” is known as delayed retention (p.248). According to Fry (2012: 48), retention is “the process by which we keep imprints of past experiences in our minds, the ‘storage depot’. Subject to other actions of the mind, what is retained can be recalled when needed”.

Khabiri and Pakzad (2012:81) also mentioned that retention relies on “the amount of mental and emotional energy used in processing a word and readers have developed certain strategies that could assist emotional and mental processing such as meta-cognitive strategies”. They also state that acquirers are suggested to learn vocabularies or phrases through reading texts. In this way, retention should not be perplexed with comprehension. Acquisition of the vocabulary’s meaning entails more than understanding it in a specific context throughout reading activity. The word’s meaning to be preserved in the long-term memory.

Jenpattarakul (2012: 445) indicated that vocabulary retention techniques help learners to be delighted in order to acquire a lot of words and they can keep those vocabularies in memory which can cause positive attitude and increased confidence in acquiring vocabulary. Therefore, vocabulary retention techniques refer to the “techniques by which students use to store vocabularies in long-term memory and recall or retrieve easily to achieve reading

comprehension". As a result, in order to improve the retention the "information needs to possess or be given qualities of meaningfulness, organisation, association, visualisation, attention, interest, and feedback" (Wainwright, 2007: 106).

Mnemonics

Mnemonic devices are memory aids that help learners in recalling particular data by using a strategy or technique that enable learners to develop memory (Richmond, Cummings & Klapp, 2008). During the ancient time of Rome and Greece, mnemonic devices have been applied in order to make the acquisition of target words easier by providing clear pictures for thoughts and ideas (Baleghizadeh & Ashoori, 2010). Mnemonics are useful techniques that help learners remember vocabulary more effectively and this strategy involves connecting unfamiliar information to the information that is already existed in the long term memory of learners through the application of a visual image or letter combinations (Bakken & Simpson, 2011). According to O'Brien (2011: 154), mnemonics have "a firm place in our repertoire of memory techniques". In addition, Mnemonic devices are good memory enhancing strategies or techniques that assist learners in order to link new information to the previous information stored in their cognitive system and also these techniques, verbal or visual, that develop the storage and recall of data included in memory (Ashoori Tootkaboni, 2012).

Kleinheksel and Summy (2003) described the processes that instructors can use when applying a mnemonic technique as follows:

- Recognize the learner's memory deficits: it is significant to identify that learners have not an attention deficit but they have a memory deficit.
- Identify curriculum areas where mnemonic devices can be utilized in order to improve memory: a strategy or technique that can be applied in more than one situation is stronger than a strategy or technique that will be employed in only one situation. Therefore, the performance of learners in other academic settings is also important.
- Talk about mnemonic devices with learners: forming the strategy will illuminate the learners what mnemonic devices involve. They also become aware of the advantages of mnemonic devices and the ways that these devices increase the learner's recall of information, and finally teach the mnemonic devices with great detail. Teacher should instruct the mnemonics, in that case some students broke down this strategy into particular small constituents and others will be able to use it at once.

Different Types of Mnemonics

Mnemonic strategy can be applied in different fields such as mathematics, medicine, history, etc. There are at least three methods to teach mnemonics namely the Keyword, Pegword, and loci strategies. The Keyword method was first proposed by Atkinson in 1975. It aids learners to "link a word form and its meaning and to consolidate this linkage in memory" (Decarrico, 2001:291). According to this source, the keyword method can be carried out in three phases: first the acquirers pick out two concrete words in an L1 and L2 that are identical to each other phonologically or orthographically. Afterwards, a strong connection can be made between the keyword (word in L1) and the target word in L2. In this situation, when the target word is seen or

heard, the keyword would be recalled at once. In the last phase, a visual image is made in order to come together the referents of the keyword and the target word. The important point here is that learners should acquire knowledge to focus on recalling the picture of interaction between the keyword and the target word. Therefore, the keyword method is a way of making a close association between an unfamiliar or new words and its meaning. Kleinheksel and Summy (2003: 32) have claimed that this method is effective because “it increases concreteness and meaningfulness of newly acquired information, and also it ties new information to prior knowledge”.

The second type of mnemonics is the Pegword method. In this method, the numbered or ordered information need to be recalled. According to Dehn (2011), this method is identical to the Loci. This technique contains two stages. The first stage is that acquirers commit to memory the rhyming vocabulary words for the number 1 to 10. In the second stage, the acquirers create in their mind the unknown word and the rhyming word and afterwards connect these two things with other vocabulary words with the associated number (Zarei, Hasani & Keysan, 2013). In this sense, wainwright (2007: 55) uttered that this technique is based upon the idea of making connections between the rhymes and the items the learners desire to remember. For example: “one is bun, two is shoe, three is tree, four is door, five is hive, six is sticks, seven is heaven, eight is gate, nine is wine, ten is hen”.

The loci method is another type of mnemonic devices. This method is used as a memory aid. It is a Latin name for ‘places’. According to wainwright (2007), Roman orators applied this method in order to recall their speeches. For example, they drew the picture or image the places they knew very well. In this regard, Dehn (2011) declared that the loci method is the first visual mnemonic device. It works effectively because learners are associating a word with something they previously know and will not fail to forget, like the rooms in their home. When they remember the rooms, the images or pictures they created will unintentionally be remembered. When they observe what is in the picture, they will identify the information they need to remember. Nemati (2009:124) also points out that in order to “ use this ancient technique, imagine a familiar location such as a room, then mentally place items to be remembered there, to recall take an imaginary walk along the landmarks in the room and retrieve the items in it”.

Empirical Studies on Mnemonics

Empirical research on the effects of mnemonic techniques on retention began in the late 1960s. Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2010) compared the impact of keyword and word list method on immediate vocabulary recall of EFL learners. In this research, the keyword method yielded better results in remembering and understanding the words as compared with word list method. The findings revealed that the experimental group which received vocabulary teaching through keyword method did better than those (control group) which received vocabulary teaching through the word list method. This shows the superiority of the keyword method in order to remember word lists. Secondly, Atay and Ozbulgan (2007) were investigated the effect of memory strategy instruction together with learning through context on the ESP vocabulary retention of Turkish EFL learners. The study exhibited that mnemonic strategies can enhance vocabulary learning. They also compared the performance of learners instructed in bidirectional

retrieval applying the keyword method to study new Spanish words and their English definitions with that of control group learners who used the standard keyword procedure; the results revealed that there was a noticeable difference in the level of recall among the two groups: the retrieval group remembered about 70% of the meanings of the 11 target words, while the level for the standard group was about 50%. In this regard, the results of Nemati's (2009) study portrayed the superiority of memory strategies in short term and long term retention and she came to the conclusion that giving strategy awareness can help learners store and retrieve new lexical items. Other research findings "provide evidence that instruction involving the use of mnemonic devices does enhance a student's formal reasoning skills and that this has the potential for application of knowledge to more varied tasks" (Laing, 2010:354).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The study intended to investigate the effect of instructing mnemonic devices on the immediate vs. delayed vocabulary retention of Iranian EFL learners. The following questions were posed to fulfill the purpose of this study:

RQ1: Does the application of mnemonic devices have any significant impact on EFL learners' immediate vocabulary retention?

RQ2: Does the application of mnemonic devices have any significant impact on EFL learners' delayed vocabulary retention?

And, the following null hypotheses were stated:

HO1: The application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' immediate vocabulary retention.

HO2. The application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' delayed vocabulary retention.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

At first, 95 Iranian EFL students were selected randomly and Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to them. After the administration of PET, the students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean shaped the main participants of the study. Fortunately, the researcher could select 60 participants from among a total number of 95 learners studying in the pre-intermediate level. The selected participants were assigned to two groups. One experimental group and one control group with 30 students in each, consisting of 12 to 15 students in each class.

Instruments

To conduct the current study, the following materials and instruments were utilized:

Preliminary English Test (PET). To homogenize students at pre-intermediate level, the piloted PET was used. This test was comprised of the three sections of reading comprehension (35

items), speaking, and writing (7 items). The listening part was deliberately omitted from the test because of the issues with administration. Though the test was a standard one, the piloting was done to reassure its reliability following the reduction of listening comprehension section. The three parts of exam have the same value, 25% each and the total score was made by adding all the results together (the total score of the test equalled to 75). The administration of the whole test took around 100 minutes and the rating scale used to rate the writing section of PET in this study was the ones provided by Cambridge under the name of General Mark Schemes for Writing. The rating was done on the basis of the criteria stated in the rating scale including the rating scale of 0-5 for PET.

Vocabulary List. To ensure the homogeneity of learners regarding their knowledge of vocabulary prior to the treatment, a vocabulary list including 120 items (taken from the learners' course book) was given the learners in order to illustrate which words were known to the subjects and which ones were not. Accordingly, 80 words of this list which were unfamiliar to the learners were selected and the other 40 vocabularies that were known to the learners were omitted from this list. The posttests of the study were also developed based on these selected words.

Immediate and Delayed Posttests of Vocabulary. A teacher-made multiple-choice vocabulary test was developed based on level of the learners and the concepts presented in their course book as well as the vocabulary list of the course book. Then the test items were checked by the researcher, modified and piloted among 30 students with the same characteristics (gender, level) for the purpose of calculating the reliability of the test. Based on the item analysis done, the weak items were modified and consequently the test received the relatively desired format. The reliability of the test was calculated as 0.79 based on Kr-21 method which is an acceptable reliability. Finally, the test which included 30 items was used both as the immediate and delayed posttests in the present study to measure and compare the participants' second language vocabulary development in the immediate and delayed vocabulary retention.

Procedure

First, the piloted PET was administered to 95 pre-intermediate students to homogenize them regarding their general language proficiency. Out of 95 students, 60 students whose scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean formed the main participants of the study. The selected participants were randomly assigned to two groups, an experimental and a control group with 30 students in each.

The participants of the study in both groups received the vocabulary list of the course book including 120 items. 80 items, which were new for at least 90% of the participants, were kept and the rest were omitted from both the treatment and the source of test construction. Then the treatment period began and continued for 8 sessions. The whole semester included nine weeks and the learners attended the classes two days a week, each session lasting for 90 minutes in both groups. Considering the fact that the syllabus of the language school had to be covered during the semester, 30 minutes of 8 sessions were allocated to the treatment in the experimental group.

As a result, same vocabularies were used for both groups, but the way of the presenting materials was different in the two groups: In the experimental group, learners were instructed based on the mnemonic devices, which included visualization or imagery, and pictures to aid the learners memorize and recall the vocabularies with delayed time intervals. Therefore, the teacher briefed the learners about mnemonic devices strategy and its different types at the beginning of the treatment. Each session, 10 words were instructed through keyword method, Pegword system, and Loci method.

The learners in the control group also received the same materials, course book, vocabularies, idioms, and passages that the experimental group experienced, meanwhile they were not provided with the mnemonic strategies. Instead they worked with conventional methods of learning vocabularies, for example the teacher presented the words in isolation, gave pronunciation of the vocabulary words orally and wrote those vocabularies on the whiteboard and gave a short explanation about their part of speech. Also, the teacher elaborated the meaning of each vocabulary through presenting synonyms and antonyms if necessary and finally applied minimal contexts, i.e. some meaningful sentences.

Then after eight sessions of treatment, the immediate vocabulary posttest was administered to check the learners' recognition of vocabularies. Then after an interval of three weeks, the delayed posttest of vocabularies was administered to check the learners' performance concerning retention of vocabularies.

Statistical Analysis of the Research Instruments

To test the hypotheses of the study, some descriptive and inferential data analysis procedures were performed:

Inter-rater Reliability of the Writing Section of PET

Table 1 shows the inter-rater reliability of the writing of the PET test. To score the participants' writings, the scale presented by Alderson and Tankó (2010) was used which rates the writings based on a 1 to 6 scale. A Pearson correlation was then run to probe the inter-rater reliability of the scores. The results (Pearson $R = .85$, $P = .000 < .05$) indicated significant agreement between the two raters.

Table 1: Inter-Rater Reliability of the Writing test

		Writing R2
Writing R1	Pearson Correlation	.856**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

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

Inter-rater Reliability of the speaking Section of PET

Table 2 displays the inter-rater reliability of the speaking test. A Pearson correlation was run to probe the inter-rater reliability and the results (Pearson $R = .78$, $P = .000 < .05$) indicated significant agreement between the two raters.

Table 2: Inter-Rater Reliability of the Speaking Test

		Speaking R 1
Speaking R 2	Pearson Correlation	.785**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60

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

KR-21 Reliability Indices

The KR-21 reliability indices of the tests were displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: KR-21 Reliability Indices

	N	Mean	Variance	KR-21
PET	95	51.26	70.600	.79
Immediate Posttest	60	21.47	2.825	.54
Delayed Posttest	30	21.83	3.217	.56

Criterion-Referenced Validity

This kind of validity is an empirical one. In this kind of validity, the correlation coefficient between the newly developed test and the criterion test will be calculated. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the PET, immediate, and delayed posttests of vocabularies were computed as the criterion-referenced validity indices of the latter tests. As displayed in Table 4, the immediate posttest ($r(58) = .73$, $P < .05$, representing a large effect size) and delayed posttest ($r(28) = .94$, $P < .05$, representing a large effect size) enjoyed significant criterion-referenced validity indices.

Table 4: Criterion-Referenced Validity

Correlations

Immediate	Pearson Correlation	.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	60
Delayed	Pearson Correlation	.944**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	30

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

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing Assumptions

Four assumptions should be met before one decides to run parametric tests (Field, 2009). The subjects were independent that is to say their performance on the test was not affected by the

performance of other students. The present data were measured on an interval scale and the subjects performed independently on the tests. The assumption of normality was also met. As displayed in Table 5 the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors are within the ranges of ± 1.96 (Field, 2009).

Table 5: Testing Normality Assumption

Group		N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
		Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Experimental	PET	30	.221	.427	0.518	-.711	.833	-0.854
	Immediate Posttest	30	-.587	.427		-.652	.833	
					-1.375			-0.783
Control	Delayed Posttest	30	-.502	.427		-.634	.833	
					-1.176			-0.761
	PET	30	.334	.427	0.782	-.658	.833	-0.790
	Immediate Posttest	30	-.427	.427		-1.325	.833	
					-1.000			-1.591

The assumption of homogeneity of variance is discussed when reporting the results of the independent t-test.

Subject Selection Statistics

Table 6 below represents the descriptive statistics of the subject selection procedure. The piloted PET test was administered to 95 students. Based on the mean (51.26) and SD (8.40), 60 students whose scores fell within one SD above and below the mean were selected.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Subject Selection

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
PET	95	29.0	65.0	51.26	8.402	70.600
Valid N (list wise) 95						

PET General Language Proficiency Test

An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the PET test in order to prove that both groups enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the administration of the treatment. As displayed in Table 7 below, the experimental (M = 54.63, SD = 3.02) and control (M = 54.76, SD = 2.97) groups showed almost the same means on the PET test.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of PET by Groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Experimental	30	54.63	3.025	.552
Control	30	54.76	2.977	.523

The results of the independent t-test ($t(58) = .171$, $P > .05$, $R = .022$, representing a weak effect size) (Table 8) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the PET test. Thus it can be concluded that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the administration of the treatment. It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's $F = .046$, $P > .05$). That is why the first row of Table 8, i.e. "Equal variances not assumed" was reported.

Table 8: Independent t-test of PET by Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Difference	Error Difference	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the Difference
Equal variances assumed	.046	.832	.171	58	.865	.100	.586		-1.072	1.272
Equal variances not assumed			.171	57.844	.865	.100	.586		-1.072	1.272

Investigating the First Null Hypothesis

The first null hypothesis was set as "the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' immediate vocabulary retention". An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention in order to probe the effect of mnemonic devices strategy training on the learners' recognition of the vocabularies as measured on the immediate posttest. As displayed in Table 9 the experimental ($M = 21.47$, $SD = 2.82$) outperformed the control ($M = 16.83$, $SD = 2.76$) groups on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of Immediate Posttest of Vocabulary by Groups

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Posttest	Experimental	30	21.47	2.825	.516
	Control	30	16.83	2.768	.505

The results of the independent t-test ($t(58) = 6.417$, $P < .05$, $R = .65$, representing a large effect size) (Table 10) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the immediate posttest of vocabulary retention. Thus the first null hypothesis as "the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' immediate vocabulary retention" was rejected. The experimental group after receiving mnemonic devices strategy instruction outperformed the control group on the immediate posttest of vocabulary.

Table 10: Independent t-test of Immediate Posttest of Vocabulary Retention

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.045	.833	6.417	58	.000	4.633	.722		3.188	6.079
	Equal variances not assumed			6.417	57.976	.000	4.633	.722		3.188	6.079

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's $F = .045$, $P > .05$). That is why the first row of Table 10, i.e. "Equal variances not assumed" was reported.

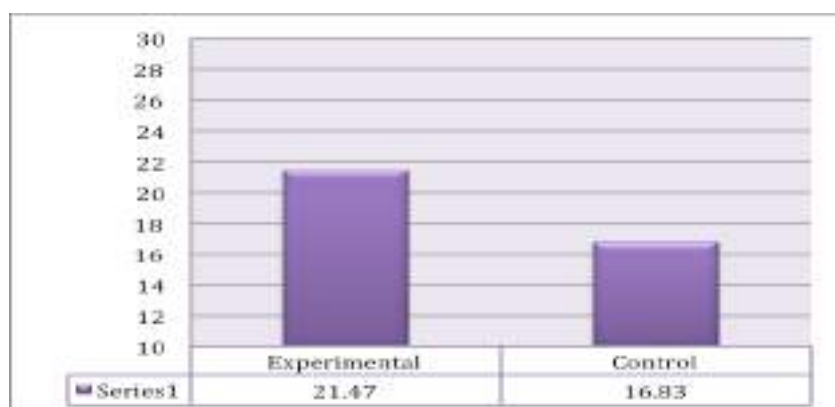


Figure 1: Immediate Posttest of Vocabulary Retention by Groups

Investigating the Second Null Hypothesis

The second null hypothesis was set as "the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' delayed vocabulary retention". A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental group's mean scores on the immediate and delayed posttests of vocabulary retention in order to probe the effect of mnemonic devices instruction on the learners' delayed vocabulary retention. As displayed in Table 11, the experimental group showed almost the same means on the immediate posttest ($M = 21.83$, $SD = 3.21$) and the delayed posttest ($M = 21.47$, $SD = 2.82$).

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics; Immediate and Delayed Posttests of Vocabulary

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Delayed	21.83	30	3.217	.587
	Immediate	21.47	30	2.825	.516

The results of the independent t-test ($t(28) = 1.515$, $P > .05$, $R = .098$, representing a large effect size) (Table 12) indicate that there was not any significant difference between the experimental group's mean scores on the immediate posttest and delayed posttest of vocabulary retention. Thus the second null-hypothesis as "the application of mnemonic devices does not have any significant impact on EFL learners' delayed vocabulary retention" was supported.

Table 12: Independent t-test; Delayed Posttest of Vocabulary Retention

Table 12: Independent Posttest, Delayed Posttest of Vocabulary Retention										
Paired Samples Test		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Delayed Posttest	-	.367	1.326	.242	-.128	.862	1.515	29	.141



Figure 2: Immediate and Delayed Posttests of Vocabulary

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to find out whether the application of mnemonic devices can boost learners' vocabulary knowledge or not and how far the learners' vocabulary retention improves after being taught by using mnemonic techniques. It was also essential for researcher

to see the changes in the range of the vocabulary knowledge of the students before and after the research. Another basic purpose of the current study was to pay more attention to the weakness the learners have in vocabulary learning.

This study was done in order to answer two questions. The first question was whether the application of mnemonic devices has any significant impact on the learners' immediate vocabulary retention or not. To answer this question, the mean scores of both experimental and control groups were compared on the immediate posttest in order to find out whether there is any significant difference between the findings or not. In that case, an independent t-test was computed. The t-test here was a two-tailed t-test since the researcher made no prediction about the answer to this question. The statistical analysis revealed that the application of mnemonics has a positive effect on the learners' immediate vocabulary retention. So the first null hypothesis is rejected.

The second research question was whether the application of mnemonic devices has any significant impact on the learners' delayed vocabulary retention or not. To find out the answer, the researcher compared the mean scores of the experimental group on the immediate and delayed posttests of vocabularies. Since the researcher did two experiments on the same group, a paired t-test was computed. The findings revealed that there was not any significant difference between the experimental group's mean scores on the immediate and delayed posttests. Hence, the second null hypothesis is supported.

In brief, it can be concluded that the instruction of mnemonics to EFL learners in the classroom provided positive atmosphere for them in order to boost their vocabulary knowledge.

Implications

Based on the findings of the present research, it is recommended that mnemonic devices can be applied in instructing the words that have any resemblances with learners' native language. In this sense, teachers should be responsible for making learners aware of the existence of such strategies and provided them with different types of mnemonic devices in order to make them self-sufficient in applying this strategy. The findings of this research have benefit to EFL instructors, learners, and material developers. The findings can help instructors change their beliefs about to be teacher- centered in language teaching and move toward learner-centered approaches. Teachers also can help students to improve their group work activities. (E.g. Share experience, cooperating with each other, etc.)

Syllabus designer and textbook writers also can help instructors to represent specific parts related to vocabulary strategies into the materials they extend in order to remember the vocabularies for a time interval. In that case, strategy training will be involved with everyday classroom procedures and the learners will be directly instructed why, how, and when to apply vocabulary strategies in order to facilitate learning of new vocabularies and also better and faster recalling.

Mnemonic strategy can be applied in testing as a tool for assessing the learners' strategy application in vocabulary retention. This can be carried out by providing learners with some pictures that aid them memorize the words through the links or connections they made between those vocabularies.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are some suggestions for further research as follows:

- Examining mnemonic devices on a larger number of learners, both female and male, and on different level of language proficiency, and also on different ranges of learners' age.
- Comparing and combining this strategy with other vocabulary learning strategies.
- Trying different types of mnemonic devices on EFL learners' vocabulary recall.
- Examining the effect of mnemonic devices on other components of language.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were imposed on this study:

The first limitation was related to the participants. They were all female. This was an empirical survey that only comprises a limited number of subjects. More samples from different institutions would definitely yield more generalizable results. Also, the interval between instructing the vocabulary words and testing them was almost short due to the constraints of the term's duration. As the listening part of the test took a long time to be administered in the classrooms and was not permitted by the institutions, therefore the researcher did not implement this part. This did not hinder the standardization of the test because different parts of PET were standardized separately.

REFERENCES

- Akmajian, A., Demers, R.A., Farmer, K.A., & Harnish, R.M. (2010). *An introduction to language and communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Alderson, C., & Tanko, G. (2010). *Into Europe: The writing handbook*. London: British Council.
- Allen, V.F. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ashoori Tootkaboni, A. (2012). Recall of foreign- language vocabulary: Effects of keyword, context and wordlist instructional strategies on long-term vocabulary recall of EFL learners. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education*, 8(1): 54-71.
- Atay, D., & Ozbulgan, C. (2007). Memory strategy instruction, contextual learning and ESP vocabulary recall. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26, pp.39-51.
- Bakken, J.P., & Simpson, C.G.(2011). Mnemonic strategies; Success for the young-adult learner. *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*, 7(2): 79-85.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Ashoori, A. (2010). The effect of keyword and wordlist methods on Immediate vocabulary retention of EFL learners. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 30(2): 251-261.
- Carter, R. (2002). *Vocabulary: Applied linguistic perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Decarrico, J.S. (2001). Vocabulary learning and teaching. In Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. USA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Dehn, M.J. (2011). *Helping students remember: Exercises and strategies to strengthen memory*. London: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London: SAGE publications.
- Field, J. (2002). The changing face of listening. In J.C. Richards & W.A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching* .(pp. 242-247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Fry, R. (2012). *How to study program: Improve your memory*. Course Technology Cengage Learning.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F.L. (2001). Reading for academic purposes. In M.Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (pp. 187-203). USA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Jenpattarakul, W. (2012). An examination of the usage of vocabulary retention techniques (VRTs) of Thai undergraduate EFL students. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(2): 443-456.
- Khabiri, M., & Pakzad, M. (2012). The effect of teaching critical reading strategies on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 4(1): 73-106.
- Khan, K. (2008). *Mnemonics and study tips*. UK: Hachette Company.
- Kleinheksel, K.A., & Summy, S.E. (2003). Enhancing student learning and social behavior through mnemonic strategies. *Teaching Exceptional children*, 36(2): 30-35.
- Kramsch, C.J. (2002). Interactive discourse in small and large groups. In W.A. Rivers (Ed.), *Interactive language teaching*. (pp. 17-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Laing, G. (2010). An empirical test of mnemonic devices to improve learning in elementary accounting. *Journal of Education for Business*, 85(6), pp. 349-358.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Nemati, A. (2009). Memory vocabulary learning strategies and long-term retention. *International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education*, 1(2): 14-24.
- O'Brien, D. (2011). *You can have an amazing memory*. London: Watkins Publishing.
- Richards, C.J. & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*: New York: Pearson Education.
- Richmond, A.S., Cummings, R., & Klapp, M. (2008). *Transfer of the method of Loci, Pegword, and Keyword mnemonics in the eighth grade classroom*. *Researcher*, 21(2): 1-13.
- Sedita, J. (2005). Effective vocabulary instruction. Published in "*Insights on Learning Disabilities*", 2(1): 33-45.
- Shmidman, A., & Ehri, L. (2010). Embedded picture mnemonics to learn letters. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 14(2), pp. 159-182.
- Wainwright, G. (2007). *How to read faster and recall more*. UK: Oxford.
- Zarei, A., Hasani, M.T., & Keysan, F. (2013). *Vocabulary teaching: mnemonic and mapping techniques in Focus*. Lambert Academic Publishing.
- Zimmerman, C.B.(1997). Historical trends in second language vocabulary instruction. In J. Coady & T. Huckin(Eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition: A rationale for pedagogy*.(p.519). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN: A WAY TO CULTURE PLANNING AND CRYSTALLIZATION OF OTTOMAN LITERARY ACTIVITY

Somaye Delzandehrooy

Faculty Member at Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan, Iran

delzende@vru.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

The fact that translation from a certain language can be 'actively involved' in re/shaping a culture and its literary activity depends on a variety of factors, either human or non-human. This study intends to investigate the reasons why during the Ottoman era Persian remained the language of art and literature for three successive centuries (15-18 A.D.). Besides different factors (geographical links, literary figures, richness of the rhetoric of Persian, the Ottomans' willingness to consume new goods, etc.) translation has proved to have had a great influence in crystallizing the Ottoman culture and literary activity since it has been practiced in different forms the most important of which, discussed in this study, is 'parallels/ nazires'. In order to show the role of these factors and the agency of translation in the crystallization of Ottoman culture and literary activity, Even-Zohar's (2010a, 2010b) concept of poly-system theory and culture planning is applied as the theoretical model in this study. It is concluded that translation, done in whatever form, can lead to forming of a culture and literature when it involves creativity, and it is done from a poetically, literary and/or politically dominant language which was the case with translation from Persian in the Ottoman era.

KEYWORDS: Translation, Culture Planning, Persian, Ottoman Era, Literary Activity

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, societies have always attempted not to fall behind of what is, globally or in their neighborhood, considered as valued assets on whatever level (material or semiotic). To this end, they have gone different ways whereby they have tried to obtain what their country lacked. They might have directly imported what was 'better' in other societies, or tried to produce or reproduce something of similar quality in their neighborhood or in other known-about cultures. They might have even gained it through victory and dominance over the conquered land. With the case of textual and cultural products whose possession may be positively evaluated in a culture, the importation and re/production mentioned above mostly occur through translation. Translation as a culture transmitter (Newmark, 1988, 7), as a re/shaper of literature and culture, plays a significant role in the socio-cultural context of a society. Re/shaping a culture and literary system of a society demands the translation to be 'actively involved in the making of the center' of the target poly-system (Even-Zohar, 1990, 46); thus being of 'primary' status in the polysystem of TL to act as a model for target writers. This primacy in turn stems from a source language and culture with certain characteristics: this language becomes ultimately the language of art and literature in the TL (the case of Persian in the Ottoman era). Consequently poets and writers write

their works in the original language to gain prestige and acceptance and to prove their skills and mastery in composing poetry for instance. In the case of the Persian language in the Ottoman era, this language actually acted as a criterion to assess the literary capability of Ottoman poets, and the poets had to live up to that criterion in case they wished to be a Divan poet welcomed at the court.

Even-Zohar's concept of 'culture planning'

Culture planning involves making a culture repertoire which is the total 'options' used by a group of people and their members in order to organize life, and it was not an exception with the case of the Ottomans who made 'deliberate' choices to declare Persian as the official language of court while other alternatives such as Turkish existed as well (Even-Zohar, 2010a, 78-79). There are good reasons for this phenomenon:

Firstly, each society assumes it necessary to, advertently or inadvertently, *make*, but not to inherit, a culture repertoire in order to organize the life of its people. In case of being advertent, as with the case of our study, this making is done by known people such as Mahmoud Ghaznavī, a political figure and Moulānā, a literary figure in the Ottoman era.

Secondly, as Even-Zohar (2002) puts it, the making of culture repertoire is done through *invention* (based more on '*analogies* and *oppositions*'), and *import*, involving organizing 'skills and marketing' (p.168). When the 'imported material' becomes integrated in the target culture, it is called '*transfer*' thus a '*cultural interference*', to use Even-Zohar's terms, has occurred.

Thirdly, the source country (in our case Iran/Persian culture) must have particular characteristics that make another country/ culture (Anatolia (current Turkey)/Ottoman culture) import 'goods' from it. In the following these features as well as the factors involved in the process of '*cultural interference*' will be discussed.

Geographical Links

Turkey (the then Anatolia) neighboring Iran on the Northwest was one of the provinces of Iran for three hundred years either partially or wholly in the Achaemenid Empire Turkey thus received much influence from the Persian language and culture. The remnants of those days can still be seen in mountains and museums. This era is known as 'The Pars Era' in the history of Anatolia. That is the reason why Riahi (1971) maintained that the roots of Iranian culture in Asia Minor dates back to 2500 years ago. Moreover, political relationships and correspondence between Iran and Turkey were carried out in Persian (Mahmoodian, 1999, 1-15; see also Aidin 2006, 10-18; Riahi, 1971, 2).

Willingness to consume new goods

This is a key concept in *transfer* (Even-Zohar, 2002, 170). There are different reasons that Turkish people were eager to learn Persian (new goods): First, the religion of the Turks was Islam, hence it was necessary for them to acquire some knowledge of Arabic and Persian. Aidin (2006, 19) maintains that Persian and Arabic literature have served as models for Turkish Islamic literature, and when the first great Islamic Turkish literary work (*KutadguBilig*, by Yusuf

Blasagunlu) was written, Persian with Islamic themes was already two hundred years old. It should be noted that this work was written in a rhythm based on Ferdowsi's *Shāhnāme*. Secondly, there were different fields of knowledge that included translations from Persian into Turkish, the first of which appeared after the Anatolian Seljuk Empire: translation of Tazkerat-al-Ouliā, Mersād-al-Ebād, Sa'di's Golestān (Aidin, 2006, 40). Thirdly, enthusiasm for becoming Divan poets was another reason to welcome Persian, indicating that the Turks had the respect for Persian poets at that time. The love for Persian culture and literature during Seljuk of Asia Minor caused them to consider Persian literature and civilization a part of their kingdom conventions, and some even composed Persian poetry (Rypka, 2003, 323-25). Finally, to become a Divan poet, it was that the poet should learn Persian. Toska (2002) maintains that 'Divan Poetry' was not restricted to Turkish but incorporated elements of 'thought, sentiment, and conception of art' related to the 'common culture,' which was Persian (58-61). Moreover poets had to go through different stages in order to become a divan poet; these are mentioned by Toska (2002, 70-75) as *imitate, applying oneself, developing skills, acquiring experience through experimentation and, engaging in practice*. This was all after they had learnt three languages of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. The Ottoman and Seljuk kings, rulers, and viziers of the time were very fond of poetry and took pride and competed in having poets composing Persian poetry. Thus they would encourage poets to compose Persian poetry. This in turn resulted in what Even-Zohar (2010a, 79) calls 'socio-cultural cohesion' provided by the realization of culture planning that was in process at that time (Toska, 2002, 71; see also Aidin, 2006, 10-11).

Political dominance of the source culture (Persian)

According to Even-Zohar (2010b, 66), a culture becomes 'source' when it is dominant 'due to extra-cultural conditions.' One of these conditions is the *political* condition. For more than 200 years Iran had been the only super power in the world (Mahmoodian, 1999, 1); that is, until Alexandria the Great defeated Iran. Afterward, Rome also grew to power. As such, Iran had acquired a great treasure of policies and experiences of governorship. This was to the extent that the Seljuk ruling Asia Minor, (Turkey) although intelligent and powerful, lacked the experience necessary to manage public institutions and thus appointed Iranian ministers and political figures accordingly. That is why most of the Seljuk viziers were Iranian; the most famous of all these ministers was Moein-al-Din Soleymān Deylamī also known as 'Parvāne.' He was the de facto governor of Asia Minor for twenty-six years (Modarresi, 2005, 71; see also Riahi, 1971, 3-7). The Seljuks were Turk but they accepted Islamic and Iranian culture and created their official system based on the talents of the Iranian people (Aidin, 2006, 19). Consequently, the atmosphere in Seljuk court was completely Iranian; out of sixteen kings, eight were named after Iranian kings: three Kaykhosrows, three Kayqobāds, two Kaykaws, and among princesses the Iranian names were Shāhanshāh, Kaykhosrow Shāh, Jahānshāh, Kay Freydoon, Faramarz, Siavash, Bahramshāh and Kamyar (Riahi, 1971, 1-8). These all have resulted in the success of *socio-cultural cohesion*, for as Even-Zohar puts it, the society, here the Turks, was dominated by 'external powers' who were 'high-level' (2010a, 79).

War

Despite the devastating nature of war and all the damages it may do to one country, it may also bring some good things to that country

Malazgirt war. In 1071, the war of Malazgirt opened the doors of Asia Minor (Anatolia) to the Turks, hence opening the way to the Persian language and culture. Riahi (1971) regarded this period as the 'time when Iranian culture actually brought its most influence.' (p.12). The Roman Seljuk government was dependent on the Iranian Seljuk government. But after the collapse of the Seljuk in Iran, the Roman Seljuk declared Persian as the official language; conversations in main cities, correspondences in the ruling systems, teaching, writing, authorship and composing poetry were all carried out in Persian. The reason for this was that the Seljuks were already acquainted with Iranian culture. Besides, Turkish was not yet advanced enough to meet the society and government needs and the Roman Seljuk language was regarded as the conquered language, thus being unacceptable (Aidin, 2006, 20; see also Modarresi, 2005, 71).

Mongol attack. The Mongols invaded Iran in 1233 AD, causing poets and scholars including Moulānā, Najm-al-Din Razi, Ouhad Kermanī, Ibn-e-Bībī, Fakhr-al-Din Arāqī to leave Iran for the neighboring countries, India and Turkey. Such poets helped the Persian language spread in these areas. Their influence was then felt for the next 700 years (Aidin, 2006, 23; see also Modarresi, 2005, 73; Riahi, 1971, 2-15). The newcomers, being Sufis and mystics, used their views in their literary works. In this context, too, great works of mysticism, including *Mevlevi Order*, were created.

Influential figures

According to Even-Zohar (2010a, 79), typically, the 'power-holders' take on in the execution of the 'preferred repertoire,' which, in our case, was the application of Persian in the form of the administrative and literary language. However, sometimes people who are not from the ruling class become engaged in the making of the desired repertoire. Jalāl-al-Din Mohammad Rumi is such a poet.

Literary figures. Thus, after the invasion of the Mongols, many poets and scholars settled in Asia Minor. Also, Turkish kings had earlier shown great interest in Persian literature, which originally helped flourish Divan poets. The development of the Persian language and culture at this time owes much to literary figures of Asia Minor. One of the most influential figures was Jalāl-al-Din Mohammad known as Moulānā [our teacher/ master]. Moulānā played a significant role in popularizing the Persian language in Turkey. He was born in September 30, 1207 in Balkh [then a province of Iran] (Mahmoodian, 1999, 6-19; See also Horata and Karaismaigloğlu, 2007, 39). Jalāl-al-din and his family were forced to leave Iran after the Mongol invasion. Although he wrote all of his works in Persian (Mathnavi, Fih-e-MāFih and Divan-e-Shams), he brought a great influence on Turkish literature as well. His son, Soltān Valad, founded *Mowlavi Order* (Mevlevi Order) whereby he conveyed his father's thoughts to followers. All of Moulānā's works became thus translated. Soltān Valad was a poet in Turkish. He influenced Turkish literature and played a substantial role in spreading Persian literature in Asia Minor. As Aidin (2006, 23) remarks, support for Persian language came first from the Roman Seljuk in Konya and then from Moulānā's poems. In 12th and 13th century AD, the Persian language was used widely by viziers, counselors, and agents of the government. Also, reciting Shāhnāme became popular in the court of the Seljuk. Reciting Mathnavi, also was popular in Khanqahs.

Political figures/figures in power position. Along with literary figures, political figures were also influential in spreading Persian. Among them is Alā-al-Din Kayqobād Seljuk. In the court of this king, there was a chamber where poets and writers gathered regularly. The evidence of this includes Ibn-e-Bībī's pictures of Shāhnāmeḥ in Kayqobād's palace (Aidin, 2006, 9-12; See also Riahi, 1971). A second political figure is Sultān Mahmūd Ghaznavī, a poet himself, who was the greatest admirer of Persian literature and art. He encouraged and motivated men of letters and this actually led to his fame and becoming more powerful. He invited the well-known Persian scientists such as Avicenna and Abu al-Reyhān Al-Bīrūnī. He also founded the establishment of 'Poet Laureate' which all helped Persian language and literature glow (Rypka, 2003, 324).

Richness of the rhetoric of language

According to Sāfi (2011, 5), the success of the Persian language in India (from 11 to 19 AD) and, in Turkey came from several factors: the capability of this language in coining new words, eloquent combination of words, the musicality of speech and rhythm, and rhyme in *letters*. The concept of *letters* in Persian, in its general sense, entails asceticism and self-discipline, indicating that the poet should try to avoid whatever weakens eloquence (Zarrinkoob, 2004, 42). Persian eloquence has won admiration from Arabic poets too: Being proud of their poetry, Arabic poets such as Jāhez and Attābi encouraged studying Persian books, and claimed that poets who look to find *figures of thought* and *eloquence* should read Persian books (Zarrinkoob, 2004, 11). To understand *letters*, great knowledge of the language alone does not work (Kazzazi, 2008, 15).

Linguistic and poetical properties and education system influence

Persian prose in its oldest form used themes from history, mysticism, religions, and ethics, and avoided non-serious concepts. Zarrinkoob recognizes a wide range of subjects in Persian prose (Zarrinkoob 2004, 36): biographies, witticism, narratives, Sufi education, folklore, political debates, mysterious stories, didactic writings, ethics, and education.

Systems of educations in Iran also served as sources of inspiration for the Arabic countries. According to Hasan Ibn-e-Sahl, the Iranian vizier and scribe of Al-Ma'mon, during the Abbasid period, *letters* was considered to be based on Iranian culture, including educational thoughts left from the time of the late Sassanids particularly Anōoshirvan (44). This shows that Holbrook's (2002, 88) view about Iranian culture as forming under the influence of Arabic culture is not trustworthy.

Persian as lingua franca

Persian also served as lingua franca, rather than Arabic, in large areas of Dar-al-Islam, practically in all parts of Asia, from Iranto China (as evidenced by Ibn Battuta). Encouraged by the Sāmānids, even the learned authorities of Islam, the *Ulama* (Islamic scholars) began using Persian as a lingua franca in public (Frye, 1975, 96). According to Famighetti (1998, 582), the second lingua franca of the Islamic world, especially in eastern regions, was Persian. He maintains that not only Persian language did function as the 'state and administrative language' in many Islamic dynasties, such as the Samanids, Ghurids, Ghanznavids, Ilkhanids, Seljuqids, Mongols, and early Ottomans, but also Persian cultural and political forms, and often the Persian language, were used by the cultural elites from the Balkans to India'. For example, as Boyle (1974, 185) points out, the

only 'oriental language' that Marco Polo knew and used at the Court of Kubla Khan and in his journeys through China was Persian. Toynbee (1939, 514–15) assesses the role of the Persian language by highlighting its significance in terms of richness of rhetoric and power:

'In the Iranic world, before it began to succumb to the process of Westernization, the New Persian language, which had been fashioned into literary form in mighty works of art ... gained a currency as a lingua franca; and at its widest, about the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries of the Christian Era, its range in this role extended, without a break, across the face of South-Eastern Europe and South-Western Asia'.

Persian is still the lingua franca in Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan. It had the same status in India as well but before the British conquest. It is still understood by many in South Asia, mainly in Pakistan.

The role of translation in re/shaping of Ottoman literary activity

There are two differences between translation and the factors mentioned above: one is that the factors are the reason of the increase in producing translations from Persian, indicating the dominance of Persian. The other difference lies in the fact that in the Ottoman Empire, translation from Persian played its significant role, although it was no longer at its peak. Turkish had already received much influence from Persian and was thus mature enough to be used as the official language. At this time, thus, translation from Persian became very important. Toska (2002, 58) states that in the period from 14th to 19th centuries, a great amount of translation from Persian occurred.

Paker (2002b, 120) distinguishes between two kinds of translation concept in the study of Ottoman literary translation practices, namely, *terceme* (translation practice of a wide range) and *nazire* (*imitatio* in the form of parallel and response poetry), both of which she believes are 'culture-bound'. The former, which is here referred to as ordinary translation/translation proper, was practiced from 13th century onwards mainly in literary and scientific works (from Persian and Arabic to Turkish), such subjects as religion, Sufism, ethics, politics, medicine, geography, astrology, and astronomy (Toska, 2002, 58). The latter, *nazire*, focuses on poetry composed by poet-translators. Paker (2002b, 120) describes them as the 'primary agents of Ottoman literary translation and transmission' (120). This is also called parallels (Toska, 2002, 60-62). Explaining the criteria of translation evaluation in 16th century Turkey, Toska defines parallels as 'poems composed as a parallel to another in the same rhyme, scheme, meter and *redif* (a letter added to a complete rhyme) and also in meaning, sentiment and thought.'

Of relevance here there are two points that Toska (2002) makes regarding translation criteria: one is that she places emphasis on the *innovative* (emphasis is mine) aspects of translations, their style and poetic features. The other is that if the 'interventions' made by the poet translators resulted in 'introducing a new manner of expression,' then this kind of translation or rewriting would be considered as the work of the poet, not that of the original author. This is exactly what Even-Zohar maintains about making culture repertoire, which he believes is done through

invention. An invention is of course based on 'analogies and contrasts' similar to the Ottoman's *nazire*/parallels and *muārezāt* respectively (2010a, 89-97). They tried to compose poems similar to Persian poems in rhyme, rhythm, and base vocabulary. Such translation is also called concealed translation, implying that the context of composing such poetry was concealed (Holbrook, 2002, 86-95). However, *nazire*/parallels in Islamic literature is not considered imitation, but a way to honor the work of the original poet (Levend in Parker, 2002b, 125). Toska (2006, 58-60) makes the same point, asserting that a poet writing parallels to another poet's work showed his respect and liking for that poet. Some examples of *nazires*/parallels are, for example, Qotb's Khosrow Shirin (based on Nezāmi's work), Āsheq Pāshā's Qribnāme (based on Moulānā's Mathnavi). Other forms of poetry, considered translation by both Andrews (2002, 16) and Paker (2002b, 123-128), are in response to *javāb*, in contrast with *muārezāt*, in verification of *tazmin*, and in reception of *istikbāl* (adopting Persian poetry). There were also 'additive poems,' such as Takhmis, meaning five (for example, Amir Ali Shirnavāei's work) and Tesdis (six). Commentary (Sharh) was another form of translation, which appeared in the form of commenting on the original poem, rather than translating it. These commentaries came into prominence when Persian was no longer the official language. The Turks' interest in Persian literature caused these commentaries and dictionaries to emerge for a better understanding of Persian masterpieces (Aidin 2006, 33). According to Andrews, poems at that time were seldom translated by any means other than by *nazire*/parallel or *nazire*-like forms (25). The result of such translations, Andrews believes, was the change of both languages, Persian and Turkish, that is, the Persian language became '*preserved through re-writing and re-interpretation*,' and the Turkish language became '*created, recreated and enriched*' (24, emphasis is mine).

This is what Even-Zohar seeks to show in introducing culture planning and successful transfer, which result in inventing something new that the recipient culture had been in need of. Since, new connections and relations are created in this way (resulting in the domestication of the goods, here poems), it can be said that *a successful act of transfer* has happened (Even-Zohar 2002, 166-174). Andrews (2002, 26) also believes that the Ottoman literary culture was 'derivative, imitative, foreign, inauthentic, elitist, and unnatural,' and through a translation form like '*nazire*/parallels, which he believes was 'neglected' and 'creative' at the same time, new relations between words and thus new literary and poetic usages were introduced, which led to the generation of the new language (Ottoman literary language) and literary inventiveness. This point along with what Toska (2002, 73) asserts in her article about the important role translation has played in 'establishing, developing, and enriching Ottoman literature' proves the dependence of Ottoman literature and culture upon Persian, the source culture both by prestige and dominance (Even-Zohar 2010b, 63-67). In fact, a 'successful transfer' has occurred between the two countries, for the 'power base' (Even-Zohar 2010a, 88) necessary for such planning and transfer existed and the 'desired shifts' had taken place.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, every nation strives for remaking/planning/shaping its culture through resorting to different ways including translation, whereby the source language and culture is transferred to the target country. However, few languages have become so widely transferred as Persian has done

during the Ottoman era of Turkey. Certain characteristics of a language can make it *high-level* and worthy enough to become translated, imported, and transferred, so much so that it becomes the official and literary language of the target country and that its literature becomes a model for men of letters in the recipient culture for long periods of time. This has been the case with the Persian language in the Ottoman era. Moreover this study highlighted the applicability of Even-Zohar's model that is focused on the role of translation in shaping the literary activity of a society. It shows that his model reveals new historical insights about the importance of Persian for Ottoman culture.

REFERENCES

- Aidin, Sh. (2006). عناصر فرهنگ و ادب ایرانی در شعر عثمانی (از قرن نهم تا دوازدهم هجری) [Elements of Iran language and culture in Ottoman poetry (8-12AH century)]. Tehran, Iran: Amirkabir.
- Andrews, W. G. (2002). Starting over again: Some suggestions for rethinking Ottoman Divan poetry in the context of translation and transmission. In S. Paker (Ed.), *Translations:(Re)shaping of literature and culture* (pp. 15-40). Istanbul, Turkey: Boğaziçi University Press.
- Boyle, J.A. (1974). Some thoughts on the sources for the Il-khanid period of Persian history. *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, 12, 185-188.
- Even-Zohar, I. (1990). The position of translated literature within the literary polysystem. *Poetics Today*, 11(1), 45-51.
- Even-Zohar, I. (2002). The making of culture repertoire and the role of transfer. In S. Paker (Ed.), *Translations: (Re)shaping of literature and culture*, (pp. 166-174). Istanbul, Turkey: Boğaziçi University Press.
- Even-Zohar, I. (2010a). Culture planning. In I. Even-Zohar (Ed.), *Papers in culture research* (pp. 78-97). Israel: Tel Aviv University.
- Even-Zohar, I. (2010b). Laws of cultural interference. In I. Even-Zohar (Ed.), *Papers in culture research* (pp. 52-70). Israel: Tel Aviv University.
- Famighetti, R. (1998). *The world almanac and book of facts*, World Almanac Books, New York, NY: St Martins.
- Frye, R. N. (1975). *The golden age of Persia: The Arabs in the East*. London, England: Weidenfeld and Nicolson..
- Holbrook, V. R. (2002). Concealed facts, translation and the Turkish literary past. In S. Paker (Ed.), *Translations:(Re)shaping of literature and culture* (pp. 77-107). Istanbul, Turkey: Boğaziçi University Press.
- Horata, O., & Karaismailoğlu, A. (Eds). (2007). *Mevlana*. Translated by Rahim Acar, et al. Ankara, Turkey: Desen Ofset.
- Kazzazi, M. J. (2008). معانی 2، زیباشناسی سخن پارسی [Persian rhetoric 2: Figures of thought]. Tehran, Iran: Markaz.
- Mahmoodian, A. (1999). پیوند دیرپا و تاریخی سرزمین «اران» و ایران از دوران ماد تا رمان تجزیه آن در عهد فتحعلیشاه به روایت نقشه [The old-age and historical link of the land of Ārān and Iran from the era of the Medes up to its breakdown at the time of Fath Ali Shāh: A Map- based narration]. In P. Varjāvand (Ed.), *ایران و قفقاز، اران و شروان* [Iran and Caucasus, Ārān and Shervān], Tehran, Iran: Qatre. [http:// aa-mahmoodian.com/Papers/aran/index.html](http://aa-mahmoodian.com/Papers/aran/index.html).

- Modarresi, F. (2005). زبان و ادب پارسی در آسیای صغیر [Persian language and literature in Asia Minor]. *Farhangestan Quarterly*, 25 (7), 70-84.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. UK: Prentice-Hall.
- Paker, S. (2002b). Translation as *terceme* and *nazire* culture-bound concepts and their implications for a conceptual framework for research on ottoman translation history. In *Crosscultural Transgressions: Research Models in Translation Studies II Historical and Ideological Issues*, edited by Theo Hermans. Manchester, UK & Northampton MA: St. Jerome Publications.
- Riahi, M. A. (1971). نفوذ زبان و ادبیات فارسی در قلمرو عثمانی [The penetration of Persian language and literature in Ottoman kingdom]. Tehran, Iran: Amirkabir.
- Rypka, J. (2003). *History of Iranian literature*. Translated by Abolqasem Jaafari. Tehran, Iran: Sokhan.
- Safi, Q. (2010). نفوذ زبان فارسی در زبان سندی [The Penetration of Persian Language in Sandi Language]. The abstract accessed October 20. [http:// Persian-language.org/article/-1604.html](http://Persian-language.org/article/-1604.html).
- Toynbee, A. J. (1939). *A study of history, V: The disintegrations of civilizations*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Toska, Z. (2002). Evaluative approach to translated Ottoman Turkish literature. In S. Paker (Ed.), *Translations: (Re)shaping of literature and culture* (pp. 58-76). Istanbul, Turkey: Boğaziçi University Press.
- Zarrinkoob, A. (2004). از گذشته ادبی ایران [Of Iran's literary past]. Tehran, Iran: Sokhan.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO IMPROVE THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS: SCAFFOLDING MEANS AND PROCESS WRITING

Sorayya Behroozizad (Corresponding Author)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Maragheh branch, Islamic Azad University,
Maragheh, Iran*

SorayyaBehroozizad. Tel.: 09146481053

E- mail address: Sorayyabehroozi@yahoo.com

Mahdiyeh Abdollahzadeh

*Department of English Language Teaching, Maragheh branch, Islamic Azad University,
Maragheh, Iran*

ABSTRACT

Writing skill is an essential index for learning. It is a means of transmitting information and communicating the thoughts and feelings. In Iranian educational system, English as foreign language (EFL) teachers still utilize traditional approaches based on memorization and drilling which are not efficient enough to meet the students' pedagogical needs. Therefore, the current article reports a study conducted within the sociocultural framework and aimed at introducing a teaching model for writing which empowered students' writing ability through the integration of scaffolding means coined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) and Seow's process model. To this end, 30 homogenous participants with intermediate level of proficiency studying English as a foreign language in a language institute in West Azerbaijan, Iran were treated in order to spot the feasible effect of the application of various scaffolding means in a process- oriented situation on students' writing proficiency. The students were weighted in pre and post tests in order to gather the required data. The outcome, manifestly, elucidated a significant difference between writing ability of experimental and control groups on the post- test. The findings of this study suggest some implications for the teachers to highlight the socially situated learning and promote high quality differentiated instruction in educational contexts.

KEYWORDS: Writing ability, Process Writing, Scaffolding, Scaffolding means

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication in any target language can be regarded as the primary goal of learning a foreign language. Since English is culturally, politically, economically, and scientifically one of the most popularly used languages, there is a drastic need for effective communication skills in English all around the world. In order to communicate concepts and knowledge, having an effective skill in writing well seems necessary. According to Byrne "any piece of writing is an attempt to communicate something; that the writer has a goal or purpose in mind; that he has to establish and maintain contact with his reader; that he has to organize his material and that he

does this through the use of certain logical and grammatical devices" (1988, p. 14, cited in McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 184). White and Arndt (1991) contended that writing is "an important experience through which we are able to share ideas, arouse feelings, persuade and convince other people. We are to discover and articulate ideas in a way that only writing makes possible" (p.1). In the View of Ariana (2010) "writing skills assist the learner to become independent, comprehensible, fluent and creative in writing, important abilities which help learners put their thoughts in a meaningful form and to mentally tackle the message in a proper manner" (p.34). However, the purpose of instructing in English as a second or foreign language is often allotted to improve the students' skills and capabilities in speaking, listening, and reading in the target language while the development of the students' writing is ignored (Edelsky & Smith, 1989 as cited in Gomez, 1996).

Based on the view of Kelleher (1999), writing is one of the least understood language production tasks, which both competent and incompetent writers often bemoan that the process of writing is circuitous and grueling. In language teachers' ideas, writing is "a language skill which is difficult to acquire" (Tribble, 1996, pp. 3). It "normally requires some form of instruction" and "is not a skill that is readily picked up by exposure" (Tribble, 1996, p. 11). Writing as a complex cognitive activity requires learners to pay more attention to context, word choice, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure and organization of ideas (Mourssi, 2013).

Among the various approaches, including controlled composition, free- writing, paragraph pattern approaches, it is the process approach as one of the most predominant ones to English writing instruction that can be a central means for maximizing students' composition skills (Bae, 2011). Shaping meaning and paying attention to what writers want to communicate to the reader is central, but not the accuracy of their writings. In the definition of Badger and White (2000, p.154) it is, "...seen as predominantly to do with linguistic skills, such as planning and drafting, and there is much less emphasis on... grammar and text structure". According to Zamel (1983) process approach is as "a non- linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (p.165). The process of writing was considered to be mainly cognitive one in the earlier writers such as Hayes and Flower, but more recently there has been a tendency to consider a more sociocultural orientation (Barnard & Campbell, 2005). In creating meaning, the interaction among interlocutors is focused. This approach is based on the assumption that "language is socially constituted" (Gere, 1987, p. 87). For Seow (2002), the writing process is a private activity which can be broadly seen as comprising four main stages: planning, drafting, revising, and editing which this study followed Seow's process model to assist students to write freely and arrive at a product of good quality. These stages are elaborated below.

Planning (pre- writing): It is an essential step in the writing process. It stimulates thoughts for getting started. This stage can help writers generate ideas, collect information, and organize their thoughts.

Drafting: This stage is the process of moving from the pre- writing step to the actual writing of a final draft. Writers are focused on the fluency of writing rather than accuracy or the neatness of the draft.

Revising: It is the process of reviewing the written text on the basis of the received feedback by the teacher or peers. Revision isn't correcting minor grammar errors but focusing on content and organization of the whole text.

Editing: This stage is the process of tidying up the revised text to prepare the final draft for evaluation by the teacher. Students edit their own or their peer's work for grammar, dictation, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and accuracy of supportive textual material such as quotation, examples, and the like.

In all, the composing writing focuses students on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions to put them cohesively into a written text, how to revise text for clearer meaning, how to edit text for appropriate grammar, and how to produce a final product (Cited in HosseiniFard & Saharkhiz, 2014, p. 497).

Writing mainly from the perspective of applied linguistics is investigated and the work of cognitive psychologists and linguists or the work of sociolinguists is used (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, pp. 238-243). For Vygotsky (1978) as one of the champion of social constructivism, the link between social context and individuals' psychological development is directly highlighted (Bruffee, 1993, 1996; Gere, 1987 as cited in Tsai, 2006). The type of social interaction involves cooperative or collaborative dialogue promotes cognitive development. For him interaction between more capable people such as teachers, parents and adults can foster the children's cognition better (De Vries, 2000). In all, both individual and social factors have a paramount role in extending children's current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence. As Hughes (2001, p.17) claims, children learn best "when they have the guidance, learning environment, intellectual and emotional support created by an adult or mentor figure". The capable people are able to model learning, questioning and thinking and thus assist children to develop their learning skills. As Pea (1993, p. 47) asserts "the mind rarely works alone" and writing is the process of co-constructing of texts by students working together. Writing in the definition of Candlin and Hyland (1999, pp. 107, cited in Phung, 2004) is "therefore an engagement in a social process, where the production of texts reflects methodologies, arguments and rhetorical strategies constructed to engage colleagues and persuade them of the claims that are made". One of the fundamental axioms within Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory is scaffolding originally introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) that is "..... a kind of "scaffolding" process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted effort" (p. 90). As Behroozizad, et.al (2012, p.37) concern "within scaffolding process which is a dynamic reciprocal process the learner is a kind of active participant as well. Both teacher and learner construct a shared understanding by means of communicative exchanges in which the student as a novice learns from the teacher as a more expert other".

In characterizing the nature of scaffolding, Murray and McPherson (2006, p.140) state that "Scaffolding, then, is more than help and instruction because it involves the use of task-specific explicit strategies that help the learners become independent by exploiting their ZPD". In educational context, the teacher's role as the mediator is of great prominence as he plans, provides, guides, and operates qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate scaffolds which are classified as a supportive means of developing students' learning process. The facilitative role of the writing teacher has inspired research on the role of the teacher as a responder to students' writing (Cited in HosseiniFard & Saharkhiz, 2014, p. 498). Hammond (2001, p. 60) illustrates how scaffolding works by asserting that "Knowing when and how to intervene is what scaffolding is all about. It is about the teacher taking an informed and active role in guiding students' learning as they come to terms with new ideas and concepts". He adds that scaffolding is far more than 'helping out' so that a student can carry out a task. The teacher's usage of variety strategies assists students to gain understanding and confidence to work independently in applying new learning. In the context of the current research, as a facilitator, the teacher offers guidance in assisting students to engage in the thinking process of composing. The teacher's provided supports can be presented in any number of ways. In Riorden's view, it can be clues, reminder, encouragement, providing example, breaking the sophisticated task into steps, or anything else that permits the students to develop as an autonomous learner (Riorden, 2003). Among these supporting means, Tharp and Gallimore (1988) maintain six means of assisting performance which the present study tried to apply them in maximizing students' writing dexterities in a process oriented setting. They are modeling, feeding back, hints, instructing, explaining, and questioning that support the learning activities of the student. Application of these means by a capable person (in the case of this study, the teacher) is to guide students learning during task completion. The detailed explanation of these means is presented as the following:

Giving hints is the provision of clues or suggestions by the teacher to help the student go forward.

Feeding back is the provision of information regarding the student's performance to the student him/ herself.

Instructing, The teacher telling the students what to do or explanation of how something must be done and why.

Questioning. It involves asking students questions that require an active linguistic and cognitive answer.

Explaining or cognitive structuring is the provision of more detailed information or clarification by the teacher (Cited in Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen, 2010, p. 277) and

Modeling which is, "the process of offering behavior for imitation" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 47).

In Iranian EFL setting especially in language institutions due to students' limited competence, time limitation, and poor motivation, writing still stays a big complication, and it seems that application of traditional methods and strategies can't meet today's class requirements. Moreover, regarding the existence of a gap in literature regarding the potential effects of the integration of scaffolding means and process writing in order to investigate its effect on writing performance of

students, this article attempted to assist bridge this ostensible gap in the literature. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to apply various scaffolding behaviors in a process oriented situation to assess the impact of scaffolding means on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study delved into a scrutiny to come up with cogent answers to the following research question:

RQ: Does the integration of scaffolding means and process writing as a teaching model affect students' writing ability?

METHODOLOGY

Sample and setting

The purpose of the current research was to apply scaffolding means within the stages of process writing to examine their effects on students' writing ability. The participants consisted of thirty intermediate EFL learners. They studied English as a foreign language in a language institute in Iran, Salmas. Participants were female with the age range of 15-18. Their mother tongue was Azari and their national language was Farsi. These participants were selected based on proficiency test conducted before by the language institute itself. They were randomly divided into two groups, i.e., one experimental group and one control group. Each group consisted of 15 students. Again, in experimental class the participants were required to constitute different groups of three because so as to use experiences and knowledge of each other during writing process. As Ting (2010, p. 623) highlights the process approach is based on the communicating theory in which the learners can learn from and with each other effectively. The process of conducting this study was in regular class time. That is, along with students' course books, every session from the total time of the class (90 minutes) half of the class time was allotted to conducting this study. The class took a 15- session course, two days a week.

Instruments

In order to actualize the research question, the current research implemented writing tests to measure both of the groups' dexterities in writing ability before and after treatment.

The purpose of the pre-test was to achieve the initiated homogeneity and final comparison, and for the post-test the purpose was to measure the participants' improvement at the end of the treatment period. In pre- test of writing, all the students in two classes were asked to write an English composition on the topic "*What are the effects of watching television on people's life?*" selected from TOEFL test. The material used in this study was "*Refining Composition Skills*" by Smalley, Ruetten and Kozyrev (2002). It was used as the main course book for two groups. The instructed parts of textbook deal with the process writing, the format of paragraph and essay writing, and different types of paragraphs and essays. After completion of the treatment during a course of 13 weekly sessions, in the last session a post- test was administrated to two groups in order to measure the students' writing performance after the treatment. They were required to

write an English composition on the topic "*What are the causes of air pollution*" selected from TOEFL test. In order for the scoring process of students' writing tasks to be reliable two experienced teachers who have been teaching EFL courses were selected. In order to prevent any raters' bias, writers' names were eliminated. Whenever the two scores of a writing test disagreed by three points or above, the two raters examined it again and reached a final agreement after consideration, and the total score of the writing test was the average of the two raters score. To prevent the procedure of students' scores to be subjective, an analytic scale selected from Jacobs et al. 's (1981) (cited in Weigle, 2002, pp. 115-116) and Hoang (2007) was used in which both assessors judged about the students' writing tests based on this scale. According to Weigle (2002) the analytic scale provides more useful diagnostic information about students' writing abilities. The rating scale for evaluation consists of five aspects: *content*, *organization*, *vocabulary*, *language use*, and *mechanics*. The five aspects are differentially weighted to emphasize. First content (3/5 point) and next language use (2/5 point), with organization and vocabulary weighted equally (1/5 point) and mechanics receiving very little emphasis (1 point) which totally equal to 10 point. In other words each aspect is analyzed by specific criteria with four degree scale, so the total score of each test ranged from 1 as the minimum to 10 as the maximum.

Procedure

To undertake the study, at the first stage, students in the two groups were asked to write an English composition in class which served as the pre- test of the study to measure the quality of the participants' written texts before the treatment. The groups wrote the essay about 150 words in 20 minutes on a topic. Then, the inter-rater reliability of writing section was calculated. To do so, the writing section was rated by two experienced teachers selected from the institution. Both of them used the same rating scale which was Jacobs et al (1981) and Huang (2007). For the treatment to take effect, in experimental group the students were required to constitute different groups of three participants. In writing the composition, students were writing through traversing the main phases of writing process including 1) planning, 2) drafting, 3) revising, and 4) editing, in which they received peer and teacher scaffolding during every stage. The tasks and activities which were carried out in the experimental class were described as follows.

In planning stage, in order to help students to write and gather information about the topic, the teacher used making a brainstorming technique.

In drafting stage, students began to write their first draft based on their ideas listed in planning stage. While writing, the teacher was circulating among the groups and guided them through monitoring students' written drafts.

In revising stage, the teacher collected the students' first drafts and revised them in the class in a limited time, then he gave the papers back to the students and asked them to revise their papers based on the hand written commentaries.

In editing stage, the students in the final phase were required to read word by word their revised papers and turn their attention to the form during the editing with using edit checklist of Seow (2002). There were seen three kinds of correction; self-correction, peer correction and finally teacher correction. After finishing every topic, the students submitted their essay to the teacher for evaluation. He assessed their papers based on the same rating scale of Jacobs et al (1981) and Hoang (2007).

However, in the control group, the students were asked to produce an individually- written essay in the traditional way. They wrote their essays without going through the stages of process writing and without any receiving existence scaffolding. At the final stage, the classes were given a post test of writing in order to measure their writing ability .They were asked to write an essay about 250 words in 30 minutes on the topic selected from the book taught. Again their scores were rated based on the same rating scale by the same teachers. The data obtained from test results constituted the major basis for statistical analyses.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The t- test analysis (independent and paired samples t- test) was used to compare the performance of both groups' scores in pre- test and post- test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to apply scaffolding means within the stages of process writing to examine their effects on students' writing ability. The research question addressed in the study was:

RQ: Does the integration of scaffolding means and process writing as a teaching model affect students' writing ability?

At the initial step a writing task selected from the trained course book was administrated as the pre- test to measure the quality of students' skills in writing before treatment. Two experienced teachers were asked to score students' writing based on the rating scale of Jacobs et al.'s (1981) and Hoang (2007) to probe the reliability of students' scores on writing pretest. The average of raters given scores was selected as the total writing scores of the pretest. Table 1 reports the correlation analysis which was an evidence of high correlation between the given scores by each rater, and it is a consideration of internal consistency between the scores.

Table 1: Correlation analysis of writing scores

Correlations

		Writing Pretest Rater1	Writing Pretest Rater2
Writing Pretest Rater1	Pearson Correlation	1	.943**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Writing Pretest Rater2	Pearson Correlation	.943**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

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

As table1 indicates, the correlation coefficient ($r= 0.943$) shows a high correlation between given scores by both rates. Because the correlation coefficient is so close to +1, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between scores. As it is known, closer the coefficients are to +1.0 and -1.0, greater is the strength of the relationship between the variables. The value of Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha=.967$) shows that the scores enjoy high reliability.

Table 2: Reliability statistics of writing scores

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.967	2

As it is observable in Table 2, $\alpha=.967$ shows that the given scores by both raters are highly reliable. In other words there is a considerable internal consistency between the scores.

To identify the equality of the groups at the outset of the study, an independent sample t- test of writing scores of both groups was carried out. Table 3 presents these results.

Table 3: Independent Samples t- test Run on Pretest writing scores of both groups

Total Writing Pre- test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Independent t- test	Sig
Experimental group	15	4. 9720	0. 6533	1. 386	0.515
Control group	15	5. 2227	0. 82072		

The results of table 3 showed that there was no significant difference between experimental and control groups before treatment with reference to their writing ability ($p= 0/05$, sig $<0/515$). Therefore, the results are an evidence of the homogeneity of two groups before conducting the treatment. Having undertaken the treatment phase of the study, a writing task was administered as the posttest to identify the effects of treatment on students' writing ability. Similar to pre-test, the scores of post test were evaluated based on the same rating scale by the same teachers. The results of table 4 demonstrate a high correlation between the given scores by each rater and the reliability analysis of the scores demonstrated the inter-rater reliability of writing scores.

Table 4: Correlation analysis of scores of writing post- test

Correlations

	Writing posttest for experimental group rater1	writing posttest for experimental group rater2	Writing Posttest for Control group rater1	Writing posttest for control group rater2
Writing posttest for experimental group rater1	1	.933**	-.253	-.274
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.362	.324
N	15	15	15	15
writing posttest for experimental group rater2	.933**	1	-.174	-.188
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.535	.502
N	15	15	15	15
Writing Posttest for Control group rater1	-.253	-.174	1	.920**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.362	.535		.000
N	15	15	15	15
Writing posttest for control group rater2	-.274	-.188	.920**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.324	.502	.000	
N	15	15	15	15

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

The statistics for the reliability analysis of participants' writing scores in the post- test of experimental and control groups are depicted in the following table which declares that scores of two groups enjoy high reliability.

Table 5: Reliability Statistics of writing scores of posttest for the groups

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Experimental group	.963	2
Control group	.958	2

To spot the potential impact of treatment on participants' writing performance, another independent samples t- test was conducted on the post test scores to testify if there is any significance difference between groups after treatment in writing ability (See table 6).

Table 6: Independent Samples t- test Run on Posttest writing scores of both groups

Total Writing Post- test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Independent t- test	Sig
Experimental group	15	7. 57	0. 66396	11. 368	0.000
Control group	15	5. 26	0. 42129		

With comparing the mean scores of two groups recounted in tables 3 and 6, the results led to this conclusion that the writing performance of two groups have improved from pretest to posttest but the improvement of participants' writing ability is remarkably observable in experimental group (treatment was based on the integration of scaffolding means and process writing) in terms of

mean scores (4.97 to 7.57). Therefore, the difference between two groups was significant (Sig=0/0, $P < 0.05$). It is revealed that the implementation of various intervention strategies in a process- based setting significantly affected participants' writing ability.

In addition to investigating the difference between groups in terms of their writing skills, the difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group is aimed to be measured by conducting paired sample t-test. Table 7 shows the results.

Table 7: Paired t- test of the writing scores of experimental group in pre and post-tests

Writing groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired t- test	Sig
Pre- test (Experimental group)	15	4. 97	0.58143	- 14. 090	0.000
Post- test (Experimental group)	15	7. 57	0.66396		

According to the results of table 7 the mean scores of experimental group in pre- test and post-test were 4.97 and 7.57, respectively. It was found that there is a significant difference between two scores. Furthermore, the result of paired t-test indicates that the significant value (0.0) was less than $p (.05)$ which revealed that the difference is highly significant.

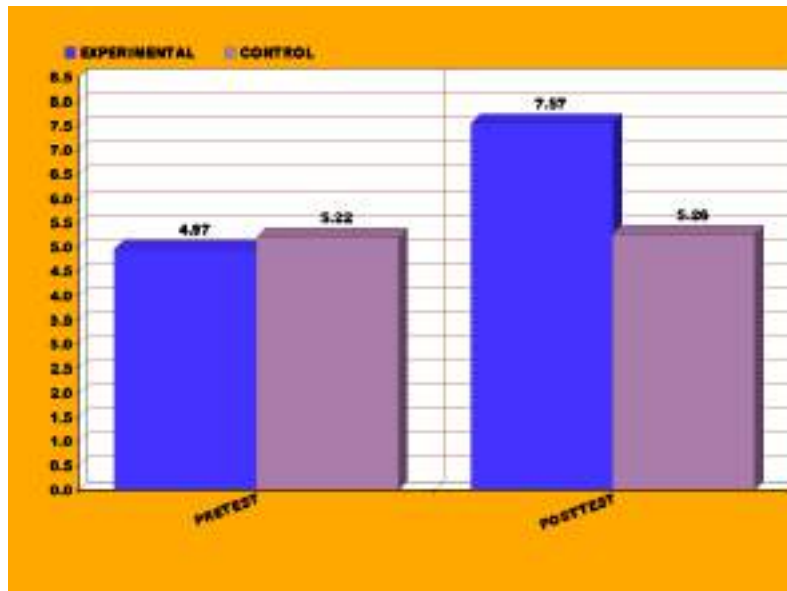


Figure 1: Comparative figure of students' writing ability in control and experimental groups during pre-test and post-test

Based on the results of figure 1, the mean scores of students' writing ability in experimental and control groups during pre- test are 4.97 and 5.22, respectively. However, in the post- test, after

implementing scaffolding means during the process writing in experimental group and traditional method of teaching writing (GTM) in control group, the mean scores of students' writing ability in experimental and control become 7.57 and 5.26, respectively.

To sum up, regarding the results of independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test this study found that there were significant mean differences in the pre- test and post- test scores of experimental group and post- test scores of learners trained by using scaffolding means in a process- based setting and traditional method of teaching writing. As the findings demonstrated, the participants in experimental group had a better performance in their writing and achieved better than control group because in experimental group, various intervention strategies implemented by the teacher in order to guide and assist the students step- by- step in every stage of process writing in which they could produce a final written text by the help and supervision of their teacher. The participants were provided supports based on their needs and problems, and they could benefit from these various means that finally resulted in improving their writing ability.

With regard to the effectiveness of applying means in a process- oriented situation, the findings are keeping with the results obtained in Riazia and Rezaii s' (2010) study which affirmed the paramount role of the teacher in providing different scaffolding behaviors in mediating students' writing in order to help reach higher stages of independency. The result also is consistent with the socio- cultural theory which claims that learning is created in the process of interacting with others in the social environment which occurs first through person- to person (interpersonal level) and then individually (intrapersonal level) through an internalization process (Vygotsky, 1978).

Students in the process- oriented setting through communication could benefit from each other's experiences and knowledge to write with high motivation. In the supportive learning environment, students can be motivated and take more responsibility to learning and become more independent learners which are in line with the results of Veerappan (2011) findings that showed the effectiveness of scaffolding technique in journal writing to assist students to develop themselves and become independent learners. The findings were also aligned with the results of Iranian researchers who claimed that those learners who received scaffolding were more involved in the process of instruction than those who received no scaffolding (Baradaran & Sarfarazi, 2011).

CONCLUSION

This study introduced a teaching model for writing which empowered students' writing ability through utilizing various means coined by Tharp and Gallimore (1988) during four stages of process writing categorized by Seow (2002). The results of research found indication of the effectiveness of implementing various scaffolding means in a process- oriented setting on the writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. The teacher as the facilitator or mediator was always in the stage to guide students towards correction. He presented himself as a helpful and facilitator offering support and supervision. Since the nature of process writing is social, the students in the socially constructed situation learnt to work in collaboration with their friends. Through the

teacher's guidance and supervision, students learnt how to plan, write, revise, and edit their writing.

The outcomes can assist English language teachers to promote high quality differentiated instruction in educational contexts and in order to stimulate students thinking process and their motivation to learn as well as to discover the areas of strength and weakness to adjust learning experiences, supplying students with challenging and reasonable tasks and creating a social situation will make learning enable.

Similar to any other research, the outcomes of the current paper are influenced by a number of limitations. This study was limited to the number of participants, the number of topics and time. Among these limitations, the shortage of time was the most important one for this study. If there was enough time to conduct the treatment, it was anticipated that more topics could be written and more comprehensive results of integrating scaffolding means during the process writing could be accessed.

In regard to the limited number of participants, this study was conducted in one of the language institutes; therefore, the results aren't generalizable to other language institutes. Thus, as sample size of this study was small and was conducted in an academic context, and with intermediate level students, further research is needed to be done in other learning context with a large sample size such at the university level across proficiency. Moreover, further studies are required to investigate the effects of scaffolding means on other skills or sub skills.

REFERENCES

- Ariana, S. M. (2010). Some Thoughts on writing skills. *Cod JEL lucrare*, 8(29), 134- 140.
- Badger, R., & White, G. (2000). A process genre approach to teaching writing. *ELT Journal*, 54(2), 153-160.
- Bae, J. (2011). Teaching process writing for intermediate/advanced learners in South Korea (MA Thesis, University of Wisconsin-River Falls). Retrieved from <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1793/52570>.
- Baradaran, A., & Sarfarazi, B. (2011). The Impact of Scaffolding on the Iranian EFL Learners' English Academic Writing. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 5 (12), 2265-2273.
- Barnard, R., & Campbell, L. (2005). *Sociocultural theory and the teaching of process writing: The scaffolding of learning in a university context*. Retrieved from <http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/10289/433/1/content.pdf>
- Behroozizad, S., Nambiar, R. & Amir, Z. (2012). The Relationship Between Language Learning Strategies & Teacher's Mediating Role. 3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies. 18 (2), 35-48.
- DeVries, R. (2000). Vygotsky, Piaget, and Education: A Reciprocal Assimilation of Theories and Educational Practices. *New Ideas in Psychology*, 18(2-3), 187-213.
- Gere, A. R. (1987). *Writing Groups: History Theory, and Implications*. Carbondale: IL Southern Illinois University Press.

- Gomez, R. (1996). *Process versus product writing with limited English product*, Retrieved from <http://find articles.com/p/articles/mi-qa3722/is-199604/ai-887568971>.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and Practice of writing*, Longman: London and New York.
- Hammond, J. (ed.) (2001). Scaffolding: Teaching and learning in language and literacy education. Newtown, Australia: *Primary English Teaching Association*.
- Hoang, V. V. (2007). "Innovations in teaching writing skills to students of English in Vietnamese upper-secondary schools", *VNU.JOURNAL OF SCIENCE*, Foreign Languages, T.XXIII, No.1.
- HosseiniFard, S. M., & Saharkhiz, A. (2014). *Language Teaching Methodology*. Modarresane Sharif, Master of Art (MA).
- Hughes, A. (2001). "The Teaching of Language to Young Learners: Linking Understanding and Principles with Practice" in Faber, P., Gewehr, W., Raya, M. J., and Peck, A. J. (Eds.), *Effective Foreign Language Teaching at the Primary Level: Focus on the Teacher*, Peter Lang, 17-24
- Kelleher, S. W. (1999). *Writing history "a guide for students"*, Oxford University press.
- McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (1993). *Materials and Methods in ELT*. A teacher's guide. Blackwell Publishers, Inc.
- Mourssi, A. (2013). Theoretical and Practical Linguistic Shifting from Product/ Guided Writing to Process Writing and Recently to the Innovated Writing Process Approach in Teaching Writing for Second/ Foreign Language Learners. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 3(5), 731-751.
- Murray, D., & McPherson, P. (2006). Scaffolding instruction for reading the Web. *Language Teaching Research*, 10(2), 131-156.
- Pea, R. D. (1993). Practices of distributed intelligence and designs for education. In G. Salomon (Ed.), *Distributed cognitions: Psychological and educational considerations* (pp. 47-87). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Phung, T. K. D. (2004). *A Study on Teacher's Written Feedback on the Writings by the Second-year Students at the English Department, College of Foreign Languages, Vietnam National University, Hanoi*. Retrieved November 15, 2007 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Thesis_Kim.pdf
- Riazi, M., & Rezaii, M. (2010). Teacher- and peer scaffolding behaviors: Effects on EFL students' writing improvement. In A. Feryok (Ed) *CLESOL 2010: Proceedings of the 12th National Conference for Community Language a ESOL*.
- Riorden, N. (2003). *Vygotsky and His Effects on the Current Classroom*. Retrieved from <http://www-pub.naz.edu:9000/~nriorde7/Researchpaper.pdf>
- Seow, A. (2002). The writing process and process writing. In J. C. Richards, & W. A. Renandya (Eds.). *Methodology in languageteaching: an anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smalley, R., Ruetten, M., & Kozyrev, J. R. (2002). *Refining Composition Skills: Rhetoric and Grammar*. Heinle and Heinle Publishers: Boston.
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing Minds to Life: Teaching, Learning and Schooling in the Social Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ting, N. (2010). Study of "the Product Approach" and "the Process Approach" in *Writing Class for University Students*. College of Arts and Law, Taiyuan University of Technology, Taiyuan, Shanxi, China.
- Tribble, C. (1996). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford UP, pp. 3-16.
- Tsai, Y. C. (2006). The effects of asynchronous peer review on university students' argumentative writing. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Maryland.
- Van de Pol, J., Volman, M., & Beishuizen, J. (2010). Scaffolding in teacher-student interaction: A decade of research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 22, 271-297. doi:10.1007/s10648-010-9127-6
- Veerappan, V. (2011). The Effect of Scaffolding Technique in Journal Writing among the Second Language Learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2, 934-940.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Interaction between learning and development (M. Lopez-Morillas, Trans). In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.), *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (pp.79-91). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- White, R., & Arndt, V. (1991). *Process Writing*, Longman UK.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem- solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 17, 89-100.
- Zamel, V. (1983). The Composing Processes of Advanced ESL Students: Six Case Studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 165-87.

THE ROLE OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION ON IMPROVEMENT OF SPEAKING AMONG IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Somayeh Azadi (M.A)

Department of English Language Teaching, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

Mohammad Aliakbari (Ph.D)

Ilam University, Iran

Akbar Azizifar (Ph.D.)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Ilam Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam,
Iran*

Corresponding Author: Mohammad Aliakbari

ABSTRACT

Speaking can be realized as the most common way to convey the message to others and the ability to communicate effectively is a basic requirement which needs to be taken seriously in English education. Likewise, classroom interaction has been said to be one of the primary means of learning in classrooms which has a significant role in language classrooms. Thus, classroom interaction has been suggested as a way of improving speaking skills in conducting the present research. For this purpose the impact of teaching speaking strategies and participants' gender on improving speaking skills are considered. For conducting the research, 30 intermediate English language learners were studied. The research pursued a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. The results revealed that classroom interaction can be considered as a way of improving the learners' speaking ability. Gender made no significant difference for the betterment of their speaking skills. Furthermore, teaching speaking strategies introduced ways of interacting and as a result could help them improve their speaking skills. Structuring the class so that it devotes most of the class time to learners interactions and encouraging in-depth conversations among them can be good ways of promoting classroom interaction.

KEYWORDS: Interaction, Classroom Interaction, Speaking, EFL learners

INTRODUCTION

Hamzah and Ting (2010) noted the importance and the role of English language in the Information and Communication Technology world, educational field, and in real life situations. They also indicated the need to be competent in English language and in spoken English, because English is a world language. Of the four main English language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – the most important one is speaking. Nunan (2001) introduced *listening* as the Cinderella skill in second language learning and *speaking* as the overbearing elder sister. He claimed that functioning in another language is generally characterized by the ability to speak

that language. Luoma (2004) stated that “speaking skills are an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes them an important object of assessment as well” (p.1). For many second or foreign language learners, speaking skill in English is a priority. Thus learners evaluate their language learning success and their effectiveness of English course based on their improvement in spoken language proficiency (Richards, 2006). Although all English language skills are very significant to learn English language, it is by speaking that others understand one has learnt a language. If one wants to be understood or express his/her feelings, speaking is the most common way. All English language learners especially those in Foreign Language (FL) settings are at least once asked the question “*can you speak English?*” But what are their responses? Can they express themselves accurately and fluently?

Yule (2006) notes that English conversation is an activity between two or more people in which they *take turns* at speaking. At one time one speaker speaks and participants wait until s/he indicates the end of his/her speaking, usually by a *completion point* such as asking a question or pausing. Other participants can take the speaking turn in a number of ways such as making short sounds, using body shifts, or facial expressions. In this way they indicate that they have something to say.

One of the most significant features of conversational discourse is being ‘co-operative’ which has become a principle of conversation named *co-operative principle*. This principle was first described by Paul Grice. Grice (1975, as cited in Yule, 2006) stated the co-operative principle “Makes your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p.129). Four conversation maxims called ‘Gricean maxims’ support this principle: the quantity maxim, the quality maxim, the relation maxim, and the manner maxim.

It is through interaction that people give and take information, become familiar with each other’s culture, and expresses their needs. In EFL situations, due to lack of the real encountering with the foreign language, there is a need to provide similar situations in classrooms in order to make learners interact and experience using the new language. According to Allright (1984) classroom interaction which is a productive teaching technique manages the classroom language learning. “Interaction is face-to-face communication with Particular prosody, facial expression, silence, and rhythmical patterns of behavior between the participants” (Crystal, 2003). Interaction also provides opportunities for production and receiving feedback. Interaction in classroom is based on the input provided by both teacher and students. The interaction can be between teacher and students and also between student and student. Both of these kinds of interaction need to be enhanced in the classroom environment.

Nugroho (2011) stated that classroom interaction has a significant role. Experiencing something by oneself will help learning it better and in the classroom environment it has been gained by engaging in classroom activities. Interaction between students and teacher influences the learning success. Learning opportunities are more for those who are active in conversation through taking turns than those who are passive. Interaction is viewed as significant by Chaudron (1988, cited in Nurmasitah, 2010), because analyzing target language structures and getting the meaning of

classroom events is done via interaction. It is through interaction that learners gain opportunities to insert the derived structures of classroom events into their own speech (the scaffolding principles). The communication constructed between the teacher and learners determine how much classroom events are meaningful for the learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In countries such as Iran where English is used as a foreign language and it is taught mostly as a compulsory subject in educational program, the speaking skill is not duly treated, simply because of the time limitation and attention to other skills i.e. speaking has not received much attention and often does not receive due attention in final examinations.

Recently more attention is given to improving learners' speaking skill especially in foreign language situations by researchers. A thesis done by Khadidja in the academic year 2009-2010 investigated the relationship between the opportunities for production that arise in a classroom setting and the development of the speaking skill. The writer used teachers' and students' questionnaires in order to collect data. The conclusion was that classroom interaction can have a positive impact on learners' speaking capacities. Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) investigated the factors effecting students' English speaking skills. In order to collect data they also used students' and teachers' questionnaires. They concluded that teachers should use English as medium of instruction, promote interactive techniques, and cultivate English communication culture and also teachers and students should promote questioning and answering in English.

Menegale (2008) studied the expanding teacher-student interaction through more effective classroom questions. The article referred to the teachers' use of questions and tried to explore the ways in which questioning can be used not only as a means to promote learning in content and language integrated learning contexts but also as a means to enhance students' participation and, as a result, their oral production. The conclusion indicated that teachers tend to use questions which recall the students' former knowledge.

Knop (2009) in his article on the increasing use of the target language in classroom interaction presented some strategies and activities used successfully by teachers to increase target language use. Both the research and classroom practice showed that students' use of the target language may be increased through student-to-student pair interactions. Liao (2009) studied the effect of combining the four main language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) on improvement of speaking ability. The writer concluded that the teacher should provide opportunities to knit skills together, because this is what happens in real life.

Choudhury (2005) addressed interaction in second language classroom. The writer explored the problem of active participation by incorporating the researchers' views and his own teaching experience. Teachers and learners together were the contributing source in managing the classroom interaction and at the same time managing learning opportunities. The findings revealed that making learners actively participate as much as possible cannot be universally right,

as not all learners learn best in the same way. What all learners need is an environment in which they can settle down to productive work, each in their various subtle ways.

Lourdunathan and Menon (2005) examined the effect of interaction strategy training on group interaction and task performance. For this purpose they trained ten groups of students. The results suggested that training resulted in a significant use of interaction strategies and more effective interaction between group members. Faridatusolihah (2012) examined the effect of teaching English speaking using audio-lingual method on the improvement of the students' speaking ability. The sample of the research included 84 of the second grade students of junior high school 1 Cisalak Kab Subang. The writer used quantitative method and non-equivalent group's pretest-posttest design to conduct the research. The results of the research showed that teaching English speaking using audio-lingual method was effective to improve the students' speaking ability.

Mohammadi, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2014) investigated the effects of classroom structure on the speaking skills of Iranian EFL learners. They also investigated whether learners perform better in competitive, co-operative or individualistic environments. 120 participants were selected among the male pre-university students as the sample of the research. A pretest was conducted at the beginning of the course, then a posttest of speaking after the sessions. The findings revealed that classroom structure affected speaking skills and the results also showed that there were no significant differences among the individualistic, co-operative, and the control groups.

A study was done by Malmir and Shoorcheh (2012) on the impact of teaching critical thinking on the Iranian EFL learners' speaking skill. The sample of the research contained 40 advanced language learners (20 male and 20 female learners) in an institute in Hamedan. The critical thinking techniques were taught to the experimental group. The results of the study revealed that the students who received critical thinking strategies did better on the oral interview posttest and there was not any significant difference between male and female learners after giving the treatment.

Most of the attention given to improving speaking skills has been through manners other than interaction. Since little attention has been paid to interaction among all the students inside the classroom, especially in Iran as a foreign context, this study aimed at exploring the role that interaction could play on improving this skill.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Oral communication is introduced as a prerequisite to students' academic, personal, and professional success in life by Morreal, Osborn, and Pearson (2000). Students are mostly taught orally. Poor listening skills make them fail to get the material they encounter and their problems will be intensified when they cannot respond appropriately because of poor speaking skills. Students who cannot clarify themselves may be judged as uneducated. Thus the ability to communicate effectively is a basic requirement which needs to be taught. In the current study, the effect of gender on improving speaking ability is also investigated.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of classroom interaction in improving speaking skill. Thus, the main goal followed by the present study is to explore the relationship between interacting inside the classroom and improving the speaking skill.

The results of the present study can be useful for teachers and learners. It can provide a rationale for the teachers to carry out oral interaction in class to improve students' speaking skills. The results of this study can be used as a model by teachers in order to instruct and train good English speakers. The results of this study can also be useful for the learners to be acquainted with using strategies appropriate for their success in improving their verbal interaction. In addition students can benefit from strengths of others through making interaction with them. This will also improve their discussion skills and as a result their speaking capabilities. This study helps to determine the effectiveness of applying interaction in teaching speaking in EFL classroom.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have been addressed in conducting this investigation:

Is there any relationship between classroom interaction and speaking improvement among Iranian English learners?

Is there any difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking skills?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study is a quasi-experimental research with a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. In pretest/posttest design, the immediate effect of treatment and the extent to which a treatment results in learning can be determined (Mackey & Gass, 2005, Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Participants

This study included 30 participants. They were selected among the students of a language institute in Ilam, Iran. The whole participants were divided into four groups, two groups as the experimental groups and the other two as the control groups. The classes were groups of 7 and 8 (8 females and 7 males in experimental group and 7 females and 8 males in control groups). Out of the whole participants (30 participants), 15 participants were female and 15 participants were male learners. Their ages ranged from 15 to 40. All of them were from Ilam with Kurdish as their first language. The classes were mixed and included both male and female learners. The procedure of selecting the sample was non-random based on convenience sampling. According to Mackey and Gass (2005) convenience sampling is the selection of participants who happened to be available at the time of the study.

Instrumentation

In this study "Oxford Quick Placement Test" (version 1) was used as a tool to put the learners in approximately the same level. The test contained 60 multiple-choice items which needed 30 minutes to conduct.

The “Cambridge English: Proficiency Speaking Test” also known as “Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) was used as the pretest. This test included 3 parts which lasted for 19 minutes. The test examines grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

After training the learners and giving treatment to the experimental groups, the “First Certificate in English (FCE)” was employed as the posttest which included 4 parts. The whole test took 14 minutes to conduct. The pretest and posttest were performed in groups of 2 or 3 persons. For groups of three, the tests took some minutes more. They needed two examiners to conduct; one examiner gave the test and the other one just listened to the examinees’ performance and decided upon giving the marks. During administering the pretest and posttest, the voices of the examinees were recorded.

Procedures

As indicated in the previous section, “Oxford Placement Test” was given to the learners to determine their levels and make them homogeneous. For carrying out this study, the pretest (CPE) was taken in the form of two or three persons, that is two or three participants were examined each time. Each of the different speaking skills (grammar, vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, interactive communication) marked by two examiners. Then the marks were added to achieve a single mark. The marks were for the whole speaking test, not for each part of the test.

Then, during 4 weeks, 3 sessions per week, speaking strategies were taught to the participants in experimental group. Apart from introducing these speaking strategies to the learners, there was a discussion topic for each session. The control and experimental groups had the same topics for discussion. The only difference was that the experimental groups received the speaking strategies.

After performing the classes, the posttest (FCE) was given to the learners to consider their progress. During both pretest and posttest the examinees’ voices were recorded. The pretest and posttest were the same for both control and experimental groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 represents the distribution of the scores gained by the participants in the control group after performing the pretest and posttest.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of control group scores in pretest and posttest

Total Scores	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Pretest (%)	13.3	20	13.3	6.7	33.3	6.7	0	6.7	0	0	0
Posttest (%)	0	6.7	0	26.7	20	6.7	13.3	6.7	6.7	0	13.3

Table 1 shows that 13.3% of the participants in control group gained the lowest score (6) in the pretest. The highest score was 13 with 6.7% frequency. The score 10 was the score which gained the most frequency (33.3%).

The above table indicates that after conducting the posttest the score 7 was the lowest score among control group participants with 6.7% frequency. 13.3% of participants in control group gained the highest score (16). But the most frequently score gained by participants was 9 with 26.7% frequency. In Table 2 descriptive statistics of the control group scores in pretest and posttest are presented.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of control group scores in pretest and posttest

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Range	Max	Min
Pretest	8.8000	9.0000	2.00713	7.00	13.00	6.00
Posttest	9.1333	10.0000	2.66905	9.00	16.00	7.00

As it can be seen from Table 2, the mean of the total scores in pretest is 8.8. The maximum and minimum scores were 13 and 6 respectively. It is obvious from the table that the mean of the total scores in control group posttest is 9.13. The maximum and minimum score were 16 and 7 respectively. Comparing the total score means of the two tests in Table 2 indicates that there is not a significant difference between the scores of pretest and posttest in control group. Table 3 demonstrates the frequency distribution of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest

Total Scores	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Pretest (%)	6.7	6.7	6.7	13.3	6.7	20	13.3	0	20	6.7	0
Posttest (%)	0	0	0	13.3	0	13.3	6.7	20	20	6.7	20

It can be seen from Table 3 that highest frequency in pretest was pertinent to scores 12 and 15 with 20% frequency and the lowest frequency was related to scores 7, 8, 9, 11, and 16 with 6.7% frequency. The above table mentions that 13 and 16 were the scores with the lowest frequency (6.7%) in posttest. The highest frequency (20%) belonged to scores 14, 15, and 17. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of experimental group scores in pretest and posttest

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Range	Max	Min
Pretest	11.8667	12	2.72204	9	16	7
Posttest	14.0667	14	2.31352	7	17	10

The data show that the mean of the total scores in pretest for experimental group is 11.86. The highest score gained by participants in pretest was 16 and the lowest score was 7. From Table 4 it is obvious that the mean of total scores in posttest for experimental group is 14.06 and the highest score gained by participants in this group was 17 and the lowest score was 10. By comparing the mean scores gained from Tables 4, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the scores of pretest and posttest in experimental group. As stated earlier, the first research question intended to check if there is any relationship between classroom interaction and

speaking improvement among Iranian English learners. To find this relationship, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was run.

Table 5: Relationship between classroom interaction and speaking improvement

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level (sig)
Relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking skills	.850**	.000

Table 5 considers the relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking skills using Pearson correlation coefficient. As seen in the above table, the correlation coefficient is 0.850. So, there is a high correlation between classroom interaction and speaking skills. Thus, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two variables and employing interaction among learners inside the classroom improved their speaking skills. This finding supports the finding obtained by Khadidjah (2009-2010) and Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011).

The second research question aimed at finding if there is any difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking skills. To find this difference, Independent Sample Test was employed.

Table 6: Independent Sample Test for considering gender differences in speaking skill

	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variance assumed	1.745	.197	-.887	28	.383	-.93333	1.05259	-3.08946	1.22279
Equal Variance not assumed			-.887	26.609	.383	-.93333	1.05259	-3.09455	1.22788

The F value for Levene's test is 1.745 with a significance value of 0.197. Since the significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the null hypothesis (no difference) was confirmed for the assumption of homogeneity of variance, concluding that there is not a significant difference between the two gender variances.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of interaction inside classroom on improving speaking proficiency. To carry out the study, the sample was chosen among English

language learners in Safir institute in Ilam, Iran. In addition to investigating the role of classroom interaction on improving speaking proficiency, the effect of gender on improving speaking proficiency was also assessed. To test the research questions of the study, inferential statistics was utilized using SPSS software.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between classroom interaction and improving speaking proficiency. It means that interaction inside the class improves the speaking proficiency. The second question was tested using Independent t-test. The level of significance gained from Levene's test proposed that there was no significant difference between gender and improving speaking skill. Therefore, gender (male/female) of the participants did not affect speaking proficiency. Thus, it can be concluded that gender cannot be considered as a factor inhibits or helps learners to improve their speaking proficiency.

On the basis of the present research findings, it can be concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between the variables of classroom interaction with speaking skills. That is to say, by reinforcing classroom interaction, speaking skills will be improved as well. The results of the study showed that there was no difference between male and female learners in improving their speaking proficiency.

There were some limitations in conducting the research that need to be addressed. The size of the sample is one limitation of this study. 30 English language learners were investigated, of whom 15 people were female learners and the other 15 were male learners. Thus, generalizing the findings should be made cautiously. Another limitation is about the place of conducting the research which was in an institute in Ilam. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to schools, universities, and also to institutes in other cities.

REFERENCES

- All wright, D. (1984). The importance of interaction in classroom language learning. *Applied linguistics*, 5(2), 156-171.
- Bashir, M., Azeem, M., & Dogar, A. H. (2011). Factors effecting students' English speaking skills. *British journal of arts and social sciences*, 2(1), 34-50.
- Choudhury, S. (2005). Interaction in second language classrooms. *BRAC University Journal*, 2(1), 77 – 82.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Faridatusolihah, N. F. (2012). *Teaching English speaking using audio-lingual method at the second grade students of junior high school 1 Cisalak KAB.Subang*. Retrieved April 5, 2012, from: <http://www.qm2.org/mbriefs/10.html>.
- Hamzah, M. H., & Ting, L. Y. (2010). *Teaching speaking skills through group work activities: A case study in SMK Damai Jaya. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia*. Retrieved from: http://eprints.utm.my/10255/2/Lu_Yee_Ting.pdf.
- Khadidja, K. (2009-2010). *The effect of classroom interaction on developing the learner's speaking skill*. (Unpublished dissertation, Constantine University).

- Knop, C. K. (2009). *Increasing use of the target language in classroom interaction*. Retrieved October 26, 2009, from: http://www.oomroom.ca/resources/knop_article.pdf.
- Liao, G. (2009). Improvement of speaking ability through interrelated skills. *English language teaching*, 2(3), 11-14.
- Lourdunathan, J., & Menon, S. (2005). Developing speaking skills through interaction strategy training. *The English teacher*. 34, 1 – 18.
- Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Macky, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research methodology and design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Malmir, A., & Shoorcheh, S. (2012). An investigation of the impact of teaching critical thinking on the Iranian EFL learners' speaking skill. *Journal of language teaching and research*. 3(4), 608 – 617.
- Menegale, M. (2008). *Expanding teacher-student interaction through more effective classroom questions: From traditional teacher-fronted lessons to student-centered lessons in CLIL*. Retrieved November 2011 from: <http://lear.unive.it/bitstream/10278/1005/1/05Menegale.pdf>.
- Mohammadi, H., Gorjian, B., & Pazhakh, A. (2014). The effect of classroom structure on speaking skills of Iranian EFL learners: A comparative study. *International journal of language learning and applied linguistic world (IJLLALW)*. 5(1), 472 – 487.
- Morreale, S. P., Osborn, M. M., & Pearson, J. C. (2000). Why communication is important: A rationale for the centrality of the study of communication. *Journal of association for communication administration*, 29(1), 1 – 25.
- Nugroho, K. Y. (2011). Interaction in English as a foreign language classroom (A case of two state senior high schools in Semarang in the academic year 2009/2010). *English education journal*, 1(1), 50-69.
- Nunan, D. (2001). *Second language teaching and learning*. University of Hong Kong. Heinle & Heinle publishers.
- Nurmasitah, S. (2010). *A study of classroom interaction characteristics in a geography class conducted in English: The case at year ten of an immersion class in SMA N2 Semarang* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Oiponegoro).
- Richards, J. C. (2006). Developing classroom speaking activities: From theory to practice. *Guidelines-Singapore-Periodical for classroom language teachers then magazine for language teachers*, 28(2), 3.
- Yule, G. (2006). *The study of language*. Cambridge university press. New York. Third edition.

THE BASIC IMPACTS OF TASK-BASED APPROACH UPON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY ENHANCEMENT IN ESP CLASSES

Rohallah Hedayatipناه, Masume Mirzaei &
Akbar Azizifar
Islamic Azad University, Ilam Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT

The present study examines the vocabulary teaching in English for specific purpose (ESP) classes within the model of task-based language teaching, focusing on accounting students at scientific and applied university of technology center of Dehloran in the country of Iran. Two homogenous groups of students who were taking their ESP courses took part in the study as a control and an experimental group. A teacher-made test of technical vocabulary knowledge was conducted as the pretest. Vocabulary in the control group was taught using a traditional approach, whereas in the experimental group, technical vocabularies were taught on the basis of task-based approach. At the end of the course, a post-test was given to the students to characterize the impact of the treatment on the experimental group. Data analysis revealed that the task-based approach was more influential in teaching technical vocabularies compared to the traditional one. Moreover, the results indicated that the experimental group learners outperformed the control group. The results of the current study can be accounted as positive trend not only for teachers and students but also for book designers. Teachers can use this trend extensively in ESP classes so that they can improve students' knowledge.

KEYWORDS: English for specific purpose (ESP), task-based language teaching, traditional approach, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

The approach of Task-based is a revolution in ELT in the late 20th century which has been developed based on the concept of tasks. Nowadays, the concept of task and task-based methodology is the common orthodoxy in the field of language teaching and it's becoming more and more important in ELT. According to (Festco., et al, 2005) learner-centered teaching methods facilitate learning. Task-based teaching method encourages the learner to do the task and learner plays a key role in the learning process (1). This method emphasizes meaningful learning through doing completely learner-centered tasks and task is considered as the basic unit of the syllabus design, curriculum development and teaching in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). As Yarmohammadi (2005) states, in this method the learners would have the opportunity for analysis, problem solving, innovation, and critical and creative thinking. This approach is likely to provide learners with opportunities to connect old knowledge to other learning tasks in a communicative way (Ellis, 2003). Ellis indicates five task features. First, a task is an activity in teaching and learning a language. This type of activity requires learners to use the target language

to achieve a particular purpose. Second, a task focuses on meaningful activities or on the language form. Third, a task involves language use in terms of communication, to allow learners opportunities to take part in meaningful interactions to complete a specific assignment. Fourth, a task uses one or more language skills. Fifth, a task involves learners in understanding the use of the target language. Ellis (2003) also suggests that the task-based approach brings a variety of benefits to learners; one of the most important is motivation. Motivation is therefore likely to be seen as the key to all learning. Once students are motivated, they can complete the given tasks or desired goals (Brophy, 2005). Since the present paper examines the impact of TBLT on increasing vocabulary in ESP classes it is better to have considerations on both ESP and vocabulary. The most important difference lies in the learners and their purposes for learning English. ESP students are usually adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job-related functions. An ESP program is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required. ESP concentrates more on language in context than on teaching grammar and language structures. It covers subjects varying from accounting or computer science to tourism and business management. The ESP focal point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the students' real world (or wishes); instead, it is integrated into a subject matter area important to the learners.

Definition of ESP (Dudley-Evans, 1997) is as follows: in terms of general characteristics¹. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners ². ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves ³. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre. In terms of variable characteristics: ¹. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines. ². ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. ³. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level. ⁴. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. ⁵. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems. Vocabulary is viewed as a major part of language proficiency as it allows learners to use four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This importance is recognized whether the language in question is a first, second, or foreign language (DeCarrico, 2001). Richards and Renandya (2002) assume that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write" (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p.255). In terms of teaching technical vocabulary in ESP, it is most important to make a distinction between two types of vocabulary: technical and semi-technical. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p. 83) suggest two broad areas related to technical vocabulary. ¹. Vocabulary that is used in general language but has a higher frequency of occurrence in specific and technical description and discussion. ². Vocabulary that has specialized and restricted meanings in certain disciplines and which may vary in meaning across disciplines. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP should be seen as an approach to language teaching which is directed by specific and apparent reasons for learning. Their specific and apparent reason for learning English is for academic purposes and their academic study will involve specialized areas across different discipline in physical sciences as well as in social sciences. The aim of their vocabulary acquisition is surely

academic vocabulary. A rationale behind this is that learners will do academic study in English must focus on academic vocabulary which is variously known as a general useful scientific vocabulary and semi-technical vocabulary because they need to exhibit a wide range of academic skills like reading about research papers in their own fields, listening to teachers speak about their work, writing academic papers and presenting oral or written evaluations of methods or results in many cases.

We know that ESP courses receive a great deal of attention and emphasis among the EFL practitioners and learners especially at universities. Concerning the importance of ESP textbooks, Mansor (2001) maintains that they have always been an integral part of a syllabus, and that they have served many teachers well, providing them with the pivot onto which their lessons hinge. Over the past few years, various approaches, methods and procedures, have been employed to aid learners learn second language. In one period considerable attention and emphasis was paid to teaching and teacher-oriented classes. Because the emphasis was on grammatical and paid to phonological structures, the vocabulary needed to be relatively simple, with new words introduced only as they were needed to make the drills possible. The belief was that vocabulary would take care of itself once the students learnt the grammatical structures (Zandmoghadam, 2007). Most of ESP students in Iran are well aware of the importance of vocabulary in studying a foreign language; they are well aware of their need to enhance their vocabulary as well as to improve their communicative competence but in ESP courses in Iran at university level, despite new methods and approaches, most of the techniques teachers use on teaching vocabulary are still traditional and old-fashioned; the teacher emphasizes on the translation of technical text and there is no real interaction among students. Hence, the present paper indicated whether teaching to ESP student through task-based approach can be influential and practically useful in ESP vocabulary enhancement.

REVIE OF LITERATURE

According to Willis (2007) "task-based language teaching (TBLT) helps language learners make real efforts to communicate as best as they can in the foreign language which they are learning" (p.2). Willis (2004) contends that task-based instruction (TBI) is in fact a meaning focused approach that reflects real world language use for purposeful communication. In TBLT, all the four language skills are considered as important. Moreover TBLT has been more effective than CBLT in teaching reading comprehension to ESP learners (Malmir, 2011). According to Willis (1996), tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communication purpose in order to achieve an outcome (p. 23). Richards and Rodgers (2001) offer some assumptions which are believed to underlie TBLT. As far as the theory of language is concerned, "language is primarily a means of making meaning" that is, what is important in language use is meaning. In fact, Skehan (1998), in his definition referred to this point too. "Multiple models of language inform task-based learning". Richards and Rodgers (2001) believe that TBLT draws on functional, interactional and, in some cases, structural models of language. Skehan (1998) believes that when we deal with task complexity, we have to consider the structural model too. "Lexical units are central in language use and language learning", and "conversation" is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition". Cubillo

and Brenes (2009) examined task-based instruction in an ESP course in the computer center at the University of Costa Rica. This study presented the advantages of using Task -based learning to help learners from the computer center at the university of Costa Rica infer the rule of the superlative form of adjectives in English. It is important to mention that the methodology based on tasks help learners pay more attention or concentrate more on meaning. Task-based language learning is an approach in which learners concentrate more on meaning than on form. By doing this, students perform different communicative tasks, which happen to be more meaningful because they are close to the learners' reality, instead of doing form-based discrete exercises, which are usually decontextualized and meaningless because they do not see a reason to do them. Cubillo concluded that it is important to point out that implementing the TBL methodology in an ESP context is a challenging task for language teachers. As Brown (1994) pointed out teachers should take advantage of different approaches and techniques and combine them to help learners improve their skills. Subsequently, by implementing task-based instruction, learners as well as teachers will certainly benefit from a different approach to language pedagogy because it is more motivating, challenging, innovative, appealing and meaningful to students than other traditional grammar-translation based approaches. Task-Based Language Teaching has shown that learners have the greatest role in a learning process. Learners' cooperative activity and speaking in groups while performing tasks have significant role. In this regard gender is one of the effective factors in language learning.

Although many studies revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female in language learning as a whole, like (Yarahmadi, 2011; Kashefian & Maroof, 2010) but many others had different results and rejected the aforementioned statement. For example Zare (2010) investigated how the use of language learning strategies varies according to gender and revealed that in Iran female EFL learners prevailed over males in the use of strategies. Noordin, (2010) investigated the effect of task difficulty on using socio-effective strategy in listening comprehension. The results of this article revealed that experimental group generally tended to use more socioaffective strategies for any difficult task, while control group used these strategies for easier tasks or difficult at a certain level. As Kavaliauskienė (2005) writes, teaching through tasks creates favorable learning conditions for students who study English for specific purposes. In her words, task-based instruction seems to grant meaningful use of language and promote autonomous learning. Introducing task-based instruction as a practical methodology which can be supplemented in EFL textbooks, Finch (2004) asserts that by creating such student-centered and interactive learning materials, teachers can achieve syllabus goals and can help their students to become more motivated and effective learners. Yuan and Ellis(2003) found that giving students an unlimited time to perform a narrative task resulted in language that was both more complex and more accurate in comparison to a control group that was asked to perform the same task under time pressure. The students used the time at their disposal to monitor and reformulate their utterances. Interestingly, the opportunity to plan on-line produced a different effect from the opportunity to engage in strategic planning, which led to greater fluency and complexity of language. It seems, then, that if teachers want to emphasize accuracy in a task performance, they need to ensure that the students can complete the task in their own time. However, if they want to encourage fluency they need to set a time limit. Therefore, the second attempt of this study is to

demonstrate whether gender difference has any considerable influence on vocabulary learning in ESP courses in Iran or not.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study was primarily designed to investigate the effect of task-based teaching of technical vocabulary on Iranian ESP learners. It also tried to find out whether there is any difference between male and female learners in learning vocabulary through task-based approach. Regarding the objectives of the study the following research question were proposed:

Q1. Will there be meaningful differences in the performance of students taught ESP vocabulary by a task-based approach and that of students taught by a traditional method?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Sixty BA students of accounting aging from 18-26 in Science and Applied University of Technology in Dehloran city in the country of Iran participated in this study. After experiencing participants by technical vocabulary pre-test, 40 (N=40) of them were chosen and were assigned randomly to two groups of 20, namely a control group and an experimental group. The two classes included 12 male and 8 female students. The participants came from various socioeconomic backgrounds and different cities of Iran.

Instruments

Teacher-made Technical Vocabulary Pre-test

To achieve maximum of possible homogeneity among the subjects regarding their general vocabulary, a vocabulary test was administered at the beginning of the study. The reliability of this test was calculated by Cronbach Alpha Formula which was 0.95. In reality, the test included 50 multiple-choice items. The grades were calculated out of 100. The teacher-made technical vocabulary test with 50 multiple-choice items was administered to test the ESP learners' ability regarding their technical vocabulary knowledge (see appendix 1).

Teacher-made Technical Vocabulary Post-test

After the subjects were homogenized regarding their general vocabulary knowledge the task based instruction was started for experimental group within seven weeks (two sessions each week) whereas the control group was taught in traditional method. In order to see whether the task-based instruction of vocabulary had any significant impacts on ESP learners' technical vocabulary knowledge, the same technical vocabulary test with 30 items was administered as the post-test after treatment (see appendix 1).

Procedure

The research was conducted at the beginning of the semester. After homogenizing participants regarding their general vocabulary competence, the researcher divided them into two groups namely a control and an experimental group. After that, the teacher-made pre-test regarding their technical vocabulary knowledge was assigned in each group. The researcher applied two different

approaches to teach technical vocabularies to the participants in the study. The participants in the control group were required to study the texts, translate them and answer some non-task-based comprehension questions, i.e. they were taught technical vocabulary based on the traditional method. For the experimental group the same passages with some task-based exercises which fit a task-based framework were used. In fact, the class time was divided into three phases: pre-task, task cycle and post-task. In pre-task phase the researcher tried to activate the ESL learner's schemata related to the text with new technical vocabularies to motivate them to read. In the during task phase, the students were engaged in completing different kinds of tasks, and in the post-task phase, they gave a report, repeated the tasks and even dealt with language focus tasks. In fact the classes were held one session a week for one hour and a half. After 7 weeks of instruction, the teacher-made technical test was given to find out the probable differences between the performances of the two groups.

Data Analysis

After collecting data, it was processed by SPSS program. In the case of the question of the study, first of all descriptive statistics paired sample *t*-test was run to examine whether there was significant difference in vocabulary knowledge of learners in the experimental and the control group. An independent sample *t*-test was run to compare the means of two groups in post-test. To find out the probable differences in vocabulary learning between male and female in the experimental group.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To answer the question concerning the effect of task-based language teaching approach on vocabulary learning of ESP students, descriptive statistics and a set of paired and independent *t*-test was used. The result of table 1 shows that there is not meaningful improvement in the control group. As mentioned earlier, two tests were conducted in the current study. At the first stage, a pre-test was conducted so as to ensure that the two groups were homogenous in terms of their language proficiency. The mean scores obtained through the pretest for the control and experimental group were 69.53 and 71.40, respectively. To see whether the two groups were meaningfully different or not, T-test was run, the result of which is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of independent sample test on learners' language technical vocabulary in pretest.

T	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error difference
-.621	28 -	540	-.4	6.44

Since the value of the T-observed was less than T-critical at $P < .05$, ($t = 0.621$, $DF = 28$, $p < .05$), it can be understood that there was not a meaningful difference between the control group and the experimental group with regard to their technical vocabulary knowledge. Simply put, the control and the experimental groups were at nearly the same level of English technical vocabulary competency. Simply put, the control and the experimental groups were at nearly the same level of English technical vocabulary competency. To determine the influence of the Task-based Approach Model upon Increasing Vocabulary Learning in ESP Classes and traditional teacher teaching on EFL Learner's technical vocabulary enhancement in ESP classes, a post-test based on

the content taught during the course was conducted to both groups. The mean scores of the control and the experimental groups were further processed to show whether there is a meaningful difference between their reading improvements. The results indicated that the mean scores for the control and the experimental group on the posttest was 64 and 77.33, respectively. However, another t-test was run to show if there was a significant difference between the two groups of learners in their achievement scores the result of which is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Result of independent sample test on the Learners' technical vocabulary on the posttest

T	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
-2.326	28	.028	-13.33	5.73

Since the T-observed was higher than the T-critical ($t=-2.326$, $DF=28$, $p<.05$), it can be said that there was a meaningful difference between the control and the experimental group in their reading improvement. However, according to the above mentioned statements it is understood that teaching technical vocabulary through task-based approach has a significant effect on ESP learners' technical vocabulary improvement.

One of the major purposes of this paper was to determine if the application of task-based has any impact on vocabulary learning of ESP students. The indicated findings reveal that there was a significant difference at .05 level .i.e., the participants' performance in the task-based class was remarkably better than that of traditional class. Logically, the significant improvement regarding the vocabulary learning ability of the participants in the experimental group must have originated from the type of instruction they had been exposed to during the time (14 sessions) that the experiment was conducted. Another factor that may influence learners' performance is the nature of the task that may be stimulating. Richards and Rogers (2001, p.229) assert that task activity and task achievement, as a characteristic for task-based instruction, are motivational. Brown (2000) goes on to state "it is easy to assume that success in any task is due simply to the fact that someone is motivated" (p. 160). Generally, TBI has the potential to bring about moderate to large vocabulary gains. It is not unlikely that the characteristics of tasks, authentic materials, learner-centered communication, negotiation of meaning, integration of new and existing knowledge, and a meaningful non-linguistic outcome can foster vocabulary acquisition in the same manner they foster the acquisition of other language features. The second objective of the present study was to discover if there is a difference between males and females in learning vocabulary in the class which was conducted based on the task-based approach. The findings revealed that males notably performed better than females in the experimental group. Psychologists have found there are significant differences in cognitive performance of males and females.

CONCLUSION

With regard to what have been mentioned, those ESP learners who have been taught vocabulary through task-based language teaching outperformed those learners who have been taught vocabulary through traditional approach. Therefore, the traditional approach is proved to be

unsuccessful and ineffective. The present paper has provided further empirical evidence for the value of a task-based approach to second language learning. It reveals that learner-learner interaction while performing tasks provided opportunities for the learners to talk about vocabularies and monitor the language they used.

Task based language teaching is a meaning-centered methodology, according to Ellis (2003), such meaningfulness in TBLT provides an authentic, purposeful, and intentional background for comprehending and using language, and it is encouraging for the EFL learners. But in traditional method the focus is on translation and memorization of new vocabularies and students are not concerned with the context in which these technical vocabularies are used. One of the features which can be referred to as a reason for the outperformance of the TBLT class in comparison with the traditional class is the collaborative and interactive nature of the task-based approach where language use and language learning take place simultaneously. The cooperative natures of planning and report stages help students get feedback from the members of a task group. Of course, the students in TBLT receive feedback from the teacher. However, in the traditional group the students work individually on the exercises, so they do not receive any feedback from their peers and the only authority for judging about accuracy of exercises is the teacher. Therefore, it can be claimed that the existence of such a feedback provides a more relaxing and less threatening condition for learning foreign language. The results of this research can have several implications in ESP, language teaching methodology, materials development and teacher-training programs. As far as ESP is concerned, ESP learners can best benefit from task-based teaching of vocabulary. With regard to language teaching methodology, the findings of this study emphasizes the role of task-based approach in teaching vocabulary. In fact, everything turns around tasks and task completion in this approach. Concerning materials development, new textbooks must be designed for ESP learners. The books must be as communicative as possible. The books must pay equal attention to all four language skills and sub-skills especially vocabulary. They must be designed based on tasks. Like any other research this study has its own limitations. The subjects of the study included only 60 students in the field of accounting in the city of Dehloran. The inclusion of more subjects in other field could add the reliability of the study. Similar studies should be done in other countries to verify the usefulness of the study.

REFERENCES

- Batters, J. (1986). Do boys really think languages are just girl-talk? *Modern Languages*, 67(2), 75-79.
- DeCarrico, J. S. (2001). Vocabulary learning and teaching. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed., pp. 285-299). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Brophy, J. (2005). *Motivating students to learn* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principle of language learning and teaching*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Farrell, P. (1990). Vocabulary in ESP: a lexical analysis of the English of electronics and a study of semi-technical vocabulary CLCS Occasional. *Journal of Trinity College*, 10(3).
- Festco T, McClure J. Educational psychology (2005): An integrated approach to classroom decisions. New York: Pearson publication.
- Finch, A. (2004). Supplementing secondary EFL textbooks. *Gyeongbuk Secondary English Education*, XVI, 96 -107.
- Cubillo, P., & Brenes, C. (2009). Using task-based instruction in ESP course in the computer center at the University of Costa Rica. *INIE Journal of Costa Rica University*, 9(1), 1-25.
- Kashefian, S., & Maarof, N. (2010). A study of the use of language learning strategies among students in Iran. *Malaysian Journal of ELT research*, 6, 195-233.
- Kavaliauskienė, G. (2005). Task-based Learning and Learning Outcomes in the ESP Classrooms. *Studies about Languages*, vol.
- Malmir A., Najafi S., & Ghasemi A. (2011). *The Effect of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) vs. Content-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on the Iranian Intermediate ESP Learners' Reading Comprehension*. The Iranian EFL Journal Volume 7 Issue 6 (pp.79-94)
- Mansor, F. (2001). A case of extra-sensitive perception of ESP. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 1(1).
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, T. (2003). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667305>
- Skehan, P. (1998). Task-based instruction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 268-286. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0267190500003585>
- Yarmohammadi L. (2005) ESP in Iran from language planning perspective. Proceedings of the first National ESP/EAP conference. SAMT Publications. Tehran: 2005; 2: 2-20. [Persian]
- Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Harlow: Longman.
- Skehan, P. (1998). Task-based instruction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 268-286. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0267190500003585>
- Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Yarahmadi, M. (2011). Gender differences views on problem-solving reading strategies in L2 a case study of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of basic and applied scientific research*, 1(12), 2633-2634.
- Zand Moghadam, A.(2007). *The effect of task-based approach on the Iranian ESP learners reading comprehension (Dissertation)*. Tehran: Allameh Tabatabaei University; 2007. [Persian]
- Zare, P. (2010). An investigation in to language learning strategy use and gender among Iranian undergraduate language learners. *World science journal*, 11(10), 1236-1247.
- Yuan, F., & Ellis, R. (2003). The effects of pre-task planning and on-line planning on fluency, complexity and accuracy in monologist L2 oral production. *Applied Linguistics*, 24 (1).

Appendix: Learners' pre-test and post test scores

Control Group			Experimental Group		
Student Number	Pretest	posttest	Student Number	Pretest	posttest
1	81	79	1	92	75
2	35	34	2	82	60
3	55	84	3	84	84
4	70	74	4	74	84
5	59	75	5	86	74
6	60	69	6	87	89
7	95	70	7	75	90
8	89	80	8	85	75
9	65	75	9	83	85
10	45	85	10	94	85
11	90	80	11	92	95
12	85	65	12	75	95
13	78	35	13	55	80
14	80	85	14	68	60
15	85	55	15	57	65
16	80	40	16	53	70
17	69	45	17	72	60
18	54	65	18	58	80
19	39	30	19	39	94
20	40	79	20	78	94

THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON TESL TRAINEES' ATTITUDES TOWARDS APPLYING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)

Samira Nikian & Faizah Mohamad Nor

ABSTRACT

This study investigates pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach based on their learning experience to find whether they experienced CLT approach during their preparation at university. This study is a qualitative study of 15 TESL trainees in a local university in Malaysia. The instruments used to elicit data for the study were questionnaires and interviews. The results show that some of the participants stated although they experienced CLT at university but school situation is different. Finding from the present study is necessary for some changes in English language teaching in Malaysian secondary schools to achieve effective skills for global communication through English. In this regards, policy-makers can reform textbook content, increase school hours or funding. These changes can be started gradually in classroom content even under current conditions. In addition, policy makers should implement learner-centered teaching from primary school, in order to change the culture of education. Even with limited time and large classes, it is possible to incorporate activities which motivate learners to actively participate in L2 communication.

KEYWORDS: CLT, attitudes, learning experience

INTRODUCTION

I attempted to identify how the participants considered the experience of TESL trainee education at university have been conducive to facilitating CLT implementation in their own contexts as well as to improving their teaching proficiency in a general way. All the participants, on entry into the programme, attended a one year foundation courses and then joined to TESL programs. The positive experiences which can be enjoyed by the pre-service teachers from this kind of teaching and training may lead them to adopt a similar approach in their classrooms (Rogers, 1983; Marshall.1998; Baron, 1998). Many researchers believe teachers often tend to apply the same teaching method which they experience during their study in classrooms (Carless, 1998; Baron, 1998).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous schooling experiences and the everyday concepts with which they entered the teacher education program had a powerful influence how they perceived and enacted the curricular reform concepts during the practicum experience (Ahn, 2009; p.5). Recent research in mainstream teacher education [see review by Pajares (1992), Nespor (1997), Fang (1996) and

Johnson (1994)] and language teacher development (Brown and McGannon, 1998; Johnson, 1992; Cabaroglu and Roberts, 2000; Peacock, 2001) show that some student teachers' attitudes, which are largely derived from their prior experiences, may adversely affect their learning approach to teaching, pre service teachers often regard alternative models of teaching as peripheral (John, 1996) and therefore easily depended on teaching as they had been taught. The impact of student teachers' prior experiences and attitudes on their attitudes of teacher learning has been discussed extensively in the literature (Holt Reynolds, 1992; Bailey et al., 1996; Freeman, 1992; Johnson, 1994; Numrich, 1996; Borg, 2006). Whitebeck (2000) found "pre-service students' simplistic views may be the number of years students spend observing their own teachers" (p.129). Holt-Reynolds (1992) probed that the pre-service teachers' attitudes about teaching were derived from their learning experiences. He found "the personal histories of pre-service teachers appear to function as prior knowledge of what 'good' teaching should look, sound, and feel like" (Holt-Reynolds, 1992, p. 343). In this regard, Farrell (1999) found pre-service teachers who were taught mandated Grammar method course in Singapore were interested in teaching grammar in the same way they had been taught it themselves.

In his study, the pre-service teachers were asked to write about their attitudes of teaching grammar directly or indirectly. Their writings revealed that their prior language learning experiences (learning English grammar through a deductive approach in Singapore) influenced their choices. Similar to Farrell's (2001) findings, Urmston (2003) found that pre-service teachers' attitudes were based on their experiences as learners. Moreover, in 2009 Zheng (2009) state EFL teachers bring attitudes acquired from the years' learning experience as a pre-service teachers in teacher education programs. Bailey et al. (1996), cited by Ho-Yan (2004), also claimed that student teachers' pre-existing attitudes, which stemmed from their past learning experiences, could both facilitate and hinder their attitudes of teaching practice.

Mok (1994) concluded that teachers' learning experience as a learner and as a teacher guide their attitudes of teaching. In addition, Ellis (2006) also declared that different learning experiences influenced their attitudes. So, teachers' professional training can be taken into account as an important factor that plays a crucial role to form teachers' positive attitudes of teaching. Ellis (1994) found that Vietnamese teachers were not able to apply CLT due to lack of educational background in CLT. A few other studies investigated the relationships between teachers' attitudes, learning experience and pre-service teachers trainings and the results are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Research on the Relationships among pre-service teachers learning experience and training and attitudes

Source	Participants	Findings
"Learning Experience"		
"Pre-service teachers Training"		
"Bramald et al., 1995"	"162 PGCE Students"	"pre-service teachers Students' prior attitudes about learning are changed in various ways through teacher education courses".
"Anderson and Bird, 1995"	"3 training course students"	"Trainees' interpretations of their teacher education coursework are influenced by their prior attitudes".
"Almarza, 1996"	"4 PGCE students"	"During teacher education courses, PGCE students' attitudes change differently despite similar behaviour".
"Peacock, 2001"	"146 BA TESOL Students"	"BA TESL Students' attitudes about vocabulary and grammar learning are different from experienced teachers' and hardly changed".

This table suggests that teacher attitudes are influenced by EFL pre-service teachers' prior language learning experience. Since the literature shows experiences may have a positive or negative impact on teacher attitudes and some studies indicate considerable differences between pedagogically and non-pedagogically educated teachers in terms of their classroom behaviour, EFL pre-service teachers' attitudes should be surfaced and acknowledged during the teacher education programme (Zheng, 2009). Apart from learning experiences some other factors that may influence on practicing CLT include L2 teaching and learning experiences (e.g., Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999; Sato, 2002); school norms and values (e.g., Sato, 2002); parental expectations, lack of institutional support and resources, and teachers' pedagogical and practical knowledge (Wang, 2002).

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study examined the following question:

How learning experience influence on TESL trainees' attitudes towards applying Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?

METHODOLOGY

Since the aim of this study is to the influence of learning experience on TESL trainees' attitudes towards applying Communicative Language Teaching, the qualitative methodology examines the attitudes of fifteen TESL trainees with the help of survey questionnaire and in depth interview. These participants were asked to complete the questionnaire and all of them were asked to participate in the succeeding interview. The use of these two data collection instruments help validate both the answers in the questionnaire and in depth interviews in which the researcher and the subject are fully interactive (Ary et al., 2009; Mishra, 2005; Moustakas, 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Borg (2003) mentions that “teachers’ prior language learning experiences establish cognitions about learning and language learning which form the bases of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives” (p. 88). In chapter 2 we discussed the effects of learning experience on shaping teachers’ attitudes. Hence, in alignment with the first aim of the research which investigates TESL trainees’ attitudes towards CLT, the second question of the second questionnaire asked the participants about the method of their learning experience at schools. 60% of the participants experienced direct method and grammar translation method and 53.33 % of them experienced CLT as the method of teaching in their school. 33.33% of participate used ALM during their studying time at school. Table 2 demonstrates the findings of this question (What methods did you experience as a language learner) in details.

Table 2: the results of the second question of the second questionnaire

	NO
a) Audio- Lingual Method	5
a) Communicative Approach	8
b) Direct Method	9
c) Grammar Translation	9
d) Natural Approach	2
e) Silent Way	0
f) Total Physical Transport	3

Apart from the second questionnaire, these fifteen TESL trainees were also asked in both the interviews to comment on the school experiences that had encouraged them to apply CLT in the real classroom as a teacher. These experiences were categorised into two major themes one of the major theme is learning experience as encouraging factors with associated two subthemes: encouraging factor as following the same methods of their teachers, encouraging factor to not following the same methods of their teachers because they had bad memories of them. Another major theme was learning experience does not have any influence on applying CLT. The emerging findings of the interviews are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: interviewees’ results of the interviews

Shi rely	Haffifa h	Sar a	Yu an	Ste ph ani e	Na jw a	As hki n	Si Na	Ma isa rah	fad hil a	Ai ne e	A mi rah	Alja ya	She any in	Asia h
Nev er CL T, trad itio nal met hod , onl y lect	T taught most time oral present ation/G ood experie nce encour age me to	Tra diti ona l at sch ool just in UT M teach CL	Tra diti ona l No CL T at sch ool just in deg ree	Tea che r cen ter. No Gro up Wo rk, no CL T,	My T did n’t use CL T and the cla ss wa s	Usu ally trad itio nal, uni vers ity a lot, i felt bor	Tra diti onal , as I can’ t spea k I hav e to imp rove	In pri ma ry sch ool tim e T sho w vid eo	Mo stly cha lk and talk /In sec ond ary T use gro	M os tl y di re ct m et ho d a fe	Mo stly tea che r cen ter, sec ond ary sch ool one	Trad ition al, Mos tly chal k and talk, one T in prim ary	pri mar y GT M and usin g mot her ton gue and	Yes, wor k in grou p, do pres enta tion and role play

urer just tell and we S just liste n.so ma ke me feel CL T is imp orta nt, felt asle ep in clas s enc our age me to use CL T/ quit e effi cien t i cou ld und erst and less on	fallow, T are prevent ing and encour aging factor, school was efficien t and S peak English in class/ S center method S talk in class using CLT	T/ sch ool in Mel acc a effi cien t and suc cess ful. I like it. The re was lots of acti vity . The clas s was n't bori ng i thin k T use CL T	pro gra m/ som eho w sch ool met hod wor k, i ben efit fro m the inp ut	trad itio nal met hod not effi cie nt not suc ces sful	tra diti ona l and qui te bor ing i sho uld use it so sch ool lear nin g enc our age to use CL T/ sch ool tea chi ng wa s not effi cie nt	ed lear nin g/ not effi cien t but suc cess ful. S lear n lan gua ge by me mor ise all con tent	new gen erati on so enc oura ge me to use CL T	the n ask for rev iew ing mo ral val ues in mo vie w/ no infl uen ce i bec om e fa mil iar wit h CL T in UT M	up, pai r, Stu den t cen ter and S talk infr ont / mo st of tim e effi cie nt	w of th e m us e C L T, in U T M K ha iri	T use CL T, tea che r ask ed S to pre sen t sthi n cla ss, the y use CL T/ yes we get goo d sco res	use role play grou p pres enta tion song poe m. The clas s was very fun i like the way she is teac hing	sec ond ary mor e AL T /no CL Tw asn' t fun and T use chal k and talk, clas s wer e bori ng and we don 't exp ose fun acti vity , we had to do som e ho me wor k to not be pub lish ed by T	
---	--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

In response to the question that I asked in the interview about TESL trainees' school time (Do you think that your English learning experience in middle and high school encouraged you to implement CLT or prevented you from using CLT in your teaching?), the majority of the participants commented that a few of their English teachers were very good and used CLT to

arouse their interest in teaching the language. Some of them were satisfied with the way of their school teachers and liked to follow their instructions even though they used traditional methods based on the text books for example Maisarah said;

S; i think it is ok and successful because most of us the level of proficiency is quite good. We are doing well because we learn English quite ourselves at home and we learn English by ourselves so the waviness of English is already in minds so the teacher just asked us on write an essay and submit it to me tomorrow so she correcting grammar on the paper but not giving us very direct comments about articles or past and present tense

R; So you mean their teaching was not efficient? You use self study?

S; ya self study

S; primary and secondary both of them traditional methods where spelling text and only use the text books and teacher only focus on giving in put too much because most of us already know the basic and most of us know the structure of sentence so we just in the class create an essay and submit it to the teacher and we have accurate lesson and direct lesson about grammar

R; now you teach grammar directly?

S; yes, yes, yes

R; What methods were used to teach you English in school? Did the school teachers incorporate CLT in their teaching?

S; no because before this the school did not have computer lab and it is not using the technology or the facilities very much so we were just using textbook, traditional methods and work book and like that

Maisarah believed they learned English through self study not by the helps of teachers. She thought this way of learning was efficient because she taught her level of English proficiency and her friends was good. The same as Maisarah, Amirah also liked to follow her teachers' methods of teaching in secondary school but opposite to Maisarah she experienced pair work and group work and became aware of the advantages of student-center class and liked to do the same in her classroom. She said: "*i think it encouraged me because I like to do group work and pair work because is more fun than just listening to the teacher talking*" (second interview Amirah, line 38-39). In addition, Fadhila also remembered one of her teachers in secondary school who made the class learning fun. She stated "*I think most of the times they used chalk and talk but once in a while the teachers use songs, use poems she knows how to make learning fun*" but "*previously in my high school my teachers i still remember one teacher who I looked up the most because she was really warm and kind but at the same time she had that side when she needs to be very strict*" (Fadhila's second interview line 12-14 and 20-2).

Interestingly, some of the participants expressed they did not like the teacher center classes of school time learning and those bad memories encouraged them to use CLT in their classroom now. The following extracts show this issue.

S; ok class was very routine in traditional way the method that teachers always use was grammar translation they always tell me directly what is essay about and they translate each

words because some of my friends did not understand. They (the teachers) always did aloud reading together and they (the students) always repeat after my teacher. I think it is a very traditional way to learn English right?

So i think my English learning experience I think encourage me to implement CLT because since ***I felt bored learning in traditional way*** so I want students feel happy and joyful when learning English so i really try to use as much as CLT

S; Ok in my memory my teachers asked me to do many questions by following the format examinations so we can get A in the exam

R; What methods were used to teach you English in school? Did the school teachers incorporate CLT in their teaching?

S; I think no in my time there is no CLT method. It was grammar translation method

S; I think it encourage me to implement CLT because i have experience that ***I could not speak*** in English. I can read but i can't speak so i have to improve the new generation

S: "Secondary school no they used direct teaching method

R: can you remember how was the class?

S; many of the time like writing class try to write, grammar class also teacher by teacher give example and do practice it is more for exam rather than learning English

Correspondingly, Ainee felt the learning experience that she had gotten from the school time encouraged her to use CLT in her classroom. She said:

"the learning experience actually encourage me to implement CLT but bad memory that I try not to do them. What I am doing now in practical time, I always note from students will know what students need like previously what I need from the teachers now I can do for them as a teacher"

Ernie Aljaya also was not satisfied about her secondary school times and she tried not to follow the ways of her secondary school teaching but she tried to follow the way of one her teachers in primary school. She said:

S: Secondary school no they used direct teaching method

R: can you remember how was the class?

S; many of the time like writing class try to write, grammar class also teacher by teacher give example and do practice it is more for exam rather than learning English

S; I use my experience to teach the students because I am one of those students that always neglect what the teacher says in front ok i am one of the students who sleep behind why i sleep because the way the teachers taught is quite boring because it is chalk and talk and actually i want to change that I don't want my students to sleep in my classroom that is why I use CLT. I want everyone to interact

Ernie also told me that she had a very good experience with one of her English teacher in primary school she said:

S; during my time most of the students use chalk and talk but there is one teacher I really like during my primary school she did some CLT she used some songs and poems and role play and it is very fun and I like the way she is teaching during my primary but during my secondary most of them are in chalk and talk and then how I learn English before entered UTM. I used to listen to English songs

The same as Aljaya, Sheanyin also confessed that although she did not like some of the rules and behaviours of teachers in school time and tries not to apply them in her class, they are still some actions that she follows them in her own class. She said:

S; i think i will not the traditional way to teach my students now because quite boring and when class is boring and students will not learn

R; Do you think that your own education as a student has had any influence on the way you teach? How?

S; yes like dr khairi i try to use that method to teach students

R; Based on your observation of your school teacher's teaching, to what extent would you say your approach to foreign language teaching is similar to or different from hers?

S; actually is a bit different what my teacher implement but then i also use some of the methods that teacher used like punishment

R; Why some of them u don't do maybe

S; I don't really like them because it is boring

Surprisingly, Sara contended that although she had good experiences at school, she did not like using CLT because she thought good learning experience is not the encouraging factor in using CLT. She believed students' lack of motivation and proficiency act as inhibiting factors in applying CLT.

*S; so because i don't think it is suitable for the students because they have **low proficiency** and it is one problem and then they are very **restless and run a round** and do not want to participate **not motivated***

R; How do you find your students' participation and performance in class? You said not good and you are not satisfied with them yes?

S; Yes

Based on the interview results, 70-80% of class time at school time was teacher talking while just one of the participants who went to a school in Melaka stated that the teacher talking was just 20% during school time and most of the time students were talking in the class. One of them also expressed although during primary school TTT was 60-70% but during secondary the TTT decreased to 40-50%. The participants also showed their disagreement on traditional teaching in which teachers' talking time was very high by answering to question number 9 and 10 of the first questionnaire. The tables 4.4 and 4.5 demonstrate their answers.

Table 4: results from question number 9 of the first interview

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2.00	5	33.3	33.3	33.3
3.00	5	33.3	33.3	66.7
4.00	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

According to the following table, 10 of the participants (66.6%) believed student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher' talk while 33.3 % believed teacher talk should exceed student talk during language classes for instructing, explaining and giving feedback.

Table 5: results from question number 10 of the first interview

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	3	20.0	20.0	20.0
2.00	7	46.7	46.7	66.7
3.00	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	15	100.0	100.0	

66.6 % (10 out of 15) of the participants believed Student talk should be equal if not greater than teacher' talk while just 33.3 % (5 out of 15) of them agreed teachers talk should exceed students talk. This awareness of decreasing TTT in the class may be the results of the new method of studying at university.

CONCLUSION

In this section some conclusions drawn by researcher about the influence of learning experience in TESL trainees' attitudes. It can be concluded through the themes that learning experience plays an important role in shaping TESL trainees' attitudes. According to the findings presented in the above table, the majority of participants reveal that they avoid following Audio Lingual Method and traditional methods because they had negative backgrounds in learning via ALM and GTM.

Limitation of the study

The current study is a study of the fifteen TESL trainees' attitudes towards CLT in Malaysia. Thus, generablizability of the results is limited. It is suggested that a large-scale study of the same research topic carry out in Malaysia and other Asian contexts in order to yield a greater generablizability.

REFERENCES

- Almarza, G.G. (1996). Student foreign language teachers' knowledge growth. In D. Freeman and J.C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher Learning in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.

- Anderson, L., & Bird, T. (1995). How three prospective teachers construed three cases of teaching. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 11(5), 479-499.
- Bailey, K. M., Bergthold, B., Braunstein, B., JagodzinskiFleischman, N., Holbrook, M. P., Tuman, J., Waissbluth, X., & Zambo, L. J. (1996). The language learners' autobiography: examining the "apprenticeship of observation". In D. Freeman and J. C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher Learning in Language Teaching* (pp. 11-29). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Baron, J. (1998). Using learner-centred assessment on a large scale. In N. Lambert & L. McCombs, eds. *How Students Learn. Reforming Schools through Learner -Centred Education*. Washington: American psychological Association. Chapter 9, p. 211-240.
- Borg, S (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, 36, 81 -109.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. London: Continuum.
- Bramald, R. Hardman, F., & Leat, D. (1995). Initial teacher trainee and their views of teaching and learning. *Teaching and teacher education*, 11 (1), 23-31
- Carless, D., 1998. A case study of curriculum implementation in Hong Kong. *System*, 26, p. 353-368.
- Cabaroglu, N., & Roberts, J. (2000). Development in student teachers' pre-existing beliefs during a 1-year PGCE programme. *System*, 28(3), 387-402.
- Ellis, E. M. (2006). Language Learning experience as a contributor to ESOL teacher cognition. *TESL_EJ*, 10 (1).
- Fang, Z. (1996). A review of research on teacher attitudes and practices. *Educational Research*, 38(1), 47-65.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (1999). The reflective assignment: unlocking pre-service teachers' attitudes on grammar teaching. *RELC Journal*, 30 (2), 1-17.
- Farrell, T. S. C., & Lim. P. C. P. (2005). Conceptions of grammar teaching: A case study of teachers' attitudes and classroom practices. *TESL-EJ*, 9(2). Retrieved November 6, 2008, from [http:// tesl-ej.org/ej34/a9](http://tesl-ej.org/ej34/a9).
- Freeman, D. (1992). Language teacher education, emerging discourse, and change in classroom practice. In J. Flowerdew and M. Brock and S. Hsia (Eds.), *Perspectives on second language teacher education* (pp. 1-21). Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.
- Gaudart, H. (1987). English Language teacher education in Malaysia. *The English teacher*. 17, 1-13.
- Holt-Reynolds, D. (1992). Personal history-based attitudes as relevant prior knowledge in course work. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29, 325-349.
- Johnson, K. E. (1994). The emerging attitudes and instructional practices of pre-service English as a second language teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10 (4), 439-52.
- Marshall, H. (1998). Teaching educational psychology: learner-centred and constructivist perspectives. In N. Lambert & L. McCombs. eds. *How Students Learn. Reforming Schools through Learner -Centred Education*. Washington: American psychological Association. Chapter 17, 449-461.
- Mok, W.E. (1994). Reflecting on Reflections: A Case Study of Experienced and Inexperienced ESL Teachers. *System*, 22 (1), 93-111.

- Nespor, J. (1987). The role of attitudes in the practice of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 19(4), 317-328.
- Numrich, C. (1996). On becoming a language teacher: Insights from diary studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30 (1), 131-53.
- Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' attitudes and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62(3), 307-332.
- Peacock, M. (2001). Pre-service teachers ESL teachers' attitudes about second language learning: A longitudinal study. *System*, 29(2), 177-195.
- Rogers, C. (1983). *Freedom to learn for the 80's*. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Sato, K., & Kleinsasser, R. (1999). Communicative language teaching (CLT): Practical attitude. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(4), 494-517.
- Urmston, A. (2003). Learning to Teach English in Hong Kong: The Opinions of Teachers in Training. *Language and Education*, 17(2), 112-137.
- Wang, Ch. (2002). Innovative teaching in EFL contexts: The case of Taiwan. In *Communicative Language Teaching in Translation: Contexts and Concerns in Teacher Education*, S. J. Savignon (ed.), 131-153. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Zheng, H. (2009). A review of research on EFL pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices. *Journal of Cambridge Studies*. 4 (1).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFL TEACHERS' CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB SATISFACTION

Dr. Fatemi, M.A.

Professor at Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Iran

Najafzade, F.

MA Student at Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Iran

Sadeghzade, H.

MA Student at Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction among Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) teachers. The present study sought to investigate the correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their job satisfaction. A sample including 110 Iranian EFL teachers completed two questionnaires, e.g. Job Satisfaction adopted from Karavas (2010) and Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Cultural Intelligence Center (2005). Results of correlation indicated a direct significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their job satisfaction. This study can help teacher educators to implement some cultural material to their curriculum for teaching prospective teachers.

KEYWORDS: EFL Teachers, Cultural Intelligence, Job Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction simply means as the extent to which employees are content with their jobs. The issue is important for both employers and employees (Kazerouni & Sadighi, 2014). Kazerouni and Sadighi (2014) view Job satisfaction as the fulfillment acquired by experiencing a variety of job activities and rewards. Cranny, Smith and Stone (1992) define job satisfaction as “an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to a job that results from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those that are desired (expected, deserved, and so on.)”(p.1). Spector (1997) defines job satisfaction as “how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs”(p.2). Job satisfaction has also been defined “as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke 1976, p.1300).

Another factor which is to be investigated here is EFL teachers' cultural intelligence (CQ). The term can be defined as knowledge of a variety of cultures. It is a multidimensional construct which is targeted in contexts where cross-cultural interactions occur due to differences in race, ethnicity, and nationality (Ghonsooly, Sharififar, & Raeisi Sistani, n.d.). Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006, as cited in Ghonsooly et al. n.d.) define CQ as "an individual's capacity to deal effectively in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (p.101). By function, the researchers mean “the capability to grasp, reason, and behave effectively in situations characterized by cultural

diversity” (Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Templer, & Chandrasekar, 2007, p. 337, as cited in Molina, 2012/2013). Molina (2012/2013) considers such qualitatively different components as metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ for cultural intelligence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ghonsooly and Golparvar (2013) argue that cultural intelligence as the ability to effectively interact with people from various cultures necessitates cultural awareness. In the other hand they maintain that successful interaction with the members of a given culture requires the awareness of its values, perspectives, and patterns of behavior. Similarly, according to Cheng (2007, as cited in Ghonsooly & Golparvar, 2013) being aware of cross-cultural communication patterns is the first step to have harmonious and successful communication. On the other hand, Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction “as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (p.1300). Evans (1997) interprets job satisfaction as “a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met” (p.833).

Ghenghesh (2013) sought to find out the extent to which different factors influence the job satisfaction and motivation. The results obtained in Ghenghesh's study (2013) show that there are a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors which can have influence teachers' job satisfaction and motivation. The most important reason shown to enhance teachers' intrinsic motivation was good relationship with colleagues/co-workers. Along similar lines, the second ranked extrinsic factor, ‘the working environment in one’s department/faculty’, was a motivating factor for teachers to work harder (Ghenghesh, 2013). It was also found that teachers were motivated and satisfied if students showed interest in the module they were taking. It was also found that 40.8% of teachers in the different faculties and the English Department were dissatisfied with the ‘poor language level’ of students upon entry to the university (Ghenghesh, 2013).

Griva, Panitsidou, and Chostelidou (2012) conducted a research to identify factors affecting motivation and professional satisfaction of foreign language (FL) teachers employed in the Greek education system. They concluded that such factors are important because teachers' views and needs can influence their attitudes, work behavior and commitment in teaching. It is also interesting to reveal how FL teachers' expectations and fulfillment from their job are different based on teachers themselves, schools and contexts (Griva et al. 2012).

According to Doyle and Kim (1999) such factors as lack of respect from administration, lack of advancement opportunities, lack of long term employment and job security, overly heavy workloads, lack of rewards for creativity, and the malfunctioning of the education system create dissatisfaction among ESL and EFL teachers.

Petrović (2011) conducted a study to determine the level of cultural intelligence of teachers and to examine which variables could predict cultural intelligence. It was found that the participants (N=107 elementary school teachers from four towns in Serbia) showed a high level of cultural intelligence and that significant predictors of teachers' cultural intelligence included enjoyment of

intercultural communication, experiencing multicultural classes as a challenge, openness to cultural learning and contacts with people from other cultures.

Iqbal and Abbasi (2013) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job burnout among universities professors in Karachi. It was concluded that the ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in the universities helps professors control burnout. In addition, the belief one has about the cause of his fortune or misfortune (locus of control) is a predictor of burnout among professors (Iqbal & Abbasi, 2013).

RESEARCH QUESTION

The present correlation study aims at investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their autonomy. In order to achieve the results of the study the following research question research question was posed:

Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence?

Accordingly, the following research null-hypothesis was proposed:

There is not any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teacher's job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 110 Iranian EFL teachers from Khorasan Razavi province, Iran. Their age ranged from 24 to over 45. Participants were selected according to Krejcie-Morgan table (1970) out of 150 EFL teachers. They were either BA or MA. Their teaching experience ranged from 5 to 25 years. Teachers of both private language institutes and public schools participated in the study.

Instrumentations

In order to collect the required data, the following instruments were employed by the researcher.

Job satisfaction

In order to assess the participants' job satisfaction, a questionnaire composed of 15 Likert type statements was administered. The items were measured on a 5 point scale ranging from 1= highly satisfying to 5= highly dissatisfying. The questionnaire was adopted from Karavas (2010).

Cultural intelligence scale

In order to assess the participants' cultural intelligence, this questionnaire developed by Cultural Intelligence Center (2005) was administered. Composed of four components, e.g. metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral, the questionnaire consists of 20 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The responses range from "strongly disagree"(1) to "strongly agree" (5).

Procedure

Selected participants, 110 Iranian EFL teachers from Khorasan Razavi, Iran were given two questionnaires, e.g. job satisfaction and cultural intelligence scale. Participants completed the questionnaire either online or on paper. Data were collected and analyzed. Next section summarized data obtained from the instruments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To determine whether Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction relates to their cultural intelligence, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was employed. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: Results of correlation between EFL teachers' job satisfaction & cultural intelligence

Correlations			
		CQ	JS
CQ	Pearson Correlation	1	.550**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	110	110
JS	Pearson Correlation	.550**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	110	110

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

As Table 1 shows, there is a statistically significant ($r=.55$; $\text{sig}=.000$) correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence. Therefore, the null-hypothesis proposed by the researcher was rejected. According to this finding it can be concluded that the more these participants are culturally intelligent, the more they are satisfied with their jobs. This finding is in agreement with what found by Bückera, Furrer, Poutsma and Buyens (2014) indicating that CQ has positive influences on communication effectiveness and job satisfaction among 225 Chinese managers working for foreign multinational enterprises in China.

Discussion

The present study aimed at investigating the correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their cultural intelligence. Data analysis employing Pearson correlation coefficient indicated a statistically significant and direct relationship between the two variables. It can be claimed that, in order to be satisfied with their jobs EFL teachers need to enhance their cultural intelligence through exposing to a variety of cultures in the era of technology and globalization. Chen and Starosta (2006, as cited in Tajeddin & Momenian, 2011) argues that due to the rapid growth of globalization, technology development, and population migrations, communication with people from other cultures became necessary in English Language Teaching in the 1980s resulting in the intercultural attitude towards language teaching (Derin, Zeynep, Pinar, Özlem, & Gökçe, 2009, as cited in Tajeddin & Momenian, 2011). In order to become satisfied with their jobs, EFL teachers in Iran need to improve their cultural intelligence through communicating with people from different cultures worldwide. As a result positive educational outcomes may occur.

CONCLUSION

In order to investigate whether there is any relationship between EFL teacher cultural influence and their job satisfaction, we conducted this correlational study. The result showed that there is a positive and somehow strong correlation between these variables. The data were gathered through questionnaire from 110 EFL teachers in Khorasan razavi, Iran. It was shown that the knowledge of culture and cultural differences can have an effect on teachers' satisfaction about their job. There are some implications regarding this study.

First, there is a need for culture teaching in the curriculum of EFL prospective teachers' courses. These teachers should be exposed to different cultures and should learn about them in order to be more effective. Second, there is a need to develop culture awareness lessons for those EFL teachers who have finished their teacher education courses. These teachers also need to become aware of cultural values and differences. Third, there is a need for some cultural lessons and materials in EFL textbooks. The textbooks should cover different cultures from different parts of the world and make their values clear for students.

There are some limitations in this study. First, this study is just correlational and don't propose a way to incorporate cultural knowledge in teacher education courses. Second, as a correlational study our sample is limited and we need more teachers to confirm the result. Third, the teachers are all from Khorasan razavi province, and this issue limits the generalization of our study.

REFERENCES

- Bücker, J.J.L.E., Furrer, O., Poutsma E., & Buyens, D. (2014). The impact of cultural intelligence on communication effectiveness, job satisfaction and anxiety for Chinese host country managers working for foreign multinationals. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(14), 2068-2087.
- Cranny, C.J., Smith, P.C., & Stone, E.F. (1992). *Job satisfaction: how people feel about their jobs and how it affects their performance*. New York: Lexington.
- Cultural Intelligence Scale (2005). Cultural Intelligence Center. Retrieved from: <http://www.linnvandyne.com/papers/The%20CQS.pdf>.
- Doyle, T. and Kim, Y.M. (1999). Teacher motivation and satisfaction in the United States and Korea. *MEXTESOL Journal*, 23, 1-17.
- Evans, L. (1997). Understanding Teacher Morale and Job Satisfaction. *Teaching and teacher education*, 13(8), pp. 831-845.
- Ghengahesh, P. (2013). Job satisfaction and motivation - what makes teachers tick? *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science* 3(4), 456-466.
- Ghonsooly, B., Sharififar, M., & Raeisi Sistani, S. (n.d.). Cultural intelligence in foreign language learning contexts. Retrieved from: http://cultusjournal.com/1/upload/ghonsooly_sharififar_sistani.pdf.
- Ghonsooly, B., & Golparvar, S.E. (2013). Probing the Predictive Power of Cultural Intelligence on Iranian EFL Learners' Performance on IELTS Writing Test. *Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 3-18.

- Griva, E., Panitsidou, E., & Chostelidou, D. (2012). Identifying factors of job motivation and satisfaction of foreign language teachers: research project design. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 46, 543 – 547.
- Iqbal, F., & Abbasi, F. (2013). Relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout among universities professors. *Asian journal of social sciences & humanities*, 2(2), 219-229.
- Karavas, E. (2010). How Satisfied are Greek EFL Teachers with their Work? Investigating the Motivation and Job Satisfaction Levels of Greek EFL Teachers. *PORTA LINGUARUM*, 14, 59-78.
- Kazerouni, N., & Sadighi, F. (2014). Investigating Iranian Female EFL Teachers' Motivation and Job Satisfaction Level at Public Schools and Private Language Institutes in Shiraz. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, 2(8), 93-105.
- Locke, E.A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction, in Marvin D. Dunnette (ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*, Chicago: Rand McNally College, 1297-1349.
- Molina, S.C. (2012/2013). Romanticizing culture: the role of teachers' cultural intelligence in working with diversity. *The CATESOL Journal*, 24(1), 220-244.
- Petrović, D.S. (2011). How do teachers perceive their cultural intelligence? *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 11, 276–280
- Spector, P.E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: application, assessment, causes and consequences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tajeddin, Z., & Momenian, M. (2011). The Interface between Cultural Intelligence and Interlanguage Pragmatics: The Case of Gratitude Speech Act. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 4(1), 169-192.

The IMPACT OF CONCEPT MAPPING TECHNIQUE ON EFL READING COMPREHENSION: A CASE STUDY

Nouroddin Yousofi

*PhD in TEFL, Assistant Professor, Department of Literature and Humanities
Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran
nyousofi@yahoo.com*

Narges Seidi

*M.A. student of TEFL, Department of Literature and Humanitie
Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran
Narges.seidi@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

Reading is one of the crucial skills in the second language learning. One of the necessary needs for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners is to learn how to manipulate strategies to get the benefit of reading in second language context. Concept maps are one of the strategies that can be applied by the learners in their reading comprehension. They help learners to connect new information to already ones. To fulfill the aim of the study, 61 EFL advanced students were chosen. Then they randomly assigned to two experimental group (concept mapping, 15 males and 16 females) or control group (traditional method, 12 males and 18 females). A pre-test and post-test was run. The results of the pretest revealed that two groups are homogeneous in their reading ability. The experimental group was instructed concept mapping in their reading comprehension while the control group followed traditional method in their reading. The results of ANOVA and T-test revealed that two groups had significant differences in their post test reading comprehension and students in experimental group outperformed those in control group. The findings of this study have some implications in applying appropriate technique to teach reading to EFL learners.

KEYWORDS : Concept mapping, EFL advanced learners, Reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Reading can be viewed as a basic skill in language learning. One of the necessary needs of students is to learn to read for communication. Learning how to read definitely help learners to use this skill as a source of getting information. According to Swalander and Taube (2007) “good reading ability is the key to success in educational setting and this is why researchers try to find effective educational and psychological variables that can explain variations in reading ability and academic achievement (p.207)”. In addition, researchers and scholars interested in student motivation and learning in academic settings put much emphasis on the position of the students’ thoughts and beliefs in learning (Schunk, 2003). In most cases the burden of reading information

leads to rote memorization and retention of materials rather than meaningful and deep learning (Lambiotte & Dansereau, 1992).

Reading is highly dynamic interaction between a reader and the written text. The ultimate goal on the reading is comprehension, "When readers are not comprehending, they are not reading (Chastain, 1988). Reading comprehension is very crucial for university students; with help of reading they can expand their repertoire of information and knowledge. Unfortunately in Iran educational context there is no special policy to teach the students strategies for better comprehension. In this educational system, students are not taught with any special strategy and consequently they cannot interact with the text and as a result, many of them lose their interests in reading in English that leads to be unsuccessful in their English courses. So "finding an efficient approach which facilitates learners' learning and help them comprehend better seems to be quiet necessary " (Jalilifar, 2010: P 98).

Antoniou and Souvignier (2007) point out that "effective reading requires the use of strategies that are explicitly taught"(p:43). According to Barnett (1988) reading strategies are referred to as mental operations which are used by readers when they read a text and try to understand it effectively. Hence, the most successful students are those who manipulate different strategies to help them to cope with their problems in this regard. Teachers can have effective roles in introducing new strategies to the students in facing with their difficulties.

One of the strategies that can be used by EFL learners in their reading comprehension is concept mapping. The beneficial effects of concept mapping on different educational outcome has been demonstrated by many researchers (Ojima, 2006; Snead & Wanda, 2004; Chularute & DeBacker; 2004).

In the light of mentioned benefits of teaching techniques for reading comprehension, the present study aims to investigate the effects of concept mapping technique on EFL advanced students. reading comprehension. Since the reading comprehension is very crucial in advanced level Students successful in this regard increase their proficiency and make them more motivated toward their goals and achievements.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical background

Concept mapping was introduced by Joseph Novak for the first time in 1972. "Concept mapping is a graphic organizational technique design to help individual and group to explain and explore their knowledge and understanding a topic "Talebinejad and Mousapour (2007). In a concept map, concepts are framed in circles or boxes and the relationship between them are illustrated by connecting lines which link two concepts. The written words on connecting lines show the relationship between two concepts. Concepts defined as "a perceived regularities in events or objects, designated by a label" (Novak & Canas, 2006). Concept map helps learners to link previous knowledge to novel information, and manifest related ideas. Drawing map lead students to engage in learning process actively. Concept mapping reveals in what ways readers

“remember , organize, interpret, and understand information in a particular subject area” (Derbentseva, Safayeni & Cañas, 2004: 3).

Two theories support the use of concept mapping in education. One is Constructivist theory; it implies that learners take with them their previous knowledge to class which is influenced by cultural and ethnic factor (Colburn, 2000) Constructivists believe that the way individual understand their experiences forms meaning. In other words what we know is constructed by our personal experience. The other theory which supports concept mapping is Ausubel assimilation theory. Ausubel (1968) classifies learning into two categories, a) meaningful and b) rote learning; "meaningful learning happens when the learner consciously and deliberately chooses to relate new knowledge to knowledge the learner already knows" (Novak, 1998: 19, cited in Shimerda, 2007: 120).

Teaching reading strategies are among the ways to enhance learners reading comprehension. Oxford (1990) states that learning strategies are “specific action taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable and more effective ” (p.8). Various strategies can be manipulated to increase students reading comprehension ,one of them which seems to enhance students reading comprehension is concept mapping .

Related studies

Several studies have been done to investigate the effect of concept mapping on different language skills. Some of them revealed the effectiveness of concept mapping on reading comprehension. Gobert and Clement (1999) point out that, the students who used concept map in their reading, can illustrate their interpretation of the text in a visual way while in traditional method; the knowledge embedded in the written form is not completely meaningful to the learners.

Contrary and Chen (1998) found out that, concept mapping is not effective in the students reading comprehension and summarization. Accordingly Han (2006) investigate the effect of concept mapping reading instruction and traditional reading instruction for Chinese EFL learners. Three different areas were investigated: main idea reading, subordinate idea reading and reading between lines. The results reveal that there is no significant difference in three reading areas between two instructions. According to Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) teachers can apply concept mapping strategies for testing the students' vocabulary rather than testing them on word definitions. They further state that concept mapping act as a stimulator which activate the learners' previous knowledge. As a result develop related instead of isolated word knowledge.

In another study, Snead and Wanda (2004) investigate the effects of using concept mapping on the science achievement of middle grade science students. The finding of the study showed that low ability students get the benefit of concept mapping more than high ability students, in another word; low ability students outperformed the high ability students. Chularut and DeBacke (2004) investigated The influence of concept mapping on achievement, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in students of English as a second language The finding of the research revealed that the concept mapping group showed significantly greater gains from pre-test to post-test than the control group who had self –study.

Khajavi and Ketabi (2010) studied the influence of concept mapping on reading comprehension and self-efficacy of intermediate EFL students. After treatment sessions in experimental group results indicated that students in the concept mapping group showed greater achievement than students in the control group.

In the same vein, Moreira and Moreira (2011) investigate the effects of concept mapping on context comprehension of course book and achieving meaningful. The results of study show that text concept mapping is effective in students' meaningful learning and students' self-confidence enhance with using concept mapping.

Accordingly, Shaul (2011) conducted a study in which she investigated the effects of student-generated, concept mapping on the performance of EFL, grade 12, students in reading comprehension texts. The results indicated that low-knowledge students who generate their maps had better reading comprehension than those of high-knowledge students or both control groups. Besides, students' disposition toward self-generated concept mapping had a progressive positive change, regardless of students' level.

Most recently DeylamSalehi., Jahandar, and Khodabandehlou. (2013) studied the impact of concept mapping on Iranian EFL student's reading comprehension in two high schools in Iran. With regard to the results of the study, the experimental group who manipulate concept mapping in their reading comprehension outperformed the control group with traditional reading method.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study aims to answer to the following questions:

1-Is there any differential effect between reading comprehension of students who apply concept mapping in their reading comprehension under treatment and students in control group who used traditional method?

2-Is there significant differences between males and females students in reading comprehension applying concept mapping?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population under study in this research were 68 (31 male and 37 female) EFL students. They studied in Kish language institute, a private institute in Kermanshah, they were learning General English at advanced level. They were enrolled in TOEFL preparation class. The age of the participants ranged from 25 to 34. In order to have homogeneous groups, prior to the study, a placement test was held. From the first population 7 were omitted, after attending placement test due to low grade and not meeting the benchmark for attending this study. Later the participants were randomly assigned to either experimental (concept mapping, 15 males and 16 females) or control group (traditional method, 12 males and 18 females).

Instruments

A reading comprehension test was used as a pretest and posttest in the study. It included 8 passages were select from Active reading –Book two (Anderson, 2007)The test was pilot by 15 students who were at the same level of proficiency, but did not take part in the study .Based on the results of pilot study, two passages were omitted and then the modified version was used for the main study.

Besides, the researcher prepared a handout based on some sources like Novak and Canas (2006) in order to familiar students with concept mapping, how to draw a concept map as well as some examples. To measure students' progress in reading ability, a reading test was run. There were 50 items in the test .Each item received 1 scores which made 50 score for the whole test.

Procedure

The participants were first briefed about the purpose of the study .Prior to conducting the study both groups were given a reading text to measure their reading comprehension. After pretesting session the students participated in ten 60-min study sessions (two session in a week).The reading passages were the same for both groups but they were instructed by different methods i.e. concept mapping and traditional methods. In experimental group, at the first session students were introduced to the concept mapping .Then the teacher explained its effects on reading comprehension, trained students how to connect pieces of information and found the relationship between them and finally draw maps.The students were required to study the handout for the next sessions .In the following sessions the participants work on reading text, highlight the concepts, draw maps and receive feedbacks from the instructor but in control group (traditional method), the participants received no special instruction and follow conventional methods i.e., they are required to read the text, look up unknown words from the dictionary and at the end, the instructor and the students discuss about the text and some synonyms and antonyms were provided for the unknown words. At the end of treatment, a reading comprehension test with the same level of readability was run as a post test for both control and experimental group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the purpose of data analysis, the data on pre-test and post-test were gathered and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences; SPSS.16.Then ANOVA was applied to calculate differences between two groups. In order to answer the research questions, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Tables 1 and 2 show the descriptive and inferential statistics of the two groups.

Table 1. Compare the mean scores for both experimental and control group. The mean score for experimental group and control group was 30.01 (M=30.01) and 24.61 (M=24.61) respectively. The ANOVA was conducted to investigate the mean score of both groups. As showed $F=16.41$.which is significant at $P=.000$, revealed that there is a significant difference between two groups.

Table 1: Descriptive and inferential analysis of the pretest and the posttest and the results of the independent F-test of the study

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	df1	df	sig
Experimental	30.01	3.11	16.41	1	120	.00
Control	24.61	5.00				

Table 2 reveals in experimental group, $T = 8.24$ which is significant in $p = .000$ which showed that, the participant in experimental group outperformed the control group.

Table 2: Paired Samples Statistics of pre-test and post-test in both groups.

group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean	T	sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest	36.35	5.43	.97	8.24	.00
Experimental Pretest	23.68	4.35	.78		
Posttest	25.47	4.85	.88	.83	.40
Control Pretest	24.70	5.20	.95		

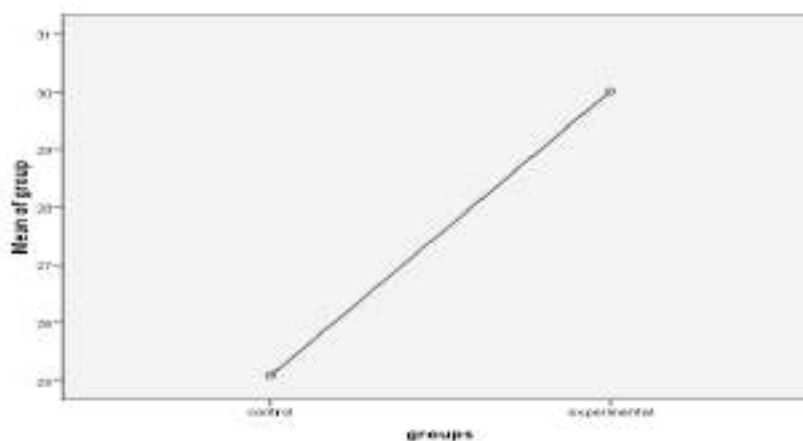


Figure 1: Control and Experimental group achievement

The above diagram shows clearly that there is a significant difference between the experimental and the control group. It confirms that EFL students that were instructed with concept mapping gained higher scores in reading comprehension than the control group.

Table 3 indicates that there are no differences between males and females in reading comprehension manipulating concept mapping instruction. The results of T-test on the performance of the students are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of T-test on the performance of the students

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	26.83	7.44	1.01	-1.04	.29
Female	28.19	6.88	.83		

According to the results of the study, concept mapping instruction had significant effects on EFL advanced level students. The results of this study is in line with Chang, Chen and Sung, (2002) who maintain that concept mapping has significant role in encouraging students' reading comprehension in writing summaries, developing vocabulary increasing self awareness in learning, reviewing material and in reading as a whole. However, the findings of this study is in contrast with Han (2006) and Chan (1998) who state that concept mapping is not effective in reading comprehension. It seem that better performance of the experimental group over the control group is that with drawing maps, the students connect their new information to their previous one. According to Ozek and Civelek (2006), proficient readers could make prediction and hypotheses about the text content by linking the new information to their previous knowledge. In concept mapping instruction the learners discover the relationship between different concepts in the text that contribute to deeper insight into the text. Concept mapping help learners to activate their background knowledge and schemata when they are trying to draw maps that lead to involvement in learning process actively and this engagement cause to meaningful learning. Furthermore, effective learning which comes from active student participation can ultimately shape their language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Effective learning and increased motivation for a subject rely on educational experiences, appropriate subject matter and connecting previous schemas to new learning (Bruner 1978; Gardner, 1978).

Concept mapping as a strategy in education is parallel with the movement from teacher to learner and as a result has the power to improve academic achievement (Peterson & Snyder, 1998). Askov (1991) pointed out that an effective teacher should help students be efficient at self-learning. Therefore, students needed study skills which they could apply while reading inside and outside of class. He also explained that the 'concept mapping' technique is a study skill that helped students sees relationships between the messages since they required learners to think through while constructing the maps. As a cognitive tool, Concept maps, can serve as a scaffold to cognitive development as they may lower cognitive load, enhance connections between

complex Constructs, and offer paths for retrieving and accessing knowledge (Novak & Gowin, 1985; O'Donnell, Dansereau & Hall, 2002).

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the study, using concept mapping technique had a significant role on EFL reading comprehension. This technique hinders memorization, which is boring for the learners and lead them to meaningful learning by connecting new knowledge to previous learned one. The findings of this study have great implications for both students and teachers.

Teachers should always seek new strategies to help students solve their problems in learning language. Teachers can introduce this technique to the students to improve their reading comprehension. In addition, it enables the teacher to perceive the area that students do not have sufficient knowledge and help them to fill this gap.

With learning this technique, Students' reading comprehension achievements enhance and in this way they will be motivated to read and reading turns to an enjoyable activity. Accordingly, this strategy allows learners to learn new vocabularies, grasp the main ideas of the text and make connection between the concepts that leads to meaningful learning. Besides, because concept mapping is a student-center strategy; they have more chances to work on reading outside the classroom context. Additionally, concept mapping is an effective tool to organize ideas and thoughts and make the retrieving the details easier. Additional research could be investigation the effect of concept mapping on the other language skills such as listening and writing and speaking. It should be noted that this study conducted in a private institute with limited number of students , .So ,this limited number of participants ,limits the generalizability of the findings of the study. Hence, findings need to be reported cautiously .In order to generalize the results of the study more population should be taken into account.

REFERENCES

- Antoniou, F., & Souvignier, E. (2007). "Strategy instruction in reading comprehension Anintervention study for students with learning disabilities", in *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, 5(1), 41-57.
- Askov, E.N. (1991). Teaching Study Skills. In Bernard L. Hayes (Eds.), *Effective Strategies for Teaching Reading*(pp.84-101). Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon
- Ausubel , D. P. (1968). *Educational psychology: A cognitive view*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Bruner, J. (1978). *Towards a theory of instruction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Butcher, K. R. (2006). Learning from text with diagrams: *Promoting mental model development and inference generation*. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98 (1) 182-197
- Chang, K., Chen, I., & Sung, Y. (2002). "The effect of concept mapping to enhance text comprehension and summarization", in *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 71 (1), 5-23.

- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing Second language Skills Theory and practice*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc .
- Colburn, A. (2000). Constructivism: Science education's grand unifying theory. *Clearing House*, 74 (1), 9-12.
- Chen, Z.C. (1998). "Teaching by using the strategy of concept mapping on the effect of elementary school students' learning scientific subjects", in *Journal of Education & Psychology*, 21, 107-128.
- Chularut P., & DeBacker, T.K. (2004). The influence of concept mapping on achievement, self regulation and self-efficacy in students of English as a second language. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 29 (4), 248–263 .
- Derbentseva , N., Safayeni, F., & Cañas, A.J. (2004). "Experiments on the effect of map structure and concept quantification during concept map construction", in A.J. Cañas, J.D. J. D. Novak, & F. M. González (Eds.), *Concept Maps: Theory, Methodology, Technology*, Proceedings of the First International Conference on Concept Mapping, Pamplona, Spain (September 14-17, 2004), Editorial Universidad Pública de Navarra.
- Deylam Salehi. A., Jahandar. Sh, & Khodabandehlou .M. (2013) The impact of concept mapping on EFL students 'reading comprehension: *Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences*, 3 (3), 241-250
- Gardner, R. (1978). Cognitive and affective variables in foreign language acquisition. *Research Bulletin*, 14(1), 1-15.
- Gobert, J.D., & Clement, J.J. (1999). "Effects of student-generated diagrams versus Student generated plate tectonics", in *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 36 (1), 39-53.
- Hibbing, A.N. & Rankin-Erickson, J.L. (2003). "A picture is worth a thousand words: Using visual images to improve comprehension for middle school struggling readers", *The Reading Teacher*, 56 (8), 758-770.
- Jalilifar A (2010). "The effect of cooperative learning techniques on college student's reading comprehension". *System* 38(1), 96-108 .
- Lambiotte, J.G., & Dansereau, D.F. (1992). "Effects of knowledge maps and prior knowledge on recall of science lecture content", in *Journal of Experimental Education*, 60 (3), 189 - 201.
- Novak, J.D., & Cañas, A. (2006). "The origins of the concept mapping tool and the Continuing evolution of the tool", in *Information Visualization*, 5 (3), 175-184.
- Novak, J.D & F.M. González (eds.), *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Concept Mapping: Vol. 1. Concept Maps: Theory, methodology, technology*. Pamplona, Spain: Universidad Pública de Navarra, 125-134.
- Novak, J. D., & Gowin, D. B. (1985). *Learning how to learn*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press
- Ojima, M. (2006). "Concept mapping as pre-task planning: A case study of three Japanese ESL writers", in *System*, 34 (4), 566-585.
- O'Donnell, A. M, Dansereau, D. R., & Hall, R. H. (2002). Knowledge maps as scaffolds for cognitive processing. *Educational Psychology Review*, 14(1), 71-86.
- Ozek, Y., & Civelek, M. (2006). "A Study on the Use of Cognitive Reading Strategies by ELT Students", in *The Asian EFL Journal*, 14(1), 3-10.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.

- Peterson, A. R., & Snyder, P. J. (1998). *Using concept maps to teach social problems analysis*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems Columbus State Community College, SF
- Schunk, D.H. (2003). "Self-efficacy for reading and writing: influence of modeling, goal setting and self-evaluation", in *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 19 (2), 159-172.
- Shaul, M. (2011). Concept Mapping: Implementation in an EFL Classroom. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2 (7), 44-55.
- Snead, D., & Wanda, S. (2004). "Concept Mapping and Science Achievement of Middle Grade Student", in *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 18 (4), 306-320 .
- Swalander, L., & Taube, K. (2007). "Influences of family based prerequisites, reading attitude, and self-regulation on reading ability", in *Contemporary Educational psychology*, 32 (2), 206-230.

DIFFERENCES IN COMPLIMENT RESPONSE ACROSS GENDER

Mehri Mohammad-Bagheri

Department of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, University of Allameh Tabatabai,
Tehran, Iran

E-mail: mmbaqeri@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Among different speech acts, compliment responses have been of interest for many researchers because they are loaded with cultural and socio-cultural factors and therefore require a great deal of pragmatic insight. In this study, the differences in compliment response between Iranian male and female university students were investigated. Data was gathered through a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with two imaginary situations in which participants were complimented by a classmate of the opposite sex, and a friend of the same sex, and were asked to write their responses to each of those imaginary compliments. Participants were forty male and female students of English at University of Allameh Tabatabai. Findings revealed that participants responded to compliments differently as the gender of the interlocutors differed. The results can shed light on the pragmatic knowledge of the respondents and the cultural and socio-cultural factors which affect the way people perceive compliments given by different sexes and the way they respond to them.

KEYWORDS: pragmatics, speech acts, compliment, compliment response, discourse completion tasks

INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have witnessed a plethora of research on pragmatics and its different aspects such as speech acts (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Billmyer, 1990; Rose & Ng, 2001, Intachakara, 2004), discourse markers, (Wildner-Bassett, 1986; Yoshimi, 2001), pragmatic routines (Tateyama, 2001; Wishnoff, 2000), politeness, and etc. Among these different aspects, speech acts such as apologizing, requesting, complimenting, compliment response, etc., have attracted the majority of researchers' attention and among different types of speech acts, compliment responses have been of interest for many because they are loaded with cultural and socio-cultural factors and therefore require a great deal of pragmatic insight.

A compliment is defined as a speech acts which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speakers, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristics, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer (Holmes, 1988). Holmes states that compliments are "positively affective speech acts, the most obvious function they serve is to oil the social wheels, paying attention to positive face wants and thus increasing or consolidating solidarity between people". However, sometimes compliments can serve another function and become a threat to the negative face.

Many studies have been conducted so far in the domain of compliment response (CR). The majority of such studies aimed to compare different strategies of responding to compliments across different communities and cultures (Huth, 2006; Wolga & Scholmberger, 2007), and others took into account other factors such as gender difference in CR (Heidari, et. a., 2009). In this study we compared the CR strategies used by male and female Iranian university students because there is an obvious gap in literature regarding this issue. The only study which compared CR strategies between males and females in Iran is Heidari, et. al., (2009)'s study which focused on Iranian male and female teenage students. In that study, they compared such strategies with regard to four situational setting: appearance, character, ability, and possession. They collected their data using DCTs and analyzed it through Holmes micro/macro strategies framework. The result of their study indicated a consistent tendency across the macro, micro levels for the female participants to use fewer Accept strategies, and more Evade and Reject strategies, than their male counterparts; that is, the females express appreciation for a compliment less and denigrate themselves more.

In the present study, such comparison was made between male and female university students. The major difference between this study and the previous one is that other variables such as the role of compliment giver's gender on compliment receiver's response were considered.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is defined by different researchers and scholars in different ways. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of speakers meaning, contextual meaning, how more gets communicated than said, and the expression of the relative distance. The same author in another place defines pragmatics as the study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. For Crystal (1997, as cited in Rose and Kasper, 2001), "pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraint they encounter in using the language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p.2).

Pragmatic competence is the competence which enables speakers to behave and talk appropriately in different contexts. According to Edward and Ccizer (2004), pragmatic competence is the knowledge of social, cultural, and discourse conventions that had to be followed in various situations. For Barron (2003), "pragmatic competence is understood as knowledge of the linguistic resources available in a given language for realizing particular illocutions, knowledge of the sequential aspects of speech acts and finally, knowledge of the appropriate contextual use of the particular languages' linguistic resources" (p. 10). Native speakers of each language have acquired such competence during their learning of language and use pragmatic rules unconsciously in interaction with others. However, language learners need to be presented with such tools.

For a long time, pragmatic competence, or the ability to behave appropriately in different situations had been ignored in language pedagogy. However, the inability of students to handle

different situations on the one hand, and the emergence of Communicative Competence Models (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Bachman, 1990; and Bachman & Palmer, 1996) in which pragmatic competence was considered as an essential part of language competence on the other hand, gave a new prominence to the subject of pragmatics in language pedagogy. In Bachman (1990), pragmatic competence was considered as one the two main component of language competence along with organizational competence.

For Bachman, Organizational competence comprises those abilities involved in controlling the formal structure of language while pragmatic competence is concerned with the relationship between users of those structures and the context of communication (pp. 87-89). As Kasper (2001) also believes, pragmatic competence is not a piece of additional knowledge to the learners' existing knowledge, but it is an organic part of the learners' communicative competence.

In SL contexts, it is expectable that learners gradually acquire such rules through their frequent exposure with the new language. However, in FL context where learners barely have any interaction in the new language out of the class, the need to teach pragmatics is the most apparent. However, Bardovi-Harlig (2001), claims that even ESL learners who have access to good amounts of pragmatic input differ significantly in their performance compared to native speakers.

At the same time, researchers found that pragmatic competence could not be expected to be developed along with the grammatical competence and it was apparent when they came across many learners who were linguistically highly competent but who lagged behind in their pragmatic ability (Lee, 2007; Eslami-Rasekh et.al, 2004; Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009; Bardovi-harli & Dorney, 1997). The same point is mentioned by Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor (2003), "learners at the higher levels of grammatical proficiency often show a wide range of pragmatic competence. Thus, we find that even advanced nonnative speakers are neither uniformly successful, nor uniformly unsuccessful, but the range is quite wide".

The importance attributed to pragmatic competence and the apparent difference between pragmatic competence of native speakers and language learners, even those who are highly proficient with regard to linguistic knowledge, highlights the importance and necessity of teaching pragmatics. The study of nonnative speakers' use and acquisition of these pragmatic rules relates to the domain of Interlanguage Pragmatics.

Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory was first proposed by the British language philosopher, John Austin. According to Austin (1955, as cited in Barron 2002), a speaker produces three types of act:

- The *locutionary act*, i.e., the act of uttering (phonemes, morphemes, sentences) and also referring to and saying something about the world.
- The *illocutionary act*, i.e., the speaker's intention realized in producing an utterance. E.g., request, compliment.

- The perlocutionary act, i.e., the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer, e.g., to make hearer do something, to make hearer happy. (p. 12)

This classification reveals that in producing an utterance, not only we say something, but also we mean something from what we say, and we seek to have an influence on our interlocutor. According to Barron (2002), the illocutionary act is the principal focus of speech act theory and it is, indeed, itself, standardly referred to as the "speech act".

However, the perlocutionary act is of concern for the study of CR because sometimes the actual effect of a compliment on the compliment receiver can be very different from what the speaker has in mind. This specially happens when the compliment giver is not properly familiar with the social and cultural conventions of the compliment receiver or when she/he does not take into account the social status of his/her interlocutor. For example, in some cultures it is common for a man to compliment another man while in others it can be totally misinterpreted. According to Golato (2005), what really makes a compliment a compliment is the context within which it is uttered. She demonstrates that the same utterance can be compliment, interruption, reproach, sarcasm or tease in different situations.

Searle (1980; as cited in Barron, 2002) believes that the central assumption of speech act theory is as follows:

.... the minimal unit of communication is not a sentence or other expressions, but rather the performance of certain kinds of acts, such as making statements, asking questions, giving orders, describing,, etc.

For Cohen (2007), "speech acts are often, but not always, the patterned, routinized language that natives and pragmatically competent nonnative speakers and writers in a given speech community use to perform functions such as thanking, complimenting, requesting, refusing, apologizing, and complaining" (p.3).

Many studies have been conducted with a focus on different speech acts such as requests (Fukuya & Clark, 2001), compliments (Rose & Ng, 2001), apologies (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990), etc. Indeed, speech acts are an aspect of pragmatics which has attracted the highest degree of attention in recent years. According to Cohen (2007), "speech acts constitute an engaging aspect of pragmatics because of the possible misfit between what you say or write in a language in the given speech act and what is meant by it" (p.3).

Compliment Response (CR)

Compliment responses have often been studied in a contrastive fashion to illuminate cultural differences in CR behavior between two speech communities. The studies presented in this section contrast how users of two different languages respond in distinct manners to compliments. One contrastive study of American and Thai's compliment responses (Gajaseni, 1994), for example, found that Americans were not only more likely to accept compliments, but that they tended to give more lengthy responses. The author also found that both groups tended to

accept compliments more from an interlocutor of a higher social status and to reject those more often from someone of a lower status. This finding might show that these groups see compliment acceptances more polite than rejections.

Chiang and Pochtraeger (1993) compared compliment responses of Chinese-born and American-born English speakers and found the American-born speakers were more likely to positively elaborate on responses, while the Chinese-born participants were more likely to deny or negatively elaborate on a compliment. These authors state that “for Americans, the least preferred type of compliment response is rejection or denial” (p.2). Fong (1998) studied the perceptions of compliment behavior of Americans by Chinese immigrants and found that the Chinese natives often thought that Americans gave compliments too freely. The Chinese speakers in this study questioned the sincerity of the compliments.

Yoko (1995) compared Japanese CRs to American norms and found that in the Japanese speakers’ responses, rejection of the CR was the ideal and acceptance of it could be problematic. The author notes that the standard American CR is “thank you” which accepts the compliment without necessarily agreeing with it and avoiding appearing conceited. Yoko also writes that compliments put the recipient in a conflict to neither reject a compliment but to also show solidarity and rapport. Yoko writes “in contrast, it is generally accepted in Japanese society that people should not accept compliments referring directly to themselves or their possessions” (53). Nelson, Al-Batal, and Echols (1998) compared Arabic and English CRs and found that both groups, unlike the previously mentioned studies, were more likely to accept compliments than to reject them. The authors noted that Americans used “appreciation tokens” (“thanks”) while the Arabic-speaking Syrians often used formulaic forms not seen in the American data.

Yu (2004) studied the CRs of two groups of Chinese learners of English, one group lived in the United States and the other in Taiwan. Similar to the present study, these participants responded to compliments in different situations with interlocutors whose status and gender varied. Yu found that the responses from the learners in the United States were more likely to be acceptances than compliments, and the responses from the learners in Taiwan were more likely to be rejections.

Not all studies of interest to this study are concerned with cross-cultural variation. Parisi and Wogan (2005) studied the effect of gender on complimenting behavior of American college students and found great variance in the performance of CRs depending on gender. They explain “males gave females a higher proportion of compliments on appearance than skill and females did the opposite, giving males a higher proportion of compliments on skill than appearance” (21). Hobbs (2003), however, had different results when she examined politeness strategies used in voice mail messages. She notes “male speakers’ use of politeness markers was roughly equal to that of women’s” (243).

Heidari, et al., (2009)’s study focused on compliment response strategies used by Iranian male/female teenage students. In that study, they compare such strategies with regard to four situational setting: appearance, character, ability, and possession. They collected their data using

DCTs and analyzed it through Holmes micro/macro strategies framework. The result of their study indicated a consistent tendency across the macro, micro levels for the female participants to use fewer Accept strategies, and more Evade and Reject strategies, than their male counterparts; that is, the females express appreciation for a compliment less and denigrate themselves more.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the present study, the following research questions are addressed:

- 1- Is there any difference between CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same/opposite gender?
- 2- Is there any difference between CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same/opposite gender?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of forty students of English in Allame Tabataba'ee University, Iran, including 17 males and 23 females, were selected as the participants of the study. Students were between 18 and 29 years old and had studied English for an average of 6 years, so all had a high-intermediate proficiency in English. To ensure their homogeneity with regard to English proficiency, all the participants were selected from those enrolled in the third year of English studies.

Instrument

A DCT was utilized to elicit data from the participants. The reason for using DCT was that they can provide us with sound data in a relatively short period of time. The DCT was consisted of two situations. In each situation the participants were presented with a compliment on appearance or possession, however, once the compliment was given by a classmate of the opposite sex and in the second situation by a close friend of the same sex. Participants were asked to identify their gender, age, and number of years studying English before giving their answers to the compliments (See appendix).

Data Analysis

Different CR patterns used by the participants were analyzed using Holmes' (1988) frame work of CR strategies which is consisted of three macro strategies, Accept, Evade, and Reject, each of which divided into a number of micro strategies as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Holmes' CR Strategies

Macro level CRs	Micro level CRs	Examples
Accept	Appreciation Token	"Thanks"; "Thank you"; "Cheers"; "Yes"; "Good"
	Agreeing Utterance	"I know"; "I am glad you think so"; "I did realize I did that well"; "Yeah, I really like it"
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterance	"It's nothing"; "It was no problem"; "I enjoyed doing it"; "I hope it was OK"; "I still only use it to call people"; "It's not bad."
	Return Compliment	"You're not too bad yourself"; "Your child was an angel"; "I'm sure you will be great"; "Yours was good too."
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	"Nah, I don't think so"; "I thought I did badly"; "Nah, it's nothing special"; "It's not"; "Don't say so."
	Question Accuracy	"Why?"; "It's right"; "really?"
	Challenging Sincerity	"Stop lying"; "Don't lie"; "Don't joke about it"; "You must be kidding"; "Don't, come on."
Evade	Shift Credit	"That's what friends are for"; "You're polite"; "No worries"; "My pleasure."
	Informative Comment	"It wasn't hard"; "You can get it from (store name); It's really cheap."
	Request Reassurance	"Really?"

However, the data revealed some new CR strategies which were categorized under the label of *Insulting* because the compliment receiver answered the compliment with some sort of insult such as "it's none of your business".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this section the kind of strategies used by the participants in different situation is explained. It should be mentioned that in some occasions, the students used more than one strategy for each situation.

CR Strategies Used by Females with Females of the Same Age

When encountered with a compliment giver of the same sex and age, female participants tended to follow an *Accept*, *Evade*, and *Reject* trend with regard to macro CR strategies. When focusing on micro CR strategies, *appreciation token* is the first popular one, and *Informative comment* the second one. Other CR strategies are *agreeing utterance*, *shift credit*, *request reassurance*, and *insulting*.

Table 2: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Females with Females of the Same Age

Accept	Appreciation Token	15	65.2%
	Agreeing Utterance	2	8.6%
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterance	0	0%
	Return Compliment	0	0%
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	0	0%
	Question Accuracy	0	0%
	Challenging Sincerity	0	0%
Evade	Shift Credit	2	8.6%
	Informative Comment	4	17.3%
	Request Reassurance	2	8.6%

CR Strategies Used by Males with Males of the Same Age

Surprisingly, male participants used only two CR strategies with their male counterparts, Appreciation token and insulting. More surprisingly, Appreciation token consisted about 94% of the responses and Insulting 5%. Other CR strategies were not used in this sample at all.

Table 3: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Males with Males of the Same Age

Accept	Appreciation Token	16	94.1%
	Agreeing Utterance	0	0%
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterance	0	0%
	Return Compliment	0	0%
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	0	0%
	Question Accuracy	0	0%
	Challenging Sincerity	0	0%
Evade	Shift Credit	0	0%
	Informative Comment	0	0%
	Request Reassurance	0	0%
Other strategies	Insulting	1	5.8%

CR Strategies used by Females with Males of the Same Age

At the macro level, females followed Accept, Evade, and Reject trend when replying to male compliment givers of the same age. At the micro level, Appreciation token encompassed around 61% of the compliment responses and Insulting 17% of them. Other CR strategies include Return compliment, Disagreeing utterance, Shift credit, Request reassurance.

Table 4: Frequency of CR Strategies used by Females with Males of the Same Age

Accept	Appreciation Token	14	60.8%
	Agreeing Utterance	0	0%
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterance	0	0%
	Return Compliment	1	4.3%
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	2	8.6%
	Question Accuracy	0	0%
	Challenging Sincerity	0	0%
Evade	Shift Credit	1	4.3%
	Informative Comment	0	0%
	Request Reassurance	2	8.6%
Other strategies	Insulting	4	17.3%

CR Strategies Used by Males with Females of the Same Age

Male participants used the same Accept, Evade, and Reject trend respectively with their female counterparts. Again, Appreciation token has the most popularity, and Agreeing utterance the next

one. Other strategies included Request reassurance and Insulting. Reject strategies were not used at all.

Table 5: Frequency of CR Strategies Used by Males with Females of the Same Age

Accept	Appreciation Token	11	64.7%
	Agreeing Utterance	3	17.6%
	Downgrading Qualifying Utterance	0	0%
	Return Compliment	0	0%
Reject	Disagreeing Utterance	0	0%
	Question Accuracy	0	0%
	Challenging Sincerity	0	0%
Evade	Shift Credit	0	0%
	Informative Comment	0	0%
	Request Reassurance	2	11.7%
Other strategies	Insulting	2	11.7%

Discussion

Based on the results obtained, the research questions of the study are discussed one by one:

What are the CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same gender and similar age?

In this situation, the two dominant CR strategies at macro level were *Accept* and *Evade* and at micro level, *Appreciation Token* (65.2%) and *Informative Comment* (17.3%). Other strategies were *Agreeing Utterance*, *Shift Credit*, and *Request Reassurance*. This pattern may be the result of intimacy between two females of the same age. Such an intimacy gives the participants the freedom to use more *Informative Comment* in which they find the opportunity to elaborate more on the subject of compliment.

What are the CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the same gender and similar age?

The results were surprising when male participants responded to male interlocutors of the same age. The majority of CR strategies were *Appreciation Token* (94.1%) which may be the sign of confidence that such participant could feel when encountered with a compliment giver of the same gender and age. However, a new category of CR strategies emerged in this situation which we called *Insulting* (5.8%). This might be the result of misunderstanding from the compliment receiver side who misinterprets the compliment as a negative act rather than a positive one. In other words, the compliment receiver might had interpreted the compliment as a sign of envy, tease, sarcasm, or things alike rather than a true compliment and this had led him to respond with a kind of *Insulting*.

What are the CR strategies of female Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the opposite gender and similar age?

When the interlocutor was a male of the same age, female participants tended to use CR macro strategies in *Accept*, *Evade*, and *Reject* order. At the micro level, *Appreciation Token* (60.8%) was the dominant CR strategy. Other frequently used strategies were *Insulting* (17.3%), *Disagreeing Utterance* (8.6%), and *Request Reassurance* (8.6%). Almost all the time, the *Insulting* strategy was used when the compliment was on appearance. This trend can have many cultural implications and shows the tendency of female participants to interpret such compliments from male interlocutors as having sexual intentions rather than being genuine. Disagreeing

utterance and Request reassurance strategies can be a sign of confidence lack and modesty among female students.

What are the CR strategies of male Iranian university students when the compliment giver is of the opposite gender and similar age?

In this situation, macro strategies were followed again in *Accept*, *Evade*, and *Reject* order. The two dominant micro strategies were *Appreciation Token* (64.7%) and *Agreeing Utterance* (17.6%). Other CR strategies were *Request Reassurance* (11.7%) and *Insulting* (11.7%). Using more *Accept* strategies can be a sign of higher confidence among male students when receiving a compliment from a female student. However, similar to females, male participants tended to use occasionally other strategies which may reveal their uncertainty and misunderstanding.

CONCLUSION

The present study was an attempt to investigate the differences in compliment response between Iranian male and female university students. Another factor which was of interest was the effect of compliment giver's gender on the compliment receiver's response.

Results of this study showed that males and females follow different strategies when responding to compliments from interlocutors of the same or opposite sex. Female students, for example, tended to be more modest in responding to compliments than their male counterparts. This modesty was observed either when the compliment giver was a male or a female. On the other hand, when responding to a female friend, female students used another strategy, informative comment, asking for more details of the compliment. In contrast, other strategies used with male classmates were insulting or disagreeing.

Male students, in general, showed more modesty to their female compliment givers than their male friends. At the same time, they used more agreeing strategies when their compliment giver was of the same gender. Part of this difference can be attributed to socio-cultural norms which dominate a society. Such norms in a society like Iran expect females to be more modest and conservative when encountered with a male speaker. However, males often do not have this restriction and tend to express themselves more freely.

Results of this study can be illuminating for both fields of language teaching and cultural studies. They familiarize us with the dominant compliment response strategies which learners of English use in their daily interactions and inform language teachers about students' strengths and weaknesses. In addition, such results can present valuable insight into the cultural norms which dominate any society. However, the present study was limited both in the size of the participants, and in their variation regarding social factors and age range. Further research can be conducted at a larger scale and with a variety of participants from different educational and social backgrounds, and different age groups. Also, the tool of data collection can be enhanced by incorporating more situations.

REFERENCES

- Alcon Soler, E. (2005). Does instruction work for learning pragmatics in the foreign language context? *System*, 33 (3), 417-435.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language Testing Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2001). Evaluating the empirical evidence: grounds for instruction in pragmatics. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Griffin, R. (2005). L2 pragmatic awareness: Evidence from the ESL classroom. *System*, 33, 401-415.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Mahan-Taylor, R. (2003). Introduction to teaching pragmatics. *English Teaching Forum*.
- Barron, A. (2003). *Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics*. John Benjamin (JB).
- Billmyer, K. (1990). I really like your life style: ESL learners learning how to compliment. *Penn Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 6 (2), 31-48.
- Bouton, L. (1994). Conversational implicature in the second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22, 157-167.
- Chiang, B., F., & Pochtrager. (1993). A Pilot Study of Compliment Responses of American-Born English Speakers and Chinese-Born English Speakers.
- Cohen, A. D. (2007). The teaching of pragmatics in the EFL classroom. *ILI language teaching journal*, 3 (2), 1-27.
- Cohen, A. D. (2008). Teaching and assessing L2 pragmatics: What can we expect from learners? *Language Teaching*, 41 (2), 213-235.
- Edward, M., & Czier, K. (2004). Developing pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom. *English Language Forum*, 16-21.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2005). Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners. *ELT Journal*, 59 (3)
- Fong, M. (1998). Chinese Immigrants' Perceptions of Semantic Dimensions of Direct/Indirect Communication in Intercultural Compliment Interactions with North Americans. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 9:245-262.
- Gajaseni, C. (1994). A contrastive study of compliment responses in American English and Thai including the effect of gender and social status. Dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Golato, A. (2005). *Compliments and Compliment Responses: Grammatical structure and sequential organization*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Heidari, M. A., Rezazadeh, M., & Eslami Rasekh, A. (2009). A contrastive study of compliment responses among male and female Iranian teenage EFL learners. *The International Journal of Language Society and Culture*.
- Hobbs, P. (2003). The medium is the message: Politeness strategies in men's and women's voice mail messages. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35 (2), 243-262.
- Holmes, J. (1988). Paying compliments: a sex preferential positive politeness strategy. *Journal of Pragmatics* 12 (3), 445-465.

- Huth, T. (2006). Negotiating structure and culture: L2 learners' realization of L2 complimentresponse sequences in talk-in-talk interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38, 2025-2050.
- Intachakra, S. (2004). Contrastive pragmatic and language teaching: Apologies and thanks in English and Thai. *RELIC Journal*, 35 (1), 37-62.
- Kasper, G. (2001). Classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics. In K.R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 33-60). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (Eds.) (1993). *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, J. (2007). The importance of acquiring a second language based on pragmatics. *Issues in EFL*, 5(2), 92-112. Retrieved December 15, 2009, from <http://tesol.sookmyung.ac.kr/download/ma01/07-SLLT%5B2%5D.pdf>
- Lyster, R. (1994). The effects of functional analytic teaching on aspects of French immersion students' sociolinguistic competence. *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 263-287.
- Martinez-Flor, A., & Fukuya, Y. J. (2005). The effects of instruction on learners' production of appropriate and accurate suggestions. *System*, 33, 463-480.
- Nelson, G. L., Al-Batal, M., & Echols, E. (1996). Arabic and English Compliment Responses: Potential for Pragmatic Failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 17 (4).
- Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1990). The leaning of complex speech act behavior. *TESL Canada Journal* 7, 45-65.
- Parisi, C., and Wogan, P. (2005). Compliment topics and gender, *Women and Language*, 29(2):21- 28.
- Rose, K. R. (2005). On the effects of instruction in second language pragmatics. *System*, 33, 358-399.
- Rose, K. R., & Kasper, G. (Eds.) (2001). *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, K., & Ng, K. F. C. (2001). Inductive and deductive teaching of compliments and compliment responses. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.) (2001). *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 145-170). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning, and interlanguage pragmatics. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.) (1993). *Interlanguage Pragmatics* (pp. 21-42). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Takahashi, S. (2001). The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 171-199). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Takahashi, S. (2005). Noticing in task performance and learning outcomes: A qualitative analysis of instructional effects in interlanguage pragmatics. *System* (33), 437-461.
- Tateyama, Y. (2001). Explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatic routines: Japanese sumimasen. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching* (pp. 200-222). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wildner-Bassett, M. (1986). Teaching and learning polite noises: improving pragmatic aspects of advanced adult learners' interlanguage. In G. Kasper (Ed.), *Learning, Teaching, and Communication in the Foreign Language Classroom*. Arhus: Arhus University Press.

- Wishnoff, J. (2000). Hedging your bets: L2 learners' acquisition of pragmatic devices in academic writing and computer-mediated discourse. Second language studies: Working Papers of Second Language Studies, University of Hawai'i.
- Yoko, U. (1995). Japanese Compliment Responses: A Comparison to American English Norms. Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism, 1 (1).
- Yoshimi, D. R. (2001). Explicit instruction and JFL learner's use of interactional discourse markers. In Rose, K. R. & Kasper, G. (Eds.), Pragmatics in Language Teaching (pp.223-244). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yu, M. c. (2004). Interlinguistic variation and similarity in second language speech act behavior, The Modern Language Journal, 88(1):102-119.
- Yule, G. (1996). Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

APPENDIX

Discourse completion Task (DCT)

Age:

Sex: (Circle One): M F

Year studying English:

Please write what you would say in response to the utterances in the following situations.

Write your response, exactly as you would say it to the person with whom you are speaking.

There is no right or wrong answer so please answer as honestly as possible.

1. A student of the opposite sex compliments your haircut. What would you say to him/her?
2. Your close friend (of the same sex as you) compliments you on your new car. What would you say to him/her?

THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE, TOPIC FAMILIARITY AND IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' WRITING ABILITY

Masoomeh Khorasani

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Alborz, Iran
(Email: m62khorasani@yahoo.com)*

Mohadeseh Amini Harsini

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages,
Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, Iran
(Email: m_amini58@yahoo.com)*

ABSTRACT

Awakening Willingness to communicate (WTC) in learners of second language is deemed the supreme goal of L2 education. WTC refers to the idea that language learners who are willing to communicate in the second language look for chances to communicate, and actually they do communicate. The present study focused on the relationships among WTC, topic familiarity and Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability to answer the following research questions: 1) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity? 2) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability? 3) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability? Seventy five male and female EFL learners participated in the study. The participants took Nelson English Language Test (200C) as the proficiency test and filled out MacIntyre et al. (2001) WTC questionnaire. They were also given a list of topics (Malekzadeh 2011) to choose the familiar and unfamiliar ones for writing tasks. The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation and paired-samples t-test. The results revealed that there was no relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. Also, there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. Findings also indicated that there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. This study claimed a bond between WTC and writing ability with regard to topic familiarity. The findings of the present study suggest that EFL learners outperform in writing when they are more willing to communicate and familiar with the topics.

KEYWORDS: willingness to communicate (WTC), topic familiarity, writing

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 90s, attempts have been made to conceptualize willingness to communicate to explain an individual's degree of readiness to participate in discourse in an L2 (MacIntyre,

Clement, Dornyei & Noels, 1998). MacIntyre et al. (1998) recognizes the difference between L1 and L2 WTC and mentions it's probably being due to the uncertainty inherent in L2 use that interacts in a more complex manner with the variables influencing L1 WTC, i.e. individual differences. WTC was originally introduced with reference to L1 communication, and it was considered to be a fixed personality trait that is stable across situations, but when WTC was extended to L2 communication situations, it was proposed that it is not necessary to limit WTC to a trait-like variable, since the use of an L2 introduces the potential for significant situational differences based on wide variations in competence and inter-group relations (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998).

To improve communicative skills one needs to use language. This is specifically why WTC is potentially of great importance. With an increasing emphasis on authentic communication in L2 learning and instruction, a willingness on the part of students to communicate seems to have multiple advantages such as development of learner autonomy, an increase of exposure and second language communication (McIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Conrad, 2001; Kang, 2005).

Researchers in WTC seem to agree that learners who actively use the language have a greater potential to develop language proficiency; since they have more opportunities to communicate with others. Thus, the more willing to communicate language learners are the more likely they are to attain greater language proficiency (McIntyre, 1994; McIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima, 2002). Therefore, employing strategies to reinforce WTC, encouraging students to involve in verbal behaviors, and fostering risk-taking on the part of learners can undoubtedly meet the goals of language learning instruction.

Designs of some useful and interesting topics for students will stimulate students' talks. Familiarity with the discussion topics will promote the smooth progress in communication activities and increase students' WTC abilities. The study of literature (Peyton & Reed, 1990; Song, 1997; Reid, 1997; Holmes & Moulton, 1997; Peyton, 1984) shows students' satisfaction and lower anxiety when they write about topics of their interest.

Students generally find writing a very demanding skill and feel anxious in the writing tasks. One of the reasons is that the writing task requires more elaboration and clarity compared to other skills. Writing teachers commonly do not look for appropriate methods to facilitate students' writing processes; instead correct their grammatical errors which results in anxiety and students' unwillingness to write (Garlikov, 2000).

Writing is claimed to play an important role in one's intellectual development and career preparation (Gere, 1985). According to Dyson (1995), writing is not merely an individual activity but a process which requires social interaction. As writing skills of students develop, they begin to apply their knowledge to the written expression more and more easily and go beyond what they have learnt (Raimes, 1983).

To sum up, learners usually communicate when they are interested. So, teachers should try to improve learners' writing ability by locating their fields of interest.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there any significant relationship between WTC and topic familiarity in Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
2. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability?
3. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H1. There is no significant relationship between WTC and topic familiarity in Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

H2. There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability.

H3. There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

In this study, an ex post facto correlational design was used to find the relationships among WTC, topic familiarity and Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability. The results showed that there were a significant relationship between learners' WTC and writing performance as well as topic familiarity and writing ability.

Participants

The participants in this study were Iranian intermediate EFL learners in Jihad Daneshgahi, Kharazmi University branch. Nonrandom convenience sampling was used for the present study. The reason is that, the samples of this study were willing, available for the study and they could provide useful information for answering questions and hypotheses (Creswell, 2008). Based on the learners' scores of the proficiency test (Nelson English Test), the total participants of the present study were 75 male and female intermediate English learners whose age ranged from 15 to 36 years old.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study were:

Nelson English Language Test

The first instrument used in this study was a 50-item placement test, with the purpose of finding the proficiency level of the participants. Based on the defined band scores, participants who scored 60 were defined as intermediate learners.

MacIntyre et al. (2001) WTC Questionnaire

In this study, the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) questionnaire developed by MacIntyre et al. (2001) was used in order to collect the necessary data. This questionnaire is designed in two parts 27 items which tests communication inside the classroom and outside the classroom context. Since in EFL Contexts learners have little, if any contact with language outside classrooms, the researcher decided to use the first part_ WTC inside the classroom. It is a 5- point Likert scale questionnaire consisting of four skill areas of speaking (8 items), reading (6 items), writing (8 items) and listening comprehension (5 items).

A list of topics for writing (Malekzadeh 2011)

All learners were given a paper with a list of strange and unusual topics used by Malekzadeh (2011). Then, they were required to check those topics they had no idea about. The purpose was to choose topics for which the learners did not have any background knowledge. Out of these topics, two familiar (*Traveling to a foreign country* and *You have three more days to live*) and two unfamiliar topics (*Your plane encounters turbulence and drops* and *Going to Mars*) were chosen.

Procedure

As mentioned earlier, convenient sampling technique was used to select samples of this study from Jihad Daneshgahi, Kharazmi University branch. In order to find the proficiency level of the participants, Nelson English Language Test 200C was used. The maximum time allocated for the test was 45 minutes. The students answered the multiple choice questions of the test by simply ticking the correct option in the test and they were asked to answer all the questions. The participants were also informed that no negative points were granted for their wrong responses.

In the second phase of the study, MacIntyre et al. WTC questionnaire was given to the students to check their willingness to communicate while they choose 1 = Almost never willing, 2 = Sometimes willing, 3 = Willing half of the time, 4 = Usually willing, 5 = Almost always willing for each item. On the same session, the students were also given a list of topics for writing. The students ticked topics that were familiar and put (X) for topics that were unfamiliar to them. The students completed the survey in 20 minutes. After examining the papers, the topics that students chose as familiar and unfamiliar were chosen. At the next phase, one of familiar topics along with an unfamiliar one were given to the students and they were asked to write three paragraphs about each. In the last phase, the students were asked to write about the second familiar and unfamiliar topics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the participants were supposed to write four writings in this study, two writings for familiar and two for unfamiliar topics. Familiarity and unfamiliarity with the topics were determined by the participants themselves. Then each of these writings were rated by three raters. In order to indicate the inter-rater reliability among the raters, the Pearson Product correlation moment was calculated. The results are shown in the following tables.

Unfamiliar Writing Task 1

Table 1: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Unfamiliar Writing 1

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.805	.730	.865	13.363	74	148	.000
Average Measures	.925	.890	.950	13.363	74	148	.000

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .80$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

Unfamiliar Writing Task 2

The second unfamiliar writing task done by participants was about "Your Plane Encounters Turbulence and Drops". Fifty seven out of seventy five participants chose this as the most unusual and the strangest topic. After being rated by three raters, Pearson Product correlation moment was run to determine inter-rater reliability among the raters.

The results of the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .77$, $P < .05$) (Table 2) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners' writings on the second unfamiliar topic.

Table 2: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Unfamiliar Writing 2

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.537	.407	.658	4.485	74	148	.000
Average Measures	.777	.673	.852	4.485	74	148	.000

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .53$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

Familiar Writing Task 1

Fifty four out of seventy five participants believed they were familiar with the writing task "You Have Three More Days to Live". So, as the first familiar writing task they wrote about this topic. Like the other tasks, this task was rated by three raters and in order to determine the inter-rater reliability, Pearson Product correlation moment was run.

The results of the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .84$, $P < .05$) (Table 3) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners' writings on the first familiar topic.

Table 3: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, familiar Writing 1

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.647	.533	.746	6.498	74	148	.000
Average Measures	.846	.774	.898	6.498	74	148	.000

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .64$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

Familiar Writing Task 2

The last task of this study due to sixty six out of seventy five participants was about the familiar topic "Travelling to a Foreign Country". The three raters rated the last task too and Pearson Product correlation moment was run to determine the inter-rater reliability.

The results of the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .87$, $P < .05$) (Table 4) indicated that there were significant agreement among the three raters who rated the EFL learners' writings on the second familiar topic.

Table 4: Intraclass Correlation Coefficient, Familiar Writing 2

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	.702	.600	.788	8.078	74	148	.000
Average Measures	.876	.818	.918	8.078	74	148	.000

If a single rater had rated the subjects several times, the intra-rater reliability would have been ($\alpha = .70$, $P < .05$) statistically significant.

The First Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity.

A Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was calculated to specify the relationship between EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. The results of the Pearson correlation ($R(73) = .16$, $P > .05$, representing a weak effect size) indicated that there was not any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. Thus the first null-hypothesis could not be rejected.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation, WTC with Topic Familiarity

		WTC
Familiarity	Pearson Correlation	.167
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.153
	N	75

In literature, according to Kang (2005), providing interesting topics for which learners have background knowledge and experience raises their interest and fosters their willingness to communicate. Also, familiarity with the discussion topics will promote the smooth progress in communication activities and increase students' WTC abilities. The study of literature (Peyton & Reed, 1990; Song, 1997; Reid, 1997; Holmes & Moulton, 1997; Peyton, 1984) shows students' satisfaction and lower anxiety when they write about topics of their interest. Similarly, Cao and Philp (2006) found that the degree of students' WTC is determined by factors such as group size, familiarity with the interlocutor, the degree of interlocutor(s)' participation in the discussion, and familiarity with the discussed topic. While Schmidt-Rinehart (1994) indicated that the subjects scored considerably higher on the familiar topic than on the new one the opposite result found here.

The Second Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability.

To determine the relationship between EFL learners' WTC and writing performances, Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was run. The results of the Pearson correlation ($R(73) = .24$, $P < .05$, representing an almost moderate effect size) indicated that there was an almost moderate and significant relationship between EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation, WTC with Writing Ability

		Writing
Familiarity	Pearson Correlation	.245*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034
	N	75

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

There is no other piece of research in the literature investigating the relationship between learners' WTC and writing ability, but Freiermuth and Jarrell (2006) investigated the effect of online chat on willingness to communicate. They gathered their data from questionnaires and from the analysis of the discourse produced by the students. They concluded that in the context of their study online chatting, in comparison to face-to-face interaction, put students more at ease and hence enhanced their willingness to communicate. Milani (2008) attempted to investigate the role of task type (oral and written), proficiency level, and gender on 190 Iranian adult language learners' WTC. The results indicated that task type did not itself determine WTC, and there was no significant difference between oral and written task in prompting a higher WTC. Willingness to communicate in the written form increased in higher levels, while the oral WTC, more or less, remained the same.

The Third Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability.

A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the EFL learners' means on topic familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. As displayed in Table 7 the subjects showed a higher mean on topic familiar writing tasks ($M = 7.38$, $SD = 1.39$) than unfamiliar topics ($M = 6.10$, $SD = 1.60$).

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics, Topic Familiarity

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Familiarity	7.38	75	1.391	.161
Unfamiliarity	6.10	75	1.602	.185

The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(74) = 8.96$, $P < .05$, $r = .72$) representing a large effect size indicated that there was a significant difference between the subjects' means on topic

familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. Thus the third null-hypothesis was rejected. The EFL learners showed a significantly higher mean on familiar topics.

Table 8: Paired-Samples t-test, Topic Familiarity

Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean	Error95% Interval of the Difference	Lower	Upper		
1.284	1.241	.143	.999	1.570	8.965	74	.000

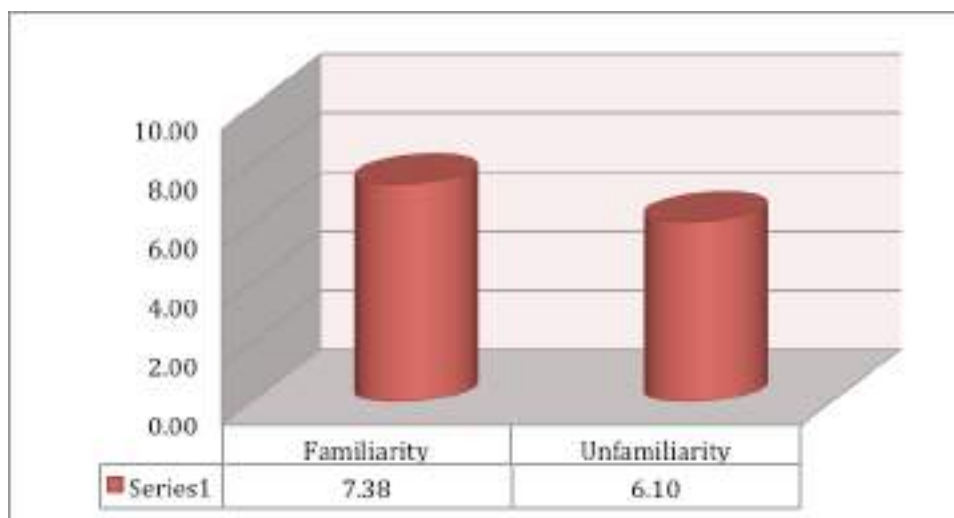


Figure 1: Mean Scores, Topic Familiarity

Based on the above figure, it can be seen that the participants had significantly different performances on the familiar and unfamiliar writing tasks. Comparing the mean scores of the writing tasks makes it clear that the participants performed better on familiar writing tasks compared against the unfamiliar ones. Therefore, the third null hypothesis can be rejected and it can be said that there is a significant relationship between topic familiarity and writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Not much has yet been done on measuring the effect of topic familiarity on writing performance in EFL setting. Most of the researches have been done on oral production, but a few studies have been done on L2 learners' written performance. Lynch (1996) emphasizes that in many cases it is our unfamiliarity with the appropriate background knowledge that prevents us from understanding something, rather than our inadequate knowledge of the language. Pulido (2007) also found that familiarity of the learners with the topics of the reading tasks leads to their better comprehension of the texts.

Chang (2006) revealed that while reading comprehension monitoring efforts were motivated by both topic familiarity and linguistic difficulty, inferencing events were primarily facilitated by topic familiarity.

In sum, most of the EFL learners, even the graduate ones have some difficulties in English writing. Furthermore, when the L2 learners are exposed with tasks having familiar topics or when they have prior information about the topics of the tasks to be performed, in fact, they automatically focus-on-meaning rather than form (Long, 1990; Schmidt-Rinehart, 1994; Markham and Latham, 1987). The findings of the present study suggest that EFL learners outperform in writing when they are more willing to communicate and familiar with the topics.

CONCLUSION

The main trust of this study was to investigate whether writing performance in learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) is related to their willingness to communicate (WTC) and topic familiarity. Three questions motivated the researcher to conduct such a study. The first question was related to the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. In order to answer the first question of the study, Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was conducted to see if there existed any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and topic familiarity. The results showed that there was no relationship between the two variables.

The second question focused on the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. A Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient was run to answer the second question of the study to examine the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability. It revealed that there was a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' WTC and writing ability.

Finally, the third question examined the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. A paired-samples t-test was run to investigate if there existed any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability. The results indicated that there existed a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' topic familiarity and writing ability.

The findings of the study can be quite advantageous for language teachers and course book designers. In any classroom context, teachers should consider the fact that not all the learners are equally willing to communicate with others and participate in classroom activities. Keeping the personality differences among the learners in mind, teachers should try to understand all learners, both willing and unwilling to communicate, and be realistic in setting the learning objectives. In order to encourage learners to communicate more in class, the teacher can pick up materials about which learners have background knowledge and experience.

Also, by the current zeal towards task-based language teaching, it seems that teachers' familiarity with learners' individual differences with respect to patterns of WTC in the foreign language can definitely help him design better tasks and assign more logical roles to students.

The results of this study can help language course book designers, too. It is not only the language teacher that must select appropriate tasks for learners, course book designers also have an important role in designing appropriate materials, so that such material can serve the needs of all kinds of learners. It is definitely a wise decision to design some activities about which learners have background information.

Similar to any other research, the outcomes of the current paper are influenced by a number of limitations and delimitations and should make the reader cautious about generalizing the findings to other situations. The researcher could not control the age and education background of the participants. Furthermore, the study was intended to make use of male and female learners to the same degree, but since the participants of this study were selected from one language institute, the researcher had problems in finding as many participants as she wished. The participants were intermediate; so, the findings cannot be generalized to populations at higher proficiency levels. Moreover, the researcher focused on writing proficiency of the participants; therefore, other language skills could not be addressed.

REFERENCES

- Cao, Y., Philp, J (2006). Interactional context and willingness to communicate: A comparison of behaviors in whole class, group and dyadic interaction. *System*, 34, 480-493.
- Chang, C. (2006). Effects of Topic Familiarity and Linguistic Difficulty on the Reading Strategies and Mental Representations of Nonnative Readers of Chinese. *Journal of Language and Learning*, 4 (4), 172-198.
- Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed)*. University of Nebraska- Lincoln.
- Dyson, A. H. (1995). Writing children: Reinventing the development of childhood literacy. *Written Communication*, 12, 4-46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0741088395012001002>
- Freiermuth, G., & Jarrell, D. (2006). Willingness to communicate: can online chat help? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16 (2), 189-212.
- Garlikov, R. (2000). *Significant Differences Between Writing and Talking: Why Talking Seems Easier*. Retrieved June 21, 2007, from <http://www.garlikov.com/talkwrite.htm>
- Gere, A. R. (Ed.). (1985). *Roots in the sawdust: Writing to learn across the disciplines*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Holmes, V.L., & Moulton, M.R. (1997). Dialogue journals as an ESL learning strategy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 40 (8), 616-621.
- Kang, S. J. (2005). Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System*, 33, 277-291.
- Long, D. R. (1990). What you don't know can't help you: An exploratory study of background knowledge and second language listening comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 65-80.

- Lynch, M. (1996). A quantitative-genetic perspective on conservation issues, pp. 471-501. In J. Avise and J. Hamrick (eds.) *Conservation Genetics: Case Histories from Nature*. Chapman and Hall, New York.
- MacIntyre, P.D., Baker, S.C., Clement, R., & Conrad, S. (2001). Willingness to communicate, social support, and language-learning orientations of immersion students. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 23, 369-388.
- MacIntyre, P.D., Clement, R., Dornyei, Z., & Noels, K. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 545-562.
- MacIntyre, P.D. (1994). Variables underlying willingness to communicate: A casual analysis. *Communication Research Reports*, 11, 135-142.
- Markham, P., & Latham, M. (1987). The influence of religion-specific background knowledge on the listening comprehension of adult second-language students. *Language Learning*, 37, 157-170.
- Milani, M. (2008). *The effect of proficiency level, task type and gender on Iranian adult students' willingness to communicate (WTC)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran.
- Morady Moghaddam, M., & Malekzadeh, Sh. (2011). Improving L2 Writing Ability in the Light of Critical Thinking. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1 (7), 789-797. Doi:10.4304/tpls.1.7.789-797
- Peyton, J. K., & Reed, L. (1990). *Dialogue journal writing with nonnative English speakers: A handbook for teachers*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Peyton, J. K. (1984). Dialogue writing: Bridge from talk to essay writing. *Language Art*, 61 (2), 141-150.
- Pulido, D. (2007). The effects of topic familiarity and passage sight vocabulary on L2 lexical inferencing and retention through reading. *Applied Linguistics*, 28 (1), 68-86.
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. Oxford University Press. London.
- Reid, L. (1997). Exploring the ways that dialogue journaling affects how and why students write: An action research project. *Teaching and Change*, 5 (1), 50-57.
- Schmidt-Rinehart, B. C. (1994). The effects of topic familiarity on second language listening comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78, 179-189.
- Song, M. (1997). *The effect of dialogue journal writing on writing quality, reading comprehension, and writing apprehension of EFL college students*.
- Yashima, T. (2002a). Willingness to communicate in second language: The Japanese EFL context. *Modern Language Journal*, 86, 55-66.

THE IMPACT OF IDEOLOGY ON TRANSLATION: A CASE IN IRAN

Zahra Ehteshami

Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran
zahra.ehteshami@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Of the many factors, which are important in the field of translation, ideology has received considerable attention. The effect of ideology on translation practice has been an issue of great concern to researchers in the past years. To this end, two professional translators with different opposing ideologies were selected following purposeful sampling technique to satisfy the objective of the study. In this investigation, each translator was required to work on three news articles on current issues. The analysis of the translated texts revealed that the translators' ideologies did affect their translation. The study might have implication both theoretically and pedagogically. The results might be useful for curriculum developers in translation studies and practitioners.

KEYWORDS: Ideological impact; Ideological manipulations; Leftist; Rightist; Translators.

INTRODUCTION

A translation can be considered as a piece of social work, which serves others. It means that the value of translation can only be realized and the effect of translation embodied when it is transmitted and accepted by others. Translation is not just a process that goes on in the translator's head. It can play an important part in the struggle between rival ideologies (Bassnet & Lefevere, 1990).

Many factors may affect translation, but there has been considerable attention to its ideological aspect from the researchers' point of view. According to Fawcett (1998), "throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effect in translation" (p. 107). Research on this field began in the early history of translation profession. From the researchers' perspective, ideological approach to translation can be seen even in some of the earliest famous translated texts. Since the 1980s, Western researchers have shown great interest in the relationships among power, ideology and various cultural products and some (Calzada Perez, 2003; Schaffner, 2003) even claim that "all language use is ideological", "any translation is ideological" (as cited in Ping, 2004).

The deficiency of old linguistics-based approaches – which 'are mainly descriptive studies focusing on textual forms' (Calzada-Pérez, 2003) – in accounting for social values in translation and other aspects of language use resulted in developing a new trend of research called critical discourse analysis (CDA) 'whose primary aim is to expose the ideological forces that underlie communicative exchanges [like translating]' (Calzada-Pérez, 2003, p.2). According to CDA

advocates, all language use, including translation, is ideological and this means that translation is always a site for ideological encounters. Similarly, Schäffner (2003) claims that all translations are ideological since ‘the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put are determined by the interests, aims, and objectives of social agents’ (p. 23, as cited in Karoubi, 2005). Schäffner (2003) explains, “ ideological aspects can be more or less obvious in texts, depending on the topic of a text, its genre and communicative purposes, and ideological aspects can also be examined in the process of text production (translating) and the role of the translator as a target text producer as well as a source text interpreter”(as cited in Karoubi, 2005).

Karoubi (2005) has also explained that translators can use translation as a tool for conveying an idea that like or dislike. This process that may happen unconsciously, in most cases, it is unavoidable. Translators interpret texts by setting them against their backdrop of known words and phrases, present statements, familiar conventions, previous texts, or, in other words, their general knowledge, which is ideological. This knowledge is what has been called the basis of their interpretation of the text.

Vision is another representation of ideological impacts. Information can be presented from an ideological perspective: a system of norms is values pertaining to social relations. This explains why two newspapers reporting on the same event can produce different reports (Renkema, 2004, p.127).

Definition of Ideology

The term ideology has been always related to politics and economy as it is evident in its dictionary definition as “ideas that form the basis of an economic and political theory or that is held by a particular group or person” (*Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary*).

Ideology has been defined in different ways; but most of its definitions are directly related to personal and political beliefs. Ideologies are opinions, assumptions, attitudes, and values that indicate the unequal status of individuals and groups in society. They are not always conscious. Ideologies could be unconsciously internalized through one’s social practices and historical experiences. Ideologies do not always have a preventive and misleading function. While ideologies cause inequalities seem natural and acceptable, they can also illuminate them to facilitate social change.

Scholars in the field of language-related, cultural and translation studies, however, often tend to extend the concept of ideology beyond political sphere and define it in a rather politically neutralized sense as “a set of ideas, which organize our lives and help us understand the relation to our environment”(Calzada-Pérez, 2003, p. 5, as cited in Karoubi, 2005). The ideology of a translation, according to Tymoczko (2003), will be a combination of the content of the source text and the various speech acts represented in the source text relevant to the source context, layered together with the representation of the content, its relevance to the receptor audience, and the various speech acts of the translation itself addressing the target context, as well as resonance and discrepancies between these two ‘utterances’.

Responsibility of Translators

Responsibility can appear in any profession, and the translation profession is no exception. Translators should be aware of the ethical issues that can come up so that they know how to avoid them as well. Researchers of this field believe that the translators are autonomous individuals who are responsible for the result of their translational act consequences. They focus on translator, giving him/her more freedom. While they consider translators as mediators and manipulators, they expect them to be responsible for their behavior. There are myriad and varied responsibilities for a translation professional; some of which are visibility, accuracy, attention to details and punctuality, etc. However, one of the basic responsibilities, is communicating the meaning of a text, or making sure that the text has been communicated properly. One the one hand, the translator must strive to approximate the translation product to the original text in terms of message, meaning and communicative and informative intents. On the other, the translator must approximate the translation product to the norms, conventions and standards of the target language. In the presence of uncertainty, these constraints become stronger and more salient forcing the translator to adopt translation strategies that often fail to produce optimal approximations (Darwish 2009). Nowadays, greater importance is given to the ideology: The effect of translator's point of view on the process and product of translation. These days the concept of translators' ideology is much discussed. As it was mentioned earlier, this impact is unavoidable, but some translators try to reduce it as much as possible. They prefer not to be engaged in social and political challenges of their country. In spite of being unavoidable, the impact of this factor needs to be controlled. Although it is against the translators' ethics, sometimes a translator's ideology may change the whole meaning of the original text, which is completely against the ethics of translation profession. It will be apparent from this review that one aspect of translation is rooted in ideology. While much excellent work has been done over the past decades on the different aspects of translation, we are still a long way from its ideal form.

Studies on Translation and Ideology

According to Darwish (2010), translation is an occupation that is easily subjected to ideological manipulations and it plays a selective role in the transfer of science, literature and art into receptor languages and cultures. He believes that it also, more seriously fulfils a reconstituting function in managing knowledge transfer and social and cultural change. Although it is almost unavoidable to keep your perspectives apart from your behavior, in this case translation, other scholars in the field of translation believe that the best and the most reasonable translation is the one, which is away from your attitude. They claim that simple translation is the easiest form of translation profession. Lander (2001) believes that a translator should not allow ideology to color anything s/he translates. He claims that if ideology influences translation, the profession suffers. Nevertheless, Epstein (2008) has commented that this point of view refers to the ideal translation. In this ideal world, ideology would not color our translation. Epstein believes that in reality, in most cases, it is impossible to avoid this impact (Epstein, 2008). In a study related to ideology and translation, Karoubi (2005) has demonstrated that translators' knowledge that is their ideology influences their behaviors. Translators can use translation as a tool for conveying an idea that they like or dislike. Translators interpret texts by setting them against their backdrop of known words and phrases, present statements, familiar conventions, previous texts, or, in other words,

their general knowledge, which is ideological. This knowledge is what has been called the basis of their interpretation of the text.

Translation activities in Iran appear to have largely been ideologically influenced. In fact, it is not specific to Iran but is evident throughout world translation history. Fawcett (2001) provides an eloquent illustration of how “throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions have applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effects in translation”. Depending on whether they find themselves in agreement with the dominant ideology of their time or not, translators choose translations with the same ideology to support it or a different one to reform it (as cited in Ping, 2004). This point may be found in translation of a text by two opposite ideologies. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether there is a difference between the acts of translators with different ideologies, and if there is any, how different ideologies influence the product of translations of a text. There seems to be a contrast between the professional behaviors of two translators with different ideologies; one is leftist, the other one is rightist.

RESEACRH QUESTION

This paper is a tentative probe into the effect of ideology on the translation product. It seeks for appropriate answer(s) for the following question: Is there any difference between the translation products of translators with different ideologies?

METODHOLOGY

The present study followed a descriptive design to examine the profile of two translated texts and to provide a gist of prominent ideological differences between them.

Participants

The sample comprised two translation professionals. One of them worked in a translation office and the other one a self-employed in Tehran, Iran. They were both male and had completed their bachelor's degrees in English translation in Iran. One of them aged 30, and ideologically was rightist; he was also an English teacher in a high school. The other one aged 35 with an opposite perspective, a leftist. Sampling technique was purposive and non-random to meet the requirement of the study.

Materials

In order to carry out the topic of news articles we had in mind, we needed access to a number of different English news cites or newspapers. We chose one of the most recent and challenging topics of news. It was about Syria's civil war especially about using chemical weapons. This was a challenging topic because there were two different views related to this subject matter. One of the articles was chosen from CTV National News; It contains 474 words and was published by Associated Press (AP) on June 13, 2013. There were two more articles from Washington Post. The first one, *Syrian civil war threatens cease-fire with Israel*, by Colum Lynch, contained about 2100 words and was published on Thursday, March 21, 2013. The second article chosen from Washington Post contained 757 words and was written by Abigail Hauslohner, published on

Saturday, April 27, 2013: *Hezbollah's role in Syrian civil war drives sectarian tension in Lebanon.*

The use of the news articles as the instrument for gathering the data in present study has several advantages:

- It was supposed to be quite challenging to indicate different ideologies.
- It was rich and sensitive to individuals' political perspectives, which formed the main part of their ideologies.
- It might allow comparison with other studies.

Procedures

Each translator was given a copy of the so-called articles to translate into Farsi in the second week of May 2013. None of them was informed about the purpose of this study; that is to say, none of them had received any information about the research and its process. They received both articles at the same time. Translating the texts lasted for approximately one week. They were allowed to use dictionaries to translate the articles.

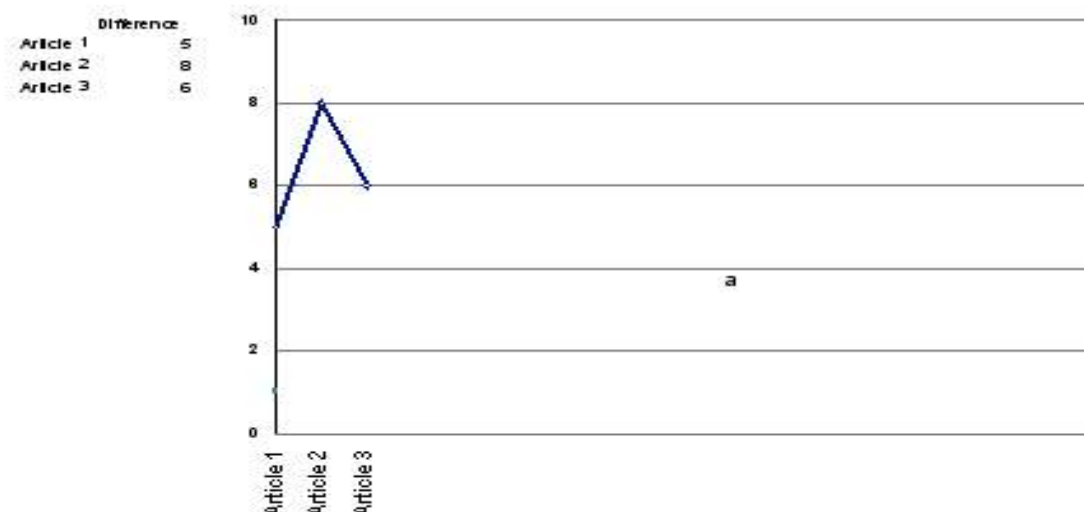
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first news article, which contained 2100 words, 8 main words, the second news that contained 474 words, 6 keywords, and in the third one with 757 words, and 5 major words, were translated considerably different. It might be claimed that these differences are rooted in the translators' ideology. Some targeted key sentences, phrases, and words were translated completely different. However, the focus of attention of this study is on key words. Table 1 below displays some examples:

Table 1: Examples of differences between translations of some keywords

Original word/phrase	Leftist's translation	Rightist's translation
Rebels	مخالفين	شورشيان
Israel	اسرائيل	رژيم صهيونيستي
Terrorist organization like Hezbollah	سازمان تروريستي حزب الله	سازمان حزب الله
Israeli invaders	مهاجمين اسرانيلى	متجاوزين اسرانيلى
Opposition	حزب مخالف	شورشيان

Figure 1 also shows the differences in the so-called articles:



CONCLUSION

After analyzing the translation products of these two translators, it was found that there were considerable differences among them. It may be argued that translation is an independent profession, but indeed, it is a profession that strongly depends on ideology. The foregoing discussion has sought to highlight how ideology has impact on translation products. Translation is and will remain one of the most important and worthy occupations; however, it is an occupation that is easily subject to ideological manipulations.

Ideological impact on translation is a noticeable factor that is unavoidable but it is more close to the ideal world if we can reduce this impact. When the translators' ideology influences the translation's product strongly, the whole profession may suffer. Sometimes the main idea of the original text may be manipulated and changed by this impact; therefore, it is better to reduce it as much as it is possible.

However, some researchers in this field believe that this manipulation cannot affect the source text strongly. The translator can in some few strongly communicative translation situations, i.e. less formal, encouraging self-expression, "rewrite" the source text in the light of his/her personal ideology/axiology. This can be viewed as a manipulation – happily this is called *axiology* nowadays – but this is not however the manipulation preached by the School of Manipulation (see Snell-Hornby, 1998) since this does not affect the explicit semantic content and function of the source text (as cited in Petrescu, 2009).

The present paper, as other researches in language studies, has some limitations. The subjects were few, then the generalizability of results is low. Also, a limited genre was studied, and selection of other genres might bring up different results.

REFERENCES

- Bassnet, S. & Lefevere, A.(Eds.). (1990). *Translation, history, and culture*. London: Printer Publishers.
- Darwish, A. (2010). *The role of ideology and translation in translation-mediated cross-cultural change management in globalized downstream and satellite media, driven knowledge transfer*. American University of Sharjah, UAE transfer.
- Fawcett, P. (1998). Ideology and translation. In M. Baker (Ed.) *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies* (pp. 106-111). London: Routledge.
- Karoubi, B. (2005). *Ideology and translation with a concluding point on translation teaching*. Retrieved from <http://www.translationdirectory.com/article233.htm>.
- Petrescu, C. (2009). Ideology and translation. *Translation Profession and Communication Studies*, 4, 93-96.
- Ping, L. (2004). Ideology and translation: A study from the perspective of TL reader responses, *Nanjing Institute of Meteorology*.
- Renkema, J. (2004). *Introduction to discourse studies*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Ping, L. (2004). On Context in the translation of literary works. *Chinese Translators Journal*, Volume 25, Number 5, 61-64.
- Schäffner, C. (2003). Third ways and new centres: Ideological unity or difference? In M. Calzada-Pérez (Ed.) *Apropos of ideology* (pp. 23-42). Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Tymoczko, M. (2003). Ideology and the position of the translator: In what Sense is a translator 'in between'? In M. Calzada-Pérez (Ed.) *Apropos of ideology* (pp. 181-202). Manchester: St. Jerome.

A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF DISCOURSE MARKERS BETWEEN IRANIAN AND AMERICAN PHYSICS LECTURES

Mona Abdolkhani

*Department of English Language Teaching, Khouzestan Science and Research Branch, Islamic
Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

*Department of English Language Teaching, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran
Email: mona.abdolkhani@gmail.com*

Mohammad Alipour

*Department of English Language Teaching, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran
Email: alipour1983@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to compare the American English and Farsi physics lectures to identify the frequency of use and various types of discourse makers used by means of a corpus linguistics analysis. Moreover, it intended to compare them in terms of their occurrences to see to what extent the physics lectures spoken by Iranian lecturers resemble to or differ from the ones spoken by American lecturers. To this end, a corpus of ten spoken physics lectures was selected. Half of these lectures (five American physics lectures) were extracted from Stanford University website, and the other half (five Farsi physics lectures) were downloaded from Iranian Sharif University of Technology website. For analysis, the DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed. The variables for the analysis were frequency rate and occurrences of each pre-established markers in the corpora. The frequency and percentage of each DM was calculated, and then Chi-squares were applied to show whether the differences in the different corpora were significant. The results revealed significant differences between the frequencies of different DMs in the two corpora. It was observed that American physics lecturers used DMs more than the Iranian ones. An overall view on individual categories illustrated that micro-markers had the highest rate in contrast with macro-markers and operators across both corpora.

KEYWORDS: Corpus, Physics lectures, Farsi, American English, Discourse marker

INTRODUCTION

A discourse marker is a word or phrase that is relatively syntax-independent, does not change the meaning of the sentence, and has a somewhat empty meaning, e.g. the particles oh, well, now, then, you know, and I mean, and the connectives so, because, and, but, and or perform important functions in spoken and written discourse (Schiffrin, 1986). The difference between spoken and written discourse can affect the use and function of discourse markers (henceforth DMs). Speakers have access to a richer context in spoken discourse; in other words, “they have prosody and phonology as well as nonverbal communication or interaction with external physical objects” (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 112). A lecture, as a spoken discourse, intends to present information or to teach people about a particular subject. Teachers are involved with different instructional

materials, such as seminars, tutorials, videos, and writing assignments, among others; but lecture remains the central instructional activity (Flowerdew, 1994) which plays an important role in academic settings. Benson (1994) defines lecture as “the central ritual of the culture of learning” (p.425). There is a wide literature on the study of lecture genre in order to be able to differ from various lecturing styles, linguistic features affecting lecture delivery, etc. However, we also have to take into consideration the assumption about lecture culture and how these may differ significantly (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 82).

All over the world, lecturing is considered as an effective practice in higher education, focusing especially on spoken academic discourse (Dunkel & Davy, 1989). Understanding and comprehending lecture content seems to be necessary for students’ university success; furthermore, students should be able to not only read English publications, but also participate and deliver papers at conferences, even do research and give lecture in academic contexts. Many researchers have suggested that an understanding of the role of DMs and the relationships between different parts of the text is fundamental for the comprehension of lectures (Coulthard & Montgomery, 1981; Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Morrison, 1974).

In Iran, lecturers are not trained in how to give lecture nor are there specific trainings in regard to the use and functions of DMs which are fundamental for lecture comprehension. This study is an effort to analyze the content of lectures, specifically physics lectures, as an academic genre within a corpus linguistic approach. The aim is analyzing some linguistic features (DMs) that are useful in the understanding and retention of physics lectures. The objective is to describe the use and functions of DMs and the similarities and differences that may exist between American physics lectures and Iranian ones.

Significance in language learning

The results of the study have implications for the lecturers of physics science to be aware of different conventions governing this discipline. Discourse markers are used in dissimilar ways in different languages and disciplines; this makes it important for teachers and ESP course designers to recognize this for instruction. The results of the study can also make lecturers of the physics disciplines aware of the conventions of their discipline and help them to be careful in using different DMs to deliver their speeches in a more natural way. Still another contribution of this study is that it contributes to the improvement of the ability to understand the language of spoken academic discourse.

Statement of the Problem

In Iran, lecturers are not trained in how to give lecture nor are there specific trainings in regard to the use and functions of DMs which are fundamental for lecture comprehension. The study presented here is an effort to analyze the content of lectures, specifically physics lectures as an academic genre within a corpus linguistic approach. The choice of physics was not made arbitrarily. Physics has been traditionally viewed as a difficult subject to study, particularly at the university level. Language problem in physics lectures maybe acute due to the complexity and abstractness inherent in science such as physics. To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have been conducted to scrutinize DMs within monologic lectures in discourse of physics science

in general, and to compare DMs between Farsi and American English physics lectures in particular. The main purpose of this study is to analyze spoken academic discourse, and more concretely the genre of physics lecture as it is presented to undergraduate university students by means of a contrastive analysis between Farsi and American physics lectures.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have recently become interested in academic genres (seminar, conference presentations, etc.), especially the genre of lecture. DMs are essential for the understanding of written texts, and they play a significant role in creating a meaningful and coherent message in the communication process of oral discourse. The studies presented here have used spoken corpora as the method of study and they have focused on the use of a single or various DMs. In addition, these researchers provided a wide and broad classification of DMs. For instance, Del Saz (2003, 2005) focused on the notion of reformulation and the lexical units that explicitly convey reformulation. She called them Discourse Markers of Reformulation (DMs of RF). She claimed that what has been called reformulator can be considered a DM. She analyzed naturally occurring instances of language collected in the British National Corpus (BNC) and considered reformulators as DMs because, according to Fraser (1999), they have connectivity and non-truth conditionality which are features of a DM.

The DMs of RF is based on Fraser's canonical form for a DMSEQUENCE, namely, S1-DM+S2. In her investigation, Del Saz (2003) attempted to fit DMs of RF into Fraser' (1999) classification. Swales and Malczewski (2001) worked on spoken academic discourse and emphasized on what they called "a cluster of features that constellate around discourse management across a wide range of university speech events" (2001, p. 146). They described speech events as 'activity types' (Levinson, 1979) in which language is used to get things done. They pointed out a difference between academic speech that is monologic (often lectures, conference presentations, etc) and dialogic talk (telephone workshops, interviews, etc). They examined MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English) (Simpson, Briggs, Ovens, & Swales, 2002) and studied the use of footing changes they called New Episode Flags (NEFs). They focused on the linguistic resources (or NEFs) which participants used in different university events to move from lecture format to discussion (or the reverse) or change the direction of the lecture or discussion. They analyzed linguistic resources such as group vocatives (folks, gang, friends, guys), directive or vocative verbs (say, listen, look) and exhortative or jussive imperative let, all these not with a large number of occurrences. They also analyzed more frequent NEFs in the MICASE such as okay, so and now (DMs). Another study dealing with academic discourse is one by Rendle-Short (2003), who analyses the use of the DM so in seminar talk within the computer science discipline. Based on Schiffrin (1987), she explains how so can function in two distinct ways.

Semantically, so ties adjoining clauses together conveying causal relations. First, it can mark the overall structure by indicating its relationship to a whole stretch of discourse and another part of discourse. Secondly so marks structure locally, by referring to the immediately preceding clauses, in this ca, by referring to the immediately preceding clauses, in this case so is marking lower-

levels of structure. Moreover, so can also function pragmatically; in this case so marks the potential speaker discourse transitions functioning as such as a topic-shifter. Rendle-Short (2003) takes these three functions of so and analyses them in a corpus composed of six first video-taped and then transcribed computer science seminar talks. She found that the DM so is commonly used seminar talk with different functions depending on its position in the talk. She particularly attracted by the way in which DMs are used together with intonation, pitch, volume, gesture and tools considering all these resources for the speaker. Also, she has shown that monologic talk is not continuous but divided into smaller parts or sections which follow a finely organized and well-structured discourse pattern. The question is whether this finely organized discourse pattern can be universally applied or, on the contrary, spoken discourse patterns mainly depend on the genre under analysis as well as on the speaker's performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to answer the following questions:

Which types of DMs do American lecturers use in the monologic lectures of Physics?

Which types of DMs do Farsi lecturers use in the monologic lectures of Physics?

Is there any significant difference in the use of DMs between American and Iranian monologic lectures of Physics?

METHODOLOGY

Corpora

In this contrastive study, a corpus of 10 spoken physics lectures was compiled. Five American lectures were collected from the Stanford University website (www.stanford.edu) and five Iranian lectures from the Sharif University of Technology website (www.maktabkhooneh.org). All the lectures were delivered by native speakers of respective languages and they also had the same topics. Only monologic lectures were selected where one speaker monopolizes the floor, sometimes followed by question and answer periods. The titles of the lectures used in this study were in the domain of quantum mechanics, Einstein's theory of relativity, thermodynamic, cosmology and electronic. The duration of the lectures in both corpora was so close to each other; the long ones were approximately one hour and fourthly six minutes and the shorter ones were roughly one hour and twenty five minutes.

Instruments

The DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed for analyzing the corpora (See Figure 1). This taxonomy was used to determine and compare both corpora in terms of the occurrences and frequency rate of each DM.

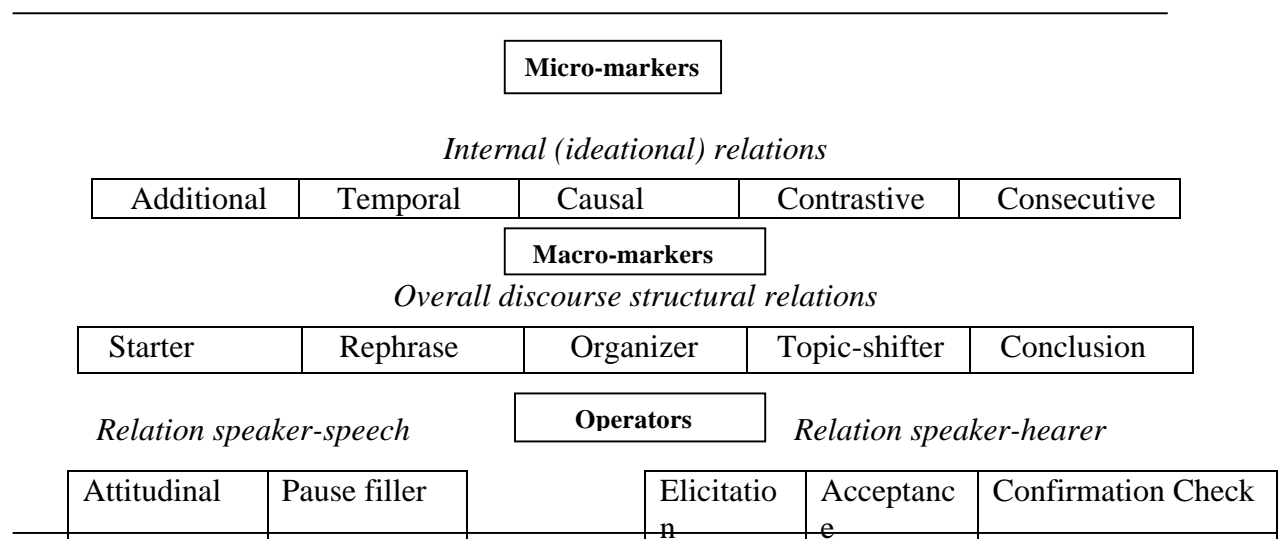


Figure 1: DMs classification model by Belles-Fortuno (2006)

Belles-Fortuno's (2006) taxonomy is based on the Hallidayan's (1994) functional meanings, namely, ideational, interpersonal and textual, and the relations they can convey along the discourse utterances. His model consists of three categories: micro-markers, macro-markers, and operators. "Micro-markers express logico-semantic relations in the discourse. According to this model, these markers have lexical or descriptive meaning (Belles-Fortuno, 2006, p. 95). Therefore, categories such as causal, contrastive, consecutive or additional DMs would be placed under this part. "Macro-markers convey an overall structure of the ongoing discourse and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances. They enhance retention and recall in post-lecture tests" (14, p. 43). They play an essential role in activating content schemata and helping listeners to successfully follow the lecture. Operators are those DMs which rhetorically signal the speakers' intentions and affect the illocutionary force. These markers are more specifically related to conversational, spoken discourse rather than written discourse. Belles-Fortuno (2006) narrowed the scope of his study by choosing a maximum of three DMs for each category. In the current study, Belles-Fortuno's classification was used for contrasting the DMs application in both North-American and Farsi physics lectures.

Procedure

After downloading and transcribing the selected lectures, we commenced the main phase of the study which is the process of analyzing the lectures' discourse markers. The variables used for the analysis of DMs were the number of occurrences and the frequency rate of each pre-established marker in the two sub-corpora. For analyzing the corpora of this study, the DMs classification model proposed by Belles-Fortuno (2006) was employed. After analyzing the North-American physics lectures, the Farsi ones were analyzed. Hence, a contrastive study between North-American English and Farsi physics lectures was carried out and the results for this study were provided. Prior to conducting the analyses, we analyzed the one Farsi and one English physics lecture as the pilot study to help minimize the likelihood of endangering the

reliability of the analyses and the findings. After we were through with the analyses, Phi correlation was applied to calculate the inter-rater reliability of the analyses. As can be observed from the obtained correlation coefficient between the two ratings (inter-rater reliability, = 0.86), there was a high reliability of the researchers' judgment in analyzing the lectures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A general overview of the analysis of DMs in both the NAC and IC gives the following results: DMs seem to be more often used in the NAC than in the IC as the resulting rates show. According to the occurrences rate, a total of 2852 DMs for the five American physics lectures were found in the NAC, whereas in the IC the rate was lower, 1496 DMs for the five Iranian physics lectures. Without distinguishing and comparing both corpora, the total rate for each individual category of DMs, that is, micro-marker, macro-markers, and operators, is as follows: micro-markers were the most frequently used type of DMs, followed by operators and macro-markers.

Table 1: Micro-Markers Frequencies in the NAC and the IC

Micro-markers	in the NAC	in the IC
Additional	706 (40%)	493 (54%)
Temporal	148 (8.5%)	115 (12.5%)
Causal	151 (9%)	98 (10%)
Contrastive	191 (11.5%)	109 (11.5%)
Consecutive	539 (31%)	114 (12%)
Total	1735 (61%)	904 (60.5%)
Chi-square (0.0)		

As shown in table 1, the overall results of analyzing micro-markers indicated that the North-American physics lectures used micro-markers as 61 percent of DMs in their speeches and the Iranian physics lectures used them as 61.5 percent. Thus, in the NAC micro-markers were used similarly to the IC. Also the results of analyzing micro-markers in the NAC represented that the two categories with the highest frequency rates were *additional* (40%) and *consecutive* (31%), while the categories with lower frequency rates were *contrastive* (11.5%), *causal* (9%) and *temporal* (8.5%). In the IC, the most frequent category was *additional* (54%); the other three categories showed close frequency rates and comprised *temporal* which were used more, (12.5%) then *consecutive* (12%), followed by *contrastive*, (11.5%). As the results displayed, *consecutive* was the second category in the NAC, whereas in the IC, this category represented a minor difference with *temporal*, and came in the third place. Categories showing the lowest frequency rates were *temporal* and *causal* in the NAC; however, in the IC, *contrastive* and *causal* had the least frequency rates. It should be noted that, at the end of each table in this section DMs are compared with each other through Chi-square. In all the comparisons, the probability (α) level is set at 0.05 (see table 1). According to the above table, Chi-square (0.0) indicates significant differences in the frequency rates of micro-markers between the NAC and IC. It means that the American and Iranian physics lecturers used micro-markers in differently their speeches.

On the other hand, the findings reveal that the total percentage of macro-markers in the IC was slightly higher than the total percentage in the NAC. The most frequent category in both corpora

was *topic-shifter*. The next categories in order of frequency rate were *organizer* and *rephraser* in both corpora. The least frequently used categories were *conclusion* and *starter* in the NAC and the IC. Table 2 shows the frequencies of macro-markers in both sub-corpora. As you can see, the significance value of Chi-square (0.821), illustrates no significant differences between the two corpora. In other words, there was not any remarkable difference in the use of macro-markers between the two corpora.

Table 2: Macro-markers Frequencies in the NAC and the IC

Macro-markers	in the NAC	in the IC
Starter	46 (9%)	27 (8%)
Rephraser	75 (14.5%)	46 (15%)
Organizer	118 (23%)	65 (21%)
Topic-shifter	269 (52%)	161 (55%)
Conclusion	7 (1.5%)	7 (1%)
Total	515(18%)	306 (20%)
Chi-square (0.821)		

Concerning *operators*, they revealed a slightly higher frequency rate in the NAC in contrast with the IC. In the analysis of *operators* in the NAC, the three most recurrent categories were *pause-filler*, *acceptance* and *confirmation-check* although this order was different in the IC, and it was as: *pause-filler*, *conformation-check* and *acceptance*. On the other hand, the categories showing the lowest frequency rates were similar in both corpora, which were *attitudinal* and *elicitation*. The least frequent category was *elicitation* in both corpora as illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: Operators Frequencies in the NAC and the IC

Macro-markers	in the NAC	in the IC
Attitudinal	31 (6%)	26 (9%)
Pause-filler	257 (42%)	115 (37%)
Elicitation	5 (1%)	4 (1%)
Acceptance	210 (34.5%)	68 (23%)
Conformation-check	99 (16.5%)	88 (30%)
Total	602 (21%)	290 (19.5%)
Chi-square (0.0)		

As table 3 depicts, the significance value of Chi-square (0.0), which is way below 0.05, demonstrates significant differences between the two corpora. In means there were significant differences in the ways North-American physics lecturers and Iranian physics lecturers use operators. At the end of this section it is worth mentioning the Chi-square of the overall results of both the NAC and the IC in table below:

Table 4: Chi-square of overall comparison of the NAC and the IC

The Overall Results of DMs
Chi-square (0.0)

Table 4 shows the Chi-square of the overall results in both corpora. As one can observe, the Chi-square value is (0.0) which means that there were significant differences in the use of DMs between the North-American physics lectures and the Iranian physics lectures.

Discussion

The findings in the result section compared the use of discourse markers in terms of their frequencies and occurrences in the two corpora. However, the quantitative analysis is needed to be complemented and supported by qualitative analyses. Attempts are made to handle this in what follows to discuss the findings in detail. Thus, the research questions are brought up again here, and the main findings are expounded on thoroughly based on the results obtained.

Is there any significant difference in the use of discourse markers between American and Iranian monologic lectures of physics?

The total number of DMs was different across the two corpora. The North-American physics lecturers and the Iranian physics lecturers employed DMs with different frequencies since the nature and history of each language is distinctive in many aspects. One might interpret this in light of North-American lecturers' tendency to segment and use DMs more often than Iranian lecturers. A closer look at the three types of DMs (micro-markers, macro-markers and operators) revealed that, in general, micro-markers are the type of DMs most widely used in both corpora over the other two types. This may be due to the type of the genre under study, monologic physics lectures. The fact that micro-markers are more often used than macro-markers and operators could be due to the peculiarities of the genre, that is, academic lectures specifically physics science. Taking into account that micro-markers express logico-semantic relations in the discourse, it could be said that in the North-American and Iranian physics lecture discourses, there is a need to convey lexical and descriptive meaning along the discourse of lectures as opposed to macro-markers, which convey an overall structure of the ongoing discourse and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances although both micro and macro-markers affect and reinforce *part-of-discourse/part-of discourse relations* (Belles-Fortuno, 2006). It is worth pointing out that those instances of micro-markers tend to be more fixed and less variable linguistic units, different from macro-markers, which tend to be longer chunks of language, more unsteady and sensitive to changes and prone to form language expressions, which may vary from one language to another, not having clear corresponding counterparts (Swales, 2004). According to the present findings, operators are second in use in the North-American corpus and third in use in the Iranian corpus.

This is not surprising taking into consideration the specificities of a corpus like ours. We have analyzed a spoken academic corpus and not a written one; the characteristics of an oral corpus differ from those of a written corpus. In spoken discourse, *speaker-speech* or, even more so, *speaker-hearer* relations are important in the discourse community which has to share a common communicative purpose and use similar rhetorical devices in the communication process (Swales 1990). Operators are those DMs which rhetorically signal the speakers' intentions and affect the illocutionary force. Probably, the study of a written corpus would have given operators a minor and less significant position; however, the results obtained from our spoken academic discourse corpus give operators a quite important position. This fact could be linked to the trend towards a

more ‘open’ lecture style (Swales, 2002) which tends to be more participatory as has been already been mentioned in this dissertation. Relations *speaker-speech* or *speaker-hearer* gain importance resulting in a relevant use of operators in both the NAC and the IC.

On the other hand, macro-markers were one of the least frequently used DMs. Although expressing relations *part-of discourse/part-of discourse* (as micro-markers do), these markers are characterized by conveying global discourse structural meanings and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances affecting discourse relations at a more segmental level of analysis. The fact that macro-markers are one of the least frequently used markers makes us think of macro-markers as having less relevance in the spoken academic discourse of North-American and Iranian physics lectures. As said above, it may happen that the specificities and peculiarities of spoken academic discourse do not aid and promote the use of macro-markers which would possibly be more relevant in the study of written discourse. The relation *part-of-discourse/part-of-discourse* seems to be primarily expressed by means of micro-markers rather than macro-markers in our NAC and IC. Previous studies regarding DMs in lecture discourse have pointed out the importance of macro-markers, which are said to be “more conducive to successfully recall of the lecture than micro-markers” (Chaudron & Richards, 1986, p. 122). This idea is also supported by DeCarrico and Nattinger (1988) who postulated that macro-markers are beneficial for activating content schemata and more recently followed by Jung (2003). Although these authors have highlighted the importance of macro-markers rather than that of micro-markers, the findings from this study have proven that micro-markers have a prominent place in lectures; at least micro-markers have proven to be more often used and preferred by the North-American and Iranian lecturers in the field of physics sciences.

Which types of discourse markers do American lecturers use in the monologic lectures of physics?

Results showed that American lecturers use micro-markers more than the two other DMs categories. In the NAC, the three most frequently occurring micro-markers were in order: *additional*, *consecutive* and *contrastive*. As already said in the previous chapter, the Americans used *additional* and *consecutive* more than the other micro-markers in their physics lectures. As a discipline, physics is concerned with describing the world by constructing models, the end product of this modeling process often being a mathematical representation, which in physics is colloquially referred to as an equation. Because of their importance in the representation of physics knowledge, physics equations affect discourse of physics lectures. Equations are connected to each other with the use of *additional* and *consecutive* DMs. The final results of micro-markers in this study also revealed that physics lecturers used *additional* and *consecutive* markers more than the other DMs.

If one observes the sub-categories in micro-markers, the most relevant markers in the NAC are *and*, *so* and *then*. The *additional* micro-marker *and* has proven to be the most frequently used marker in the NAC, functioning in the majority of its uses as *additional* marker. As a DM, *and* can also work as an operator conveying relations *speaker-speech* where it is used as a hesitator or pause-filler rather than having a strict semantic meaning. Other micro-markers with high

frequency rates in NAC were *so* and *but*. As a whole, we observe that *consecutives* were followed by *additional*s with a high rate of frequency in the NAC physics lectures.

Within the *consecutive* category, there is a micro-marker that outnumbered the rest, *so*. It has largely been studied as being one of the most ambiguous DMs as well as one of the most commonly used ones together with *and*. From the NAC analysis, we have observed that *so* can have more than one function among discourse utterances and can convey different meanings. We have considered here *so* as a semantic DM that affects ideational internal relations functioning as a micro-marker within the *consecutive* category and marking fact-based, knowledge-based or action-based consecutive relations, mostly exchangeable by *therefore*. These instances of *so* generally occur at the end of a section of speech. At this point, we understand a section of speech as characterized with louder more prominent speech at the beginning of the section and quieter, faster speech at the end of it. The beginning of each section introduces a new topic or idea, thus resembling the paragraph-initial indentation of the written paragraph (Brown & Yule, 1983; Chafe, 1979; Hinds, 1979).

A closer look at individual categories reveals that in the NAC the *topic-shifter* category owes its high frequency to the macro-marker *so*; however, as noted previously in this chapter, *so* is one of those polysemous markers that can have different meanings (we have already seen *so* as a consecutive marker in the micro-marker classification). *So* as a macro-marker affects the overall discourse structural relations, in this case it normally occurs at the beginning of a section of talk, generally after a long pause, and its function is to introduce a new topic, in contrast to *so* as a micro-marker with a consecutive meaning. This function of *so* as a *topic-shifter* is similar to the notion of *so* as a ‘flag’ mentioned by Swales and Malczewski (2001), or the ‘global’ function of *so* that indicates relationships to a whole stretch of discourse pointed out by Schiffrin (1987).

Within *organizer*, there was a macro-marker with a high frequency rate which has been used in the NAC, worth mentioning here. This was *let’s*, the contracted form or *let us* in the full form with the first person plural object pronoun. These macro-marker appeared in the NAC followed by verbs such as *go back*, *run through*, *focus*, *look*, etc.

On the other hand, less important in the NAC were the categories of *starter* and *conclusion* with very few occurrences. The lack of *starter* and *conclusion* macro-markers could be linked to the fact that a lecture time session is not necessarily and strictly related to a lecture lesson time; that is to say, one content lesson or syllabus unit may need more than one session (lecture) to be fully and completely explained. Therefore, there are no clear beginning or concluding linguistic signals within a single lecture, but a need to use *organizers* or *topic-shifters* to create an ongoing discourse structure.

In addition, operators were the second frequent category which the American lecturers used in their speeches. Furthermore, the three most frequent categories were: *pause-filler*, *acceptance* and *confirmation-check*. Taking into account the two kinds of relations conveyed by operators (relations speaker-speech and/or speaker-hearer), we observe that the most relevant category for the NAC *pause-filler* conveys relations speaker-speech, whereas the two other relevant

categories, *acceptance* and *confirmation-check*, convey relations speaker/hearer. Presumably and according to authors such as Benson (1994) and Mason (1994) among others, the North-American lectures tend to move toward a more participatory and interactive lecturing style. If this is so, a larger number of confirmation-checks would have been expected in the NAC, but the results show the opposite and there is a large number of *pause-fillers*. The question here is that why the North-American lecturers use fewer *confirmation-checks* than *pause-filler*. One possible interpretation is that North-American University students are more used to participating in classes, thus providing feedback to the lecturers in ways that do not occur in Iranian lectures. As said previously, the second most relevant category in the NAC was *acceptance*. In this sense, a more interactional type of lecture can also be given by the use of *acceptance* operators.

If we take a general view of the results obtained in the use of operators in the NAC, the most recurrent operator is *Okay* as it can have different functions as an operator, either as a *pause-filler*, an *acceptance* operator, or a *confirmation-check*. The operator *Okay* is quite broad since it can function in many different ways as a response to questions when prompting or agreeing with the main speaker, what other authors have called *back-channel* instances of *Okay* (Swales and Malczewski, 2001) and what Belles-Fortuno (2006) have categorized as *acceptance Okay* can also be used as a kind of question tag, that is, *Okay?*, in which case it is a *confirmation-check* (both cases marking speaker-hearer relations). However, and contrary to what could be expected from a direct question, most instances of *Okay* as a *confirmation-check* in the NAC are not intended to elicit a direct verbal response (Belles-Fortuno, 2006). The third function of *Okay* is as a *pause-filler* operator to maintain the floor in which case it is hard to interpret, barely holding a semantic meaning.

The two least frequently used categories in the NAC were *elicitation* and *attitudinal*. In the case of *elicitation*, we are not surprised, since the corpus under study is composed of monologic lectures where one speaker monopolizes the floor with scarce or little interventions. A wide use of *elicitation* operators was not expected in any of the two sub-corpora although one could be less monologic than the other that is the American one. As for the *attitudinal* category, we have to point out the case of the operator *I think / we think*. *I think* has proven to be the most recurrent *attitudinal* operator in the North-American lectures in the discourse of physics sciences.

Which types of discourse markers do Farsi lecturers use in the monologic lectures of physics?

Concerning the Farsi lecturers' use of DMs in the monologic lectures of physics science, it should be mentioned that Farsi lecturers use DMs slightly different from the American ones. The frequency and occurrences of DMs in the IC were less than the NAC. Furthermore, the DMs categories were used in the IC with the following order: micro-markers, macro-markers, and operators. An overall view in the IC showed that micro-markers have the highest rate in contrast with macro-markers and operators, the same as the NAC. This represented that lecturers in both corpora tended to express logico-semantic relations in their lectures. As a result, it could be said that in the discourse of physics lectures, there was a need to convey lexical and descriptive meaning by using micro-markers. Within micro-markers, there were three categories with the highest frequency rates that are: *additional*, *temporal*, and *consecutive*. Comparing the use of micro-markers in the IC and NAC, the highest category in ranking *additional* is similar to the

NAC due to markers *and* and its counterpart in the IC *va*. The use of *va* (*and*) within the *additional* category is the most relevant for the final number of micro-markers used in the IC. As an additive marker, *and* normally occurs after or before a short or long pause in order to add something new to the ongoing topic joining two clauses together.

The other main difference between the NAC and the IC is found in the *temporal* category. This category is very relevant in the Iranian lecture corpus, whereas it is one of the least frequently used categories in the NAC. We could say that temporal internal relations in the Iranian lectures seem to be rather important; the lecturer is prone to place students and discourse in time much more than the North-American lecturers who make a more extensive use of additional and contrastive micro-markers. By way of contrast, *consecutive* was one of the important categories in both corpora. In the IC ranked third. One can say that the use of *consecutive* markers in the physics lectures can be due to the nature of this physics science. As I said elsewhere in this chapter, the existence of mathematical equations as an unrepeated part of physics intensifies the use of *consecutive* markers in both corpora. *Consecutive* markers can link mathematical equations to each other as observed in the physics lectures in both the NAC and IC.

The second type of markers was macro-markers which had the next place in frequency after micro-markers in the IC. It is worth mentioning that macro-markers express relations *part-of discourse/part-of discourse* (as micro-markers do). These markers are characterized by conveying global discourse structural meanings and aim at segmenting and structuring utterances affecting discourse relations at a more segmental level of analysis. Thus, macro-markers are used more in the IC than the NAC; it means that the American lecturers convey discourse structural meaning more by the use of micro-markers, but in the IC, macro-markers are also important for conveying this discourse structural meaning. The relation *part-of-discourse/part-of-discourse* seems to be primarily expressed by means of micro-markers rather than macro-markers in the NAC. Previous studies regarding DMs in lecture discourse have pointed out the importance of macro-markers, which are said to be “more conducive to successfully recall of the lecture than micro-markers” (Chaudron & Richards 1986, p. 122). This idea is also supported by DeCarrico and Nattinger (1988), who postulated that macro-markers are beneficial for activating content schemata and more recently followed by Jung (2003).

Macro-markers which were employed more in the IC were *topic-shifter*, *organizer* and *rephraser*, the same as the NAC. According to the findings, the Iranian lectures in the discourse of the physics Science tend to generally change the topic the same as the North-American lectures. Both *conclusion* and *starter* accounted for the lowest percentage in the ranking due to DMs like *barae paian dadan be* (*to end up*) and *barae shoro* (*to begin*). It is obvious that the lecturers in both the NAC and IC just use these markers at the beginning of their speeches or at the end of their speeches; sometimes they even do not make use of this kind of markers in their speeches and finish them directly. Comparing the IC with NAC, one can understand the North-American lecturers use this kind of markers slightly more than the Iranian ones, and it can be due to the nature of Farsi language and the culture of Iranian people.

The last category in the IC was *operators*. As the results described, the three most frequent categories in the IC were: *pause-filler*, *confirmation-check*, and *acceptance*. Taking into account the two kinds of relations conveyed by operators (relations speaker-speech and/ or speaker-hearer), we observe that the most relevant category for the IC (*pause-filler*) conveys relations *speaker-speech*. However, the second frequent used operators were *confirmation-check* which conveyed speaker-heater relations. Comparing these results with the NAC in which the second place belongs to *acceptance*, we can say that there were differences in the use of *operators* in both corpora. *Confirmation-checks* were more numerous in the IC than the NAC. This could be due to the fact that the Iranian lecturers need to continuously check that the audience has understood what they are explaining, either because the lecturer has the feeling the students are not having an effective lecture learning, because the topic under discussion is of a difficult nature, or due to the age of the audience (junior or senior), a junior student might feel shy to interrupt the lecturer. Therefore, he or she does not participate as much as a senior tertiary student, which would explain why *confirmation-checks* were used more in the IC than NAC.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore and compare the frequencies and occurrences of discourse markers between North-American and Iranian physics lectures to find out whether or not there were any significant differences in their use. In addition, it aimed to juxtapose American and Iranian lecturers of physics science in terms of the similarities and differences between the ways they use these discourse markers. The results of the study indicated that there were differences in the use of discourse markers. In other words, American lecturers' use of discourse markers differs from Iranian lecturers' in terms of their frequencies. Regarding different frequencies, results revealed that that discourse markers were utilized more frequently by the American lectures than the Iranian ones in the field of physics science. To put it simply, there were differences among the two corpora in terms of their most and least frequent DMs. Another conclusion to draw is that DMs are the same in both corpora respecting their occurrences. By this, it can be said that the American and Iranian lectures use similar discourse markers in their physics speeches.

Limitations of the study

There were definitely some limitations to this study. Firstly, we faced some problems during data collection. The data were selected from prestigious universities websites, and we had to find physics lectures which had the same topics in both the American and Iranian ones. These factors made the process of data collection more time-consuming than we expected and limited our corpus to only five lectures in each corpus. Furthermore, the full transcripts of the lectures were not generally available on the websites, and hence we had to transcribe all the lectures by ourselves; this was a painstaking undertaking.

REFERENCES

- Barber, C. L. (1962). Some measurable characteristics of modern scientific prose. In *Contributions to English Syntax and Phonology*, 1-23. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

- Bathia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: language use in professional settings*. London: Longman
- Bazerman, C. (1988). *Shaping written knowledge: The genre and activity of the experimental article in Science*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Belles-Fortuno, B. (2006). *Discourse markers within the university lecture genre: A contrastive study between Spanish and North-American lectures*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Universitat Jaume I. Retrieved October 6, 2012, from <http://www.repositori.uji.es>
- Benson, M. J. 1994. Lecture listening in an ethnographic perspective. In Flowerdew, J. (Ed.). *Academic English: research perspectives* (pp. 181-198). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T. N. (1995). *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication. Cognition/ culture/ power*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. xii- 288.
- Chafe, W. L. (1979). Caddoan. In Campbell, L. and Mithun, M. (eds.), *The Languages of Native America: Historical and Comparative Assessment*, 213-235. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Chaudron, C., & Richards, J. C. (1986). The effect of discourse markers on the comprehension of lectures. *Applied Linguistics*, 7(2), 113-127.
- DeCarrico, J., & Nattinger, J. R. (1988). Lexical phrases for the comprehension of academic lectures. *English for Specific Purposes*, 7, 91-102.
- Dunkel, P. A., & Davy, S. (1989). The heuristic of lecture note taking. Perceptions of American and international students regarding the value and practice of note taking. *English for Specific Purposes*, 8, 33-50.
- Flowerdew, J. (2002). *Academic discourse*. London: Longman Pearson Education.
- Fraser, B. (1999). What are discourse markers? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31, 931-952.
- Freedman, A., & Medway, P. (1994a). *Genre and the new rhetoric*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Halliday, M. A. K. 1994. *Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Martin, J. R. (1993). *Writing science. Literacy and discourse power*. London: Flamer press.
- Halliday, M.A.K., McIntosh, A., & Stevens, P. (1964). *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*. London: Longman.
- Hinds, J. (1979). Organizational patterns in discourse. In Givón, T. (Ed.). *Syntax and semantics: discourse and syntax*. New York: Academic Press: 159-181.
- Jung, E.H. (2003). The role of discourse signalling cues in second language listening comprehension, *The Modern Language Journal* 87 (iv), 62-577.
- Khuwaileh, A. A. (1999). The role of chunks, phrases and body language in understanding co-ordinated academic lectures. *System*, 27, 249-260.
- Lemke, J. L. (1990). *Talking science: Language, learning and values*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Mason, A. (1994). By dint of: Student and lecturer perceptions of lecture comprehension strategies in first-term graduate study. In Flowerdew, J. (Ed.). *Academic English: research perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 199-218.
- Ostman, L. (1998). How companion meanings are expressed by science education discourse. In D. Roberts & L. Ostman (Eds.), *Problems of meaning in science education* (pp. 54-70). New York: Teachers College Press.

- Rendle-Short, J. (2003). So what does this show us?: Analysis of the discourse marker so in seminar talk. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 23, 46-62.
- Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schiffrin, D. (2003). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Malden, MA/Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Swales, J. M., & Malczewski, B. (2001). Discourse management and new episode flags in MICASE. In Simpson, R. & J. M. Swales. (Eds.), *Corpus linguistics in North America: Selections from the 1999 Symposium* (pp.145-164). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (2002). Integrated and fragmented worlds: EAP materials and corpus linguistics. In Flowerdew, J. (Ed.). *Academic discourse* (pp. 150-164). London: Longman Pearson Education.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF GENESEE AND UPSHUR'S SELF EVALUATION RATING SCALE

Reza Nejati

Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University

Nejatireza2@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Tests are the most widely used assessment tools in the classroom and outside of the classroom. They are used for placement, admission to a program, achievement, research and other purposes. In some circumstances, due to practical and or other concerns, instead of tests, self-assessment scales are used. In both cases, however, it is important to consider the appropriateness, i.e., the reliability and validity of the measure. Reliability measures the consistency of the test; validity is the extent to which the test measures what it claims to measure. This study reports and discusses the results of administering a self reporting test, namely, Genesee and Upshur's self evaluation rating scale (GUSRS). Over 1000 Iranian students took the test. The results, analyzed through confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha, revealed that, the GUSRS is a valid and reliable instrument. The instrument may be useful especially as a complimentary measure along with other test forms. Before using this rating scale, however, the examinees should be given training on how to interpret the test items.

KEYWORDS: Reliability, Validity, Self-evaluation, Rating scale

INTRODUCTION

Interest in self-assessment methodologies in foreign/second language education has emerged in 1980s. Work has been undertaken in many parts of the world and several reports on the theoretical and practical implications of using self-assessment techniques have come out (Oscarsson, 1997).

Attention to self-assessment developed out of interest in the area of autonomous learning or learner independence. Conversely, it has been viewed as one of the more challenging areas of self-directed learning. It is admitted that learners might not be experienced enough to make judgments of this sort (Blue, 1994).

Many teachers express doubt about the value and accuracy of student self-evaluation. The doubts may relate to the point that students may have fictitious perceptions of their accomplishments and that they may be motivated by self-interest. Frequently heard is the claim that the "good students" under-estimate their achievement while students who do not know what successful performance requires, over-estimate their attainments. These concerns suggest, from a measurement perspective, that self-assessment introduces construct-irrelevant variance that threatens the validity of assessment (Ross, 2006).

Despite these criticisms, there are a number of reasons why self-assessment should be encouraged in language classes. Oscarsson (1998) gives six different reasons why self-assessment can be beneficial to language learning. First, he stresses that self-assessment promotes learning. It gives learners training in evaluation, which results in benefits to the learning process. Secondly, it gives both students and teachers an awareness of perceived levels of abilities. Training in self-assessment, even in its simplest form, like asking “What have I been learning?” encourages learners to look at course content in a more discerning way. Thirdly, it is highly motivating in terms of goal-orientation. Fourth, through the use of self-assessment methodologies, the range of assessment techniques is expanded in the classroom. Because of using self-assessment, the learner broadens his/her range of experience within the realm of assessment. Fifth, by practicing self-assessment, the students participate in their own evaluation (Dickinson, 1987). They, in effect, share the assessment burden with the teacher. Finally, by successfully involving students in their own assessment, beneficial post-course effects will happen.

In spite of the criticisms leveled against self-assessment in terms of validity and reliability, educators have successfully used writing conferences, reflection logs, weekly self-evaluations, self-assessment checklists, teacher-student interviews and inventories. A popular technique in the area of self-assessment has been the use of rating scales, checklists and questionnaires. These three techniques have been used as a means where learners could rate their perceived general language proficiency or ability level. A lot of developmental work has been done in this area using “ability statements” such as “I can read and understand newspaper articles intended for native speakers of the language” (Coombe, 1992; Oscarsson, 1984).

Learner diaries and dialog journals have been proposed as one way of systematizing self-assessment for students (Oscarsson, 1984; Dickinson, 1987). Learners should be encouraged to write about what they learned over the course and what they plan to do with their acquired skills.

To summarize, there are a number of benefits to using self-assessment in the classroom. It allows students to weigh up their knowledge of the language at various points within a course and/or semester. It also assists students in the development of critical faculties. Self-assessment also enables students to look at language in more concrete terms. Using the techniques mentioned here, self-assessment motivates students to look at their strengths and weaknesses and become more autonomous learners that is a fundamental part of the learning process.

The purpose of the study

Self-assessment can take many forms, including writing conferences, reflection logs, weekly self-evaluations, self-assessment checklists and inventories, teacher-student interviews, etc. These types of self-assessment have one thing in common: they ask students to look at their work to find out what they have learned and what have not learned. Although each method differs slightly, all should include enough time for students to consider reflectively and evaluate their progress. When students understand the criteria for good work before they begin an activity, they are more likely to meet those criteria. The key to this understanding is to make the criteria clear. Students' reflections can provide effective feedback for improving your instructional plan. As

your students answer questions about their learning and the strategies they use, think about their responses to find out what they are really learning and to see if they are learning what you are teaching them.

Whereas formal or standardized tests have already established construct, predictive, and concurrent validity and reliability indices, the question of the validity and reliability of learners' self-estimates still remains controversial. Many language constructs, such as proficiency and communicative competence, are hard to define and must be clearly operationalized to ensure the validation of assessment among learners. The criterion by which learners are to assess themselves may be unclear and thus add an added risk to validity.

Language learners in EFL contexts may find self-assessment very difficult if no comparisons to a native speaker are available to them. Since reliability, like validity, depends on systematic analysis, the question is whether self-assessments are consistent. They most likely are not. Learners need to be encouraged to assess their performance on a regular basis. The present study, then, attempts to examine one self-assessment checklist. It further intends to determine the psychometric characteristic of a frequently used self-assessment instrument, namely, Genesee and Upshur's self-evaluation rating scale (GUSRS).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study addresses the following questions.

1. Are the constructs of GUSRS psychologically real in an EFL setting?
2. Is GUSRS reliable in an EFL context?

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the means and methods utilized to answer the research questions put forward in this study. It describes the participants, the instruments, the data collection procedure, the scoring method and the analyses performed.

Participants

Over twelve hundred undergraduate English and non-English major students were asked to take the rating scale. Nevertheless, some students did not return the forms. Some others did not provide the information requested. Hence, these forms were discarded. All in all, the researcher could obtain 1016 forms.

Instrumentation

To achieve the purpose of this study Genesee and Upshur's (1996) self-evaluation rating scale was used. According to the instructions of the questionnaire, the students should rate themselves with terms such as *never*, *rarely*, *half of the time*, *often*, *always*. Since these terms are categorical, they may result in subjective judgment thereby decrease the reliability of the outcomes. To avoid this pitfall, the rating was modified. The subjects were required to choose 0-20, 21-40, 41-60, 61-80, 81-100 depending on how competent they saw themselves in each skill. The items are illustrated under Table 1 below. To make sure that the subjects clearly understand the items, they

were translated into students' native language, Persian. To avoid drawbacks of probable mistakes in the translation of the scale, it was back-translated.

Data Analysis

The two issues often cited in reference to more serious research studies are the reliability and construct validity of inventories or surveys when administered to specific samples. Assessing reliability is a relatively straightforward statistical technique. Cronbach's Alpha is the statistical procedure that is usually used. The higher the value of alpha, the more accurate the survey or inventory is estimated to be. One frequent way of establishing indicators of construct validity is to use confirmatory factor analysis of all the items and scales on a survey to see if the conceptualization of the theory/ model is confirmed. Should the index meet the cut-off point set by the psychometrics then some piece of evidence has been produced upon which a case for construct validity can be established. To establish the reliability and the construct validity of the rating scale, the techniques mentioned above were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question was:

Are the constructs of GUSRS psychologically real in an EFL setting?

It must be stated that this question does not lead to a null hypothesis for the question essentially deals with a latent construct not (in) dependent variables. Hence, construct validity is usually examined through factor analysis which purports to 'discover simple patterns in the pattern of relationships among the variables' (Darlington, 2004). The construct validity of the GUSRS was examined through the use of confirmatory factor analysis. To do so, a structural equation model was developed. The structural model is displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Structural Model for the GUSRS

Scale	Items
Speaking	s1 s2 s3
Writing	s4 s5
Listening	s6 s7 s8
Reading	s9 s10 s11

The model was developed in accordance with the original authors' conceptualization of language proficiency. They believe that proficiency can be manifested in the following manner.

Items 1, 2, and 3 constitute speaking ability. They are written out below.

- I can describe where I live and people I know.
- I can describe my life experiences and events.
- I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects.

Items 4 and 5 comprise writing ability. They are inscribed here.

- I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality, and address on a hotel registration form.
- I can write short essays.

Listening comprehension is mirrored in items 6, 7, and 8. The items are noted down below.

- I can understand native speakers when they talk about daily affairs.
- I can understand academic lectures.
- I can understand movies without too much effort.

Items 9, 10 and 11 speak for reading comprehension. They read as follows.

- I can read and understand the information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, menus, and timetables.
- I can read articles and reports on social or political issues.
- I can read articles and reports related to my field of study.

The parameter estimation for the model used maximum likelihood. Goodness of fit information is displayed in the following table.

Table 2: Goodness-of-Fit Information for the GUSRS

Degrees of Freedom = 40
Minimum Fit Function Chi-Square = 187.98 P = 0.0
Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP) = 147.98
Minimum Fit Function Value = 0.19
Population Discrepancy Function Value (F0) = 0.15
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.060
Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI) = 0.24
ECVI for saturated Model = 0.13
ECVI for Independence Model = 10.10
Chi-Square for Independence Model with 55 Degrees of Freedom = 10231.33
Independence AIC = 10253.33
Model AIC = 239.98
Saturated AIC = 132.00
Independence CAIC = 10318.49
Model CAIC = 393.99
Saturated CAIC = 522.96
Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.20
Standardized RMR = 0.094
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.99
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.99
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) = 0.60
Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.98
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.98
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) = 0.71
Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.99
Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.99
Relative Fit Index (RFI) = 0.97
Critical N (CN) = 344.91

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of the model in question was found to be 0.06, which typically indicates close fit. Hence, the researcher could retain the self-evaluation model used in this study.

The RMSEA measures the amount of discrepancy between model and data in the population, taking model complexity (i.e., number of estimated parameters) into account. The following are rules of thumb for the interpretation of the RMSEA:

Practical experience has made us feel that a value of RMSEA of about .05 or less would indicate a close fit of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom. This figure is based on subjective judgment. It cannot be regarded as infallible or correct, but it is more reasonable than the requirement of exact fit with the $RMSEA = 0.0$. We are also of the opinion that a value of about 0.08 or less for the RMSEA would indicate a reasonable error of approximation and would not want to employ a model with a RMSEA greater than 0.1 (Browne and Cudeck (1993).

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) here was calculated to be 0.99. According to one rule of thumb, the CFI value should be above .90 for a model to be acceptable. The Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) was 0.98 indicating that the model fits the present sample. T-values obtained between measured variables (items) and latent variables (constructs) in all cases were statistically meaningful signifying coherent relation between the indicators and the constructs they represented. Moreover, these T-values showed that all indicator variables were effectively measuring the same construct, i.e., the model enjoyed convergent validity (Anderson, and Gerbing, 1988).

Further, T-values observed between factors, namely *speaking, writing, listening and reading* and the latent construct of proficiency represented as SELF (short for Self-assessment) turned out to be significant implying that these factors could legitimately be viewed as good measures of language proficiency.

Assuming that construct validity evidence would subsume other types of validity, namely, content, criterion, face and consequential, it would be safe to claim that the GUSQ is a valid instrument to be used for the assessment of proficiency in Iran. However, the utility of a self-rating instrument must not be exaggerated because, as readers may agree with the writer, there is a possibility of measurement inaccuracy with such instruments. Some teachers and researchers rightly question the methodology of self-assessment on the ground that some students may overestimate themselves, especially if the consequence of the test is dire for them or they may underestimate themselves due to their personality. Another factor that may cause overestimation/underestimation of one's ability is the fact that the students may misinterpret the items of the rating scale. This is particularly true of perfectionist student. A perfectionist student may have trouble with concepts such as 'clear', 'detailed' and 'complex subjects' as stated in the following statement taken from the GUSRS.

I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects.

The above-mentioned statement is but one example. Other statements are also open to personal interpretation.

The reliability of the GUSRS is addressed in the next section. The second research question was: *Is GUSRS reliable in an EFL context?*

As stated before, reliability questions do not render themselves to null hypotheses for they do not deal with the so-called (in) dependent variables. Again, the researcher has to resort to the acceptability norms in the field of Social Science research.

Before attempting to answer this question, it must be added that the rating scale had four scales, namely speaking, writing, listening and reading. Hence, the reliability of all subscales and that of the whole questionnaire is reported here. The reliability index for the whole questionnaire turned out to be. 0.92.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics of GUSRS

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.919	0.920	11

The analyses were run to examine the internal consistency of items in each scale (Table 4). All four scales, namely speaking, writing, listening and reading yielded acceptable reliability estimates ranging from 0.68 to 0.89.

Table 4: Reliability Statistics of the GUSRS Factors

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Speaking	0.89	3
Listening Comprehension	0.79	3
Reading Comprehension	0.85	3
Writing	0.68	2

The item- total correlations were examined for the items in all scales. Correlations for all items were within acceptable ranges (0.46 to 0.71).

Based on the results displayed in the tables above, one can easily see that the rating scale of interest in the present study is highly reliable. That is to say, Iranian researchers can use this rating scale with certainty. Needless to add, however, in using any instrument, the findings based merely on measurement model will not be 100 percent useful. Practitioners and researchers are advised to take contextual factors into consideration. For example, before using the GUSRS rating scale, the users should see if the rating scale items reflect the way language teaching/ assessment is echoed in the curriculum and whether a self-assessment instrument is appreciated by the stake holders in education, namely, officials, principals, teachers, parents and students.

CONCLUSION

Having answered the research questions, the researcher found that the GUSRS is an appropriate questionnaire on account of construct validity, reliability and practicality. If the present sample represents the population of Iranian University students, instructors and or researchers can use this rating scale for proficiency assessment. Nevertheless, assuming that statistical analysis is not the final arbiter for it investigates the input given to it not more, the researcher, based on the review of the literature, suggests that some new descriptors be added to the GUSRS if one wishes to develop a more comprehensive measure of self- assessment.

The present study did not deal with the following issues which, if investigated, might be of great use for the clarification of other factors in self-assessment studies.

1. Age factor was not controlled. This would shed light on the issue of underestimation or overestimation of one's abilities through an inside in measures.
2. The socio-economic status of the subjects was not taken into account. The main charge here is that the socio-economic and the cultural context of students' lives may influence their approach to self-assessment. Learners are not all alike; they live in particular socio-economic settings where age, gender, race and class all interact to influence their attitudes to tests.
3. Data gathering was limited to the implementation of a questionnaire on one sample of subjects. However, Gay and Airasian suggest that determining construct validity involves gathering numerous test results from the instrument on similar populations (Airasian, (2000). This would also provide more information on the reliability of the measure. Moreover, the literature of Social and Psychological Research contends that research in this field should be approached through different elicitation instruments – the so-called triangulation approach. It remains to be seen whether students' self-ratings correlate with outside criteria (criterion-referenced testing). The study could have been carried out, using parallel tests of proficiency, say, TOEFL, in a tighter design such as 'within group' and or 'between groups' design. This would bring concurrent evidence of both content and construct validity of the instrument used.

Limitations of the study

The study has some limitations. First, the instrument used for this study is a self- report measure. Second, the instrument items are subject to personal interpretation. Such instruments are prone to overestimation and or underestimation thereby the results obtained might be conflated with error. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with care. Third, personal variables such as age, gender, educational background and socio-economic status of the participants were not controlled. As a consequence the generalizability of the findings may be somewhat limited.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103, 411-423.
- Blue, G. (1994). Self-assessment of foreign language skills: Does it work? *CLE Working Papers*, 3, 18-35.

- Bollen, K. A., & Long, J. S. (Eds.). *Testing Structural Equation Models*, 136-162. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Browne, M. W., & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In: Bollen, K. A. and Long, J. S. (Eds.) *Testing Structural Equation Models*. pp. 136-162. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Coombe, C. (1992). *The relationship between self-assessment estimates of functional literacy skills and basic English skills test results in adult refugee ESL learners*. Ohio State University.
- Darlington, R.B. (2004). *Factor analysis*. Available at <http://comp9.psych.cornell>.
- Dickinson, L. (1987). *Self instruction in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gay, L., & Airasian, P. (2000). *Educational Research*. Prentice Hall, Inc.,
- Genesee, F., Upshur, J.A., (1996). *Classroom-based evaluation in second language education*. Cambridge University Press.
- Oscarsson, M. (1984). *Self-Assessment of Foreign Language Skills: A survey of research and development work*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Oscarsson, M. (1997). Self-Assessment of Foreign and Second Language Proficiency. In *The Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, Vol. 7. Kluwer Academic Publishers, 175-187.
- Oscarsson, M., (1998). *Learner Self-Assessment of Language Skills*. IATEFL TEA SIG Newsletter, Nov. 1998.
- Ross, J.A. (2006). The reliability, validity, and utility of Self-assessment. *Practical Assessment, research & evaluation*, 11 (10).

THE IMPACT OF USING PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT ON WRITING PERFORMANCE OF IRANIAN MEDICAL STUDENTS

Mostafa Zamanian

Shiraz Branch of Islamic Azad University, Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz, Iran

Nima Pouladian

*Shiraz Branch of Islamic Azad University, Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz, Iran
Nimapooladian@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

Recently much attention has been paid to assessment in language pedagogy literature. Portfolio Assessment as an assessment technique was not an exception as well. One of the benefits of using portfolios for assessment is that they tend to promote a richer and more sophisticated understanding of writing (Birjandi, et.al. 2008). Unfortunately, to date little research has been done on the use of portfolios as an assessment technique at the university level in Iran and the effects it might have on writing skill. Hence the researchers tried to find the impact of using portfolio assessment on the improvement of Iranian medical students' English writing performance. The study used a sample population of 64 male and female students in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences in Bandarabbas, Iran. They were selected out of 182 students based on the results of an essay writing test. The participants were randomly divided into two groups of 32, the control and experimental groups all of whom attended a session of "getting started with portfolios" held by the researchers in which the portfolio model of Moya & O'Malley (1994) was explained. All of the participants attended the same English course held in 15 sessions. The experimental group members were treated with the portfolio method (i.e. given the portfolio properties, they were asked to prepare and present their writing tasks as a structured portfolio) while at the end of the class both groups were given an essay posttest. The results of this study showed a rather significant advantage in the scores of experimental group providing confirmation of the positive effect that the portfolio compilation by the students had on their writing performance. This would provide further proof that the mostly avoided portfolio approach is in fact beneficial in the learning process of writing as a productive skill and is worthy of considering by teachers and curriculum planners.

KEYWORDS: Portfolio, Portfolio Assessment, Performance Assessment

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is a powerful pedagogical tool for promoting effective learning. By googling the net using the key words "learning portfolio" and "portfolio assessment" the popularity of these concepts are seen in academic circles (Apple, 2004; Fenwick, 2000; Jennings, 2008; Shimo,

2003; Yeo Kee Jiar, 2006). If done in the right ways, assessment can provide a basis for planning the next instructional steps in response to students' needs. It gives feedback to be drawn on into teaching strategies and practices at all levels. Tutors should use assessment as part of teaching and learning to raise their students' achievement.

Teachers and researchers are greatly interested in implementing a portfolio assessment in their classrooms (Paulson, et.al. 1992). These interests stem from the different aims that teachers and researchers would like to achieve. They suggested three reasons for using portfolios in writing instruction: as teaching tools, for professional development, and for assessment purposes.

The traditional role that assessment plays for the purposes of grading and reporting should be revisited to promote learning. In this regard, an effective way of assessing students through assessment is by means of authentic assessment to review their portfolios. Portfolios are open-ended and versatile. The content of the portfolios depend on determined educational goals and purposes and can include a variety of students' tasks.

Portfolio development is introduced in many studies as a viable replacement for standardized testing. The feasibility of altering or supplementing standardized testing with portfolio assessment for the purpose of determining student achievement and competencies is currently being explored everywhere.

Proponents of portfolio-based assessment are of the idea that portfolios are better predictors of students' performance in any authentic situation and they can also improve students' higher-order thinking skills (Tillema, 1998). Research concerning portfolio use at the college and university level, however, is limited at this time. Portfolios are becoming more popular in a variety of postsecondary programs like English composition and writing as well (Clayton, 1998). To date, little research has been done on the use of portfolios as an EFL program at the university level in Iran.

The Portfolio Assessment Process

According to Damiani (2004), the use of the portfolio as an assessment tool is a process with multiple steps. The process takes time, and all of the component parts must be in place before the assessment can be utilized effectively. She goes on to mention these steps as follows.

Decide on a purpose or theme

General assessment alone is not a sufficient goal for a portfolio. It must be decided specifically what is to be assessed. Portfolios are most useful for addressing the student's ability to apply what has been learned. Therefore, a useful question to consider is, what skills or techniques do I want the students to learn to apply? The answer to this question can often be found in the school curriculum.

Consider what samples

Consider what samples of student work might best illustrate the application of the standard or educational goal in question. Written work samples, of course, come to mind. However,

videotapes, pictures of products or activities, and testimonials are only a few of the many different ways to document achievement.

Determine how samples will be selected

A range of procedures can be utilized here. Students, maybe in conjunction with parents and teachers, might select work to be included, or a specific type of sample might be required by the teacher, the school, or the school system.

Assess the process and the product or the product only?

Assessing the process would require some documentation regarding how the learner developed the product. For example, did the student use the process for planning a short story or utilizing the experimental method that was taught in class? Was it used correctly? Evaluation of the process will require a procedure for accurately documenting the process used. The documentation could include a log or video of the steps or an interview with the student. Usually, if both the process and the product are to be evaluated, a separate scoring system will have to be developed for each.

Develop an appropriate scoring system

Usually this is best done through the use of a rubric, a point scale with descriptors that explain how the work will be evaluated. Points are allotted with the highest quality work getting the most points. If the descriptors are clear and specific, they become goals for which the student can aim. There should be a separate scale for each standard being evaluated. For example, if one standard being assessed is the use of grammatically correct sentence structure, five points might be allotted if all sentences are grammatically correct. Then, a specific number of errors would be identified for all other points with zero points given if there are more than a certain number of errors. It is important that the standards for evaluation be carefully explained. If we evaluate for clarity of writing, then an operational description of what is meant by clarity should be provided. Points available should be small enough to be practical and meaningful; an allotment of 20 points for clarity is not workable because an evaluator cannot really distinguish between a 17- and an 18-point product with regard to clarity.

Share the scoring system with the students

Qualitative descriptors of how the student will be evaluated, known in advance, can guide learning and performance.

Engage the learner in a discussion of the product

Through the process of discussion the teacher and the learner can explore the material in more depth, exchange feelings and attitudes with regard to the product and the learning process, and reap the greatest advantage of effective portfolio implementation.

Significance and Objectives of the Study

The concepts of traditional testing or the more recent assessment approaches – including portfolio creating or portfolio assessment – are not new in many developed language pedagogical approaches around the world. For some teachers though, the portfolio approach is unknown. As

Rea (2001) asserts, they find a gap between what they believe could be a helpful pedagogical approach and what their students are actually doing.

Our instructors and students in Iran are less familiar with the concept of Portfolio Assessment, thus are not ready to use it in current EFL programs in the universities. Those who are familiar with it would choose not to use it for several reasons one of which might be the time-consuming nature of portfolios. The researchers find it necessary to make it more clear for them and also show its possible merits for teachers and students.

BACKGROUND

Portfolio development is increasingly cited as a viable alternative to standardized testing (Shepard, 1989; Valencia, 1990a). The feasibility of replacing or supplementing standardized testing with portfolio assessment for purposes of determining student achievement and competencies is being explored everywhere.

Recently, portfolios have been proposed and adopted as student assessment management tools in addition to or simultaneously with standardized achievement tests (Baron, 1992b; Brewer, 1990). More recently, there has been a growing interest mainly in mainstream educators in performance assessment and specially portfolio assessment thanks to concerns that multiple-choice tests fail to assess higher order skills and other skills essential for functioning in school or work settings (O'Neil, 1992; Rothman, 1991). Multiple-choice tests are not authentic because they do not represent the activities that students typically engage in. In addition, multiple-choice tests do not reflect current theories of learning and cognition and are not based on abilities students actually need for future success (Hancock, 1994).

Whereas standardized tests serve a purpose in education, they are neither infallible nor sufficient. Many educators acknowledge that any "single score, whether it is a course grade or a percentile score from a norm referenced test, almost always fails to accurately report student overall progress" (Flood & Lapp, 1989, p. 509). A single measure is incapable of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, processes, and strategies that combine to determine student progress. Another concern is that standardized tests cannot be used to closely screen student's progress in the school curriculum throughout the year since they are only administered once or twice per semester, thus portfolio development is increasingly drawn on as a viable alternative to standardized testing.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

Based on the presented subject of portfolio assessment and its effects on the students proficiencies during EFL programs the researchers propose the following question to be addressed in the study:

1. Does portfolio assessment have any impact on the writing proficiency of university EFL learners?

To address this question the researchers try to logically and statistically reject the following null hypothesis:

1. Portfolio Assessment does not affect the writing performance of intermediate EFL learners.

If the researchers can reject this null hypothesis then an alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, an experimental design was used with an experimental group and a control group to investigate the effectiveness of portfolio compilation on the experimental group's writing performance in comparison with that of the control group participants. In this section, the sampling method, instruments and the procedure used in the study are elaborated on.

Participants

Based on the portfolio model presented early in the study, the current study was conducted on a group of 64 intermediate students in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences in Bandarabbas, Iran, studying in a Medical Doctorate program. They were selected out of 182 students based on the results of an essay test.

Instruments

The materials used in this study are an essay writing as pretest and another essay writing as posttest with equal word counts and scoring procedures and similar topics related to the field of medicine (i.e. patient history, prescriptions, etc.). The submitted writings were marked by two raters as well as both researchers with the same scoring criteria applied in all to minimize the subjectivity. The Pearson's inter-rater reliability index was calculated at ($r=0.81$).

Procedure

After selecting the 64 participants, the researchers gave them a choice on their preferred testing method. This test included two writing topics related to the science of medicine and for each topic the students were asked to write an essay of at least 100 words. Then they attended several sessions of Getting Started with Portfolios in which the researchers elaborated on the portfolio model of the study. Having mastered the knowledge necessary for preparing a portfolio and the grading based on this approach instead of the traditional methods of testing, the researchers asked them to voluntarily select between these two approaches (keeping in mind that if the students have an option to choose between the portfolio approach and the traditional method the final results would be more reliable).

These 64 students were randomly divided into two groups of 32, one as the experiment group and the other as the control group. All of the participants attended the same writing class receiving the same input. The experiment group members were treated with the portfolio method of assessment (i.e. given the portfolio properties, they were asked to prepare and present their writing tasks as a structured portfolio) while both groups were assessed with an essay test parallel to that of the pretest.

The results of pretest and posttest which were rated by two skilled writing raters plus the researchers according to the same scoring criteria are presented and discussed in the next chapter. It should be noted that the age and gender of the participants were not controlled in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of Both Groups

The results of the pretests and posttest were rated by three skilled writing raters. Using SPSS v.20, the following analyses were made on subjects' scores. First you can see in table 1 the descriptive statistics of the control group:

Table 1: descriptive statistics of control group

	Control Group Pretest Average	Control Group Posttest Average
N Valid	32	32
Missing	0	0
Mean	14.9921	15.5546
Median	15.1700	15.1000
Mode	14.17 ^a	15.02 ^a
Std. Deviation	1.5731	1.2679
Variance	2.408	1.562
Skewness	-.315	-.159
Std. Error of Skewness	.343	.343
Range	9.50	8.75
Minimum	10.50	11.25
Maximum	20.00	20.00
Sum	479.25	482

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

As it's been illustrated in table 1, the average score achieved by control group in the posttest (15.5546) has by a small amount exceeded the average of control group pretest (14.9921). This increase is scientifically insignificant and can even be ignored.

But let's take a look at the descriptive statistics of the experimental group of the study in table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of experimental group

	Experimental Group Pretest Average	Experimental Group Posttest Average
N Valid	32	32
Missing	0	0
Mean	14.9453	17.0078
Median	15.9800	18.3100
Mode	14.93 ^a	18.23
Std. Deviation	1.9720	1.2134
Variance	3.756	1.308
Skewness	-.387	-.919
Std. Error of Skewness	.349	.343
Range	6.50	9.25
Minimum	12.00	10.75
Maximum	18.50	20.00
Sum	488.75	573.75

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 2 illustrates the same descriptive statistics regarding the experimental group's pretest and posttest. We can observe a rather noticeable increase between the average of pretest (15.2734) and the average of posttest (17. 9296). This increase is statistically interpreted in later tables.

Discussion

A researcher can reject the null hypothesis in social sciences when the significance is below 0.05 and then the alternative hypothesis will be accepted. As is shown in this study, the paired samples statistics of experimental group indicate that the t-test with 44 degrees of freedom was significant which means that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

This also means that the difference observed among Experimental group averages of pretest and posttest is a significant reliable difference. The average mean observed for the experimental

group's posttest far exceeds the same observation for the control group which suggests that the method used for the experimental group is more effective than that of control group.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to determine the effects of portfolio compilation as an assessment approach on the writing performance of Iranian language learners. The writing skill, generally, is the weakest of the four skills among Iranian learners of English and for the participants, the medical students, this skill is of utmost importance. Hence, attempting to improve their writing performance, the authors implemented the portfolio approach and tested it against a simple essay approach. Finally, based on these results the researchers can claim that the portfolio assessment method used in this study has positive effects on writing competence of Iranian EFL learners.

There were however some limitations such as considering only the writing skill and not the combination of all skills. The authors also liked to investigate other Iranian students in different university programs which was simply not feasible for a single piece of study.

REFERENCES

- Apple, M. (2004). *Empowering the Demotivated Learner: Writing Portfolios as an Alternate Means of Assessment for False Beginners to Low Intermediate Learners of English as a Second or Foreign Language*. The Journal of the College of Foreign Language, Himeji Dokkyo University, 17, 85-100.
- Baron, J.B. (1992b). *Performance-based assessment in mathematics and science: Examples from Connecticut's core of learning assessment program*. Paper presented at the National Forum on Assessment for the National Education Association, Washington, DC.
- Birjandi, P., Bagheridoust, E., & Mossalanejad, P. (2008). *Language Testing, A Consice Collection for Graduate Applicants, 4th edition*. Shahid Mahdavi Publications, Tehran, Iran.
- Brewer, W.R. (1990). *Performance assessment in Vermont*. (Policy Briefs Nos. 10 and 11.) Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Clayton, M. A. (1998). *CAL portfolio English III: A new direction for freshman composition at Middle Tennessee State University (portfolio assessment)*. (Doctoral dissertation, Middle Tennessee State University, 1998). Dissertation Abstracts International, 59-07A, 2479.
- Damiani, V. (2004). *Portfolio Assessment in Classroom*. Indiana University, College of Education. Available online at: <http://reading.indiana.edu>
- Fenwick, T. (2000). *Dynamic assessment: Putting learners at the centre of evaluation*. In T. Barer-Stein & M. Kompf (Eds.), *The craft of teaching adults (3rd ed.)* (pp. 77-94). Toronto: Culture Concepts/Irwin.
- Flood, J., & Lapp, D. (1989). Reporting Reading Progress: A Comparison Portfolio for Parents. *The Reading Teacher*, 42, 508-514.
- Hancock, C.R. (1994). *Alternative Assessment and Second Language Study: What and Why?* Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Issue Paper July 1994.

- Jennings, S. (2008). *Freshman English Seminar Class Goals: A Portfolio Approach*. Available online at Maebashi Kyoai Gakuen College site via: www.kyoai.ac.jp/college/ronshuu/no-08-jennings2.pdf
- Moya, S., & O'Malley, M. (1994). *A Portfolio Assessment Model for ESL*. The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, Spring 1994, 1-16.
- O'Neil, J. (1992, May). *Putting Performance Assessment to the Test*. Educational Leadership, 49(8), 14-19.
- Paulson, F.L., Paulson, P.R., & Meyer, C.A. (1991). "What Makes a Portfolio a Portfolio?" *Educational Leadership*, 60-63.
- Rea, S. (2001). *Portfolios and Process Writing: A Practical Approach*. The internet TESL Journal, Vol. VII, no. 6, June 2001, available online at: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Rea-Portfolios.html>
- Rothman, R. (1991, May 8). *Ambitious Student Assessment System Advances*. Education Week, p. 14.
- Shepard, L. A. (1989). Why we need better assessments. *Educational Leadership*, 46(7), 4-9.
- Shimo, E. (2003). *Learners' Perceptions of Portfolio Assessment and Autonomous Learning*. In Barfield, A. & Nix, M. (2002). *Teacher and learner autonomy in Japan*, Vol. 1: Autonomy You Ask! (pp. 175-186). Japan Association for Language Teaching, Learner Development Special Interest Group.
- Tillema, H. H. (1998). Design and Validity of a Portfolio Instrument for Professional Training. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 24(3), 263-278.
- Valencia, S. W. (1990a). A Portfolio Approach to Classroom Reading Assessment: The whys, whats, and hows. *The Reading Teacher*, 43, 338-34.
- Yeo, K.J. (2006) *Portfolio Assessment: Self-Evaluation for Children with Learning Disabilities*. In: Seminar TVE06, 09-10 Desember 2006, Hotel Sofitel Palm Resort Senai Johor, (Unpublished). Available online at: <http://eprints.utm.my/2269/>

REPLACEMENT OPERATION IN SELF-INITIATED REPAIR PRACTICES IN ORAL REPRODUCTION OF SHORT STORIES

Azizeh Chalak, Amirhossein Talebi, Seyed Naser Khodaeian, & Ali Asghar Pourakbari
Islamic Azad University of Isfahan

Javad Danesh
Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

This paper investigated replacement operation, one of the self-initiated repair operations, practiced by Iranian students of English as a foreign language (EFL) in reproduction of short stories. In addition, the present study examined learners' priorities in employing repair methods. Two repair methods were analyzed, explicit repair and tacit repair. To this end, two groups of thirty EFL students in two oral reproduction courses at Sheikh-Bahaei university (Iran) were required to reproduce two short stories as their final exam. This study purposefully used two groups of learners in two different academic years, sophomores and juniors, to inspect whether the academic level of studies has an impact on the frequency of use of repair practices. To collect data, two short stories were selected from Oral Reproduction of Stories by Abbas Ali Rezai, and participants were voice recorded. After transcribing the data and applying the Chi-square test (Yates correction factor), the results revealed that both sophomore and junior Iranian EFL learners produced explicit repair practices more frequently. Furthermore, students in the sophomore group practiced more instances of replacement repair operation. The findings of the present research may have implications for syllabus designers and teachers as well as students.

KEYWORDS: self-initiated repair, repair operation, repair method, explicit repair, tacit repair

INTRODUCTION

As it is evident, students in educational EFL settings frequently encounter conversational challenges when they are to interact with other interlocutors such as other students or teachers i.e. they mostly experience moments of conversational breakdowns for various reasons. In fact, they struggle to transmit a comprehensible message to their interlocutors, and they sometimes fail to do so. Therefore, Leonard (1983) suggests that competent communicators learn to regulate and modify messages within a conversation. Speech modification may entail planning to select appropriate words, reducing the complexity of utterances, or elaborating on a statement for clarification. When individuals do not properly regulate or modify messages, a communication breakdown may occur. Interactants, thus, try to make repairs to their utterances in order to maintain communication.

Hence, Language repair, first defined by Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) as the set of practices whereby a co-interactant interrupts the ongoing course of action to attend to possible trouble in speaking, hearing or understanding the talk, is used as an important communication

strategy to maintain the conversation and avoid breakdowns. ‘Trouble’ includes such things as “misarticulation, malapropisms, use of a ‘wrong’ word, unavailability of a word when needed, failure to hear or to be heard, trouble on the part of the recipient in understanding, incorrect understandings by recipients” (Schegloff, 1987a : 210), among others. Repair is used to ensure “that the interaction does not freeze in its place when trouble arises, that inter-subjectivity is maintained or restored, and that the turn and sequence and activity can progress to possible completion” (Schegloff, 2007b : xiv).

A key distinction has been provided by conversation analysts between *initiating* repair and actually making the repair by giving the repair solution. In fact, this is an important distinction because repair can be initiated by one party and completed by another. Most often, repair is initiated by the speaker of the *trouble-source* or *repairable* (these terms are used interchangeably in the literature), and this is referred to as *self* - initiated repair. Generally the speaker who self - initiates repair also completes the repair by producing a repair solution (Kitzinger & Lerner, 2010).

In self - initiated self - repair, then, a current speaker stops what s/he is saying to deal with something which is being treated as a problem in what s/he has said, or started to say, or may be about to say — for example, cutting off the talk to replace a word uttered in error with the correct word. By contrast, in *other* - initiated repair someone other than the speaker of the trouble -source initiates repair. Hence, it is the recipient of a turn - at - talk (rather than its speaker) who initiates repair on it (Schegloff, et al., 1977).

Self-initiated repair operations identified by Schegloff (2007) are: replacing, inserting, deleting, searching, parenthesizing, aborting, sequence jumping, recycling, reformatting and reordering. Replacing, which is probably the most common operation in English and also in some other languages (Fox, et al., 2010) is the focus of the present study. It involves “ a speaker’ s substituting for a wholly or partially articulated element of a turn - in - progress another, different element, while retaining the sense that this is the same utterance ” (Schegloff, 2008).

Replacement repairs come in various forms such as antonyms or synonyms, alternative formulations of the trouble - source term. Also, they can substitute a full - form for an indexical reference, or a new full - form reference for the trouble - source reference, either for the same referent or for a different one. Replacing can extract an individual from a collectivity or conversely can aggregate an individual to a collectivity by replacing (e.g. “ I ” with “ we ”) (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2007a). Speakers can also use replacement to change the tense of a verb (e.g. from past to present).

Cut-offs are a common way of halting progressivity in English (and in many other languages). So, too, are various other hitches in speaking — including sound stretches and other delaying productions (e.g. “um”, or “ uh ”). Such hitches do not initiate repair by themselves, but rather alert recipients to the possibility of a repair of trouble (if it was trouble) only becoming evident from an inspection of what happens next. Nevertheless, Repairs can also be initiated tacitly, without any explicit advance indication that progressivity is being suspended; in such instances it

is only apparent on production of the repair solution that a repair is being affected, and that the onward progressivity of the turn has been suspended for the purposes of that repair (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2010). There is no one - to - one relationship between the method of repair initiation and the repair operation: repair initiated with a cut - off can turn out to be replacing, inserting, deleting, or any other of the full range of repair operations.

On the basis of such assumptions, the present research aims to investigate whether two methods of repair: explicit (using cut-offs and hitches) and tacit (using no indicators) in replacement repairs are used in the oral production of Iranian EFL learners. The study also aims to identify how repair methods in replacement operation practices are used by both groups in order to regulate and maintain conversation, pass comprehensible messages to their interlocutors and achieve their communicative goals. The findings will hopefully provide insights into how important these practices are in real life communication; in addition, EFL syllabus designers may gear the courses to the linguistic and communicative ability of their students.

Indeed, a couple of prior studies have been carried out on language repair. For example, Nagano (1997: 81) in his study on the self-repair of Japanese learners of English concludes that "... the self-repair of Japanese speakers of English is not very different in some ways from that of the L1 speakers in Levelt's study".

Research has also shown that repair, which is a language phenomenon, is necessary for keeping communication smooth and accurate, and it has been evident in the literature that language learners are able to employ many repair strategies in second language interaction (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 2000, 2007; Watterson, 2008). Additionally, It is evident in language repair research that both native and non-native speakers of English use repair practices while negotiating meaning in order to understand or make themselves understood (Firth & Wagner, 1997).

Drew (1997) suggests that "self-repair is also a mechanism of remedying mistakes in conversation". 'Mistakes' may also relate to acceptability problems, such as saying something wrong in a broad sense, that is untrue, inappropriate or irrelevant (Schegloff, 2007).

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), self-initiated self-repair (self-repair) takes the form of initiation with a non-lexical initiator, followed by the repairing segment (p. 376). These non-lexical initiators include cut-offs, lengthening of sounds, and quasi-lexical fillers such as *uh* and *um*. In order to repair their errors in problematic talk, language users repeat words and use fillers to gain time and achieve their communicative goal. Schegloff et al. (1977) state that self-initiated and self-completed repair (self-initiated self-repair) occurs when the interlocutor who is responsible for the trouble source both initiates and completes the repair.

The problematic talk 'trouble source' can be defined as an utterance or a part of an utterance that is perceived as problematic by at least one of the interlocutors. The speaker may feel that the utterance did not correspond to what he/she wanted to say, while the hearer may be unable to

decode the intended meaning of the utterance. The speaker may also assume that the recipient did not understand the utterance in the right way (Faerch & Kasper, 1982:79).

Self-initiation, self-completed repair is the most common repair strategy used (Schegloff et al., 1977). The speaker makes an error, detects it, cuts off what he/she was saying, and repairs the error. Repairs are signaled through the use of strategies, such as interruption, editing expressions (*er, em*) and backtracking. Similarly, Berg(1986: 212) admits that the repair process begins with an error. An error means "all kinds of inadvertent behaviors". Errors are usually detected during the articulation of the problematic word, which is usually signaled by the interruption of the flow of speech by the speaker himself.

Research on the repair of second language learners (e.g., Kranke & Christison, 1983; Schegloff, 2000) shows preference for self-initiated repair, although variations can be seen in the amount of initiation depending on the learner's language level (cf. Krahne and Christison, 1983). Krahne and Christison (1983) remark that "...language learners have demonstrated ability to utilize non-language-specific techniques of interaction maintenance which also facilitate their comprehension, and we can assume, their acquisition of the new language" (p. 234).

When EFL learners come across situations in which they make conversational mistakes, repair comes to help to smooth the way to return the conversation to normalcy. However, lack of linguistic knowledge may impede them from using repair practices or lengthen the time before repair is produced. According to Faerch and Kasper (1983), during the planning and execution phases, L2 speakers encounter problems due to their lack of linguistic resources; therefore, they modify their plan and use their existing knowledge, usually consciously, with the intention of sending a comprehensible message and achieving their communicative goal.

As a matter of fact repair operations take various forms as Schegloff (2007) suggests such as replacement, insertion, deletion, etc., yet repair is produced either explicitly by using hitches(hesitation markers and indicators) or tacitly with no hitches as in the following examples (taken from the data of the present research):

(1)

- 1 S: Buh the men we:re the men **are were** surprise'd
2 T: [nod]

(2)

- 1 S: The man **said told** his son he should'n heve done id
2 T: Ok

(3)

- 1 S: She jus' uh:'(0.4) met her mum at the street' 'er, (0.2) **on** de street
2 T:

(4)

- 1 S: You know and thet house wes really **bi:-small**
2 T: Aha...

As it is evident from these replacement examples, students in examples (1) and (2) did not use any advance indications to let the interlocutor become aware of the suspension of the turn; however, in examples (3) and (4), students explicitly alerted the cut-off by using delaying hitches and sound stretches respectively.

Replacement is a common repair practice whose role in communication could be one of the "most effective strategies for promoting comprehension that a speaker can use" (Hoekje, 1984: 10). However, research literature on replacement operation in Iranian EFL learners is not rich enough. Hence, the need for more research on repair practices, especially repair operations, is felt as teachers and syllabus designers can benefit from the findings of this type of research to have a better grasp.

Fotovatnia and Dorri's study (2013) concentrated on repair strategies used by Iranian learners in accordance with gender's effect on their use; nevertheless, repair operations were not the focus of the study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The focus of the present study is to investigate replacement operation in oral reproduction of stories. It compares explicit and tacit repair practices produced by Iranian EFL learners. More specifically, the aim of the present research is to answer the following questions:

1. Is replacement, as the most frequent repair operation, practiced by Iranian EFL students in retelling short stories?
2. Which repair method, explicit or tacit, is more frequently practiced?
3. Is there a relationship between the participants' academic level of studies and the frequency of replacement repair practices?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were sixty male and female third-year and second-year EFL students enrolled in the oral reproduction courses at Sheikh-Bahaei university. In December 2014, these participants, in two groups of 30, ranging from age 20 to 24 performed a story-retelling task as their final exam. The first group included fifteen males and fifteen females, and

they were all selected from the oral reproduction of short stories course offered to sophomores. Also, the second group included fifteen males and fifteen females, but they were selected from the same course offered to juniors. Students were not informed that they were selected for this study to keep the natural state of their performance. However, the researcher let them know the fact after the exam.

Instruments and materials

To control the effect of prior English studies, all students who had enrolled in these two classes took an Oxford Placement Test (Allan, 2004). Prior to the study, the OPT was used to assess the participants' homogeneity in terms of proficiency. The test had 100 multiple choice items. Along with Allen's (2004) scoring guidelines, 60 of the participants who scored higher than 68 out of 100 were selected as upper-intermediate learners for the main phase of the study. Two short stories were selected from Oral Reproduction of Stories book (Rezai, 2013): *The Six Rows of Pompons* and *All Summer in a Day*, which were thought to be interesting, and within the proficiency level of the students, after consultations with three university professors.

Procedure

All participants were assigned to read the stories and prepare for oral reproduction as their final exam. The participants were individually audio-recorded in the researcher's office while retelling the stories to the researcher. The researcher used gestures, such as nodding, to show that he was following, and interested, and to encourage the participants to continue their retelling. Since real-life conversations require more interaction between speakers, the researcher also tried to interrupt the participants, using words and expressions, such as *then, aha, OK, oh my God!, Did he do that? Oh Really!*, and *What happened then?* This had a positive impact on the participants' performance, and their motivation to complete the task. The participants' production was carefully transcribed. All pauses and sound elongations were included in the transcription. In the transcription, every pause was shown in seconds, which was measured with the use of a stop watch. Markee (2000) suggests that the entire speech event should be transcribed to "provide an exhaustive account of the data potentially available for analysis" (p. 105).

The researcher was interested in analyzing the oral production of the participants because the interlocutor, who was the researcher of the present study himself, did not produce much discourse. Regarding the markers of repair, the researcher detected repair methods in replacement operation in the transcription of the spoken discourse of Iranian learners of English, and then classified them into two categories: explicit and tacit repair. Markee (2000) identified markers of repair stating that "repairs are likely to be signaled by various markers of incipient repair (pauses, silences, sound stretches, cut-offs and phrases like 'you know' and 'I mean'" (p. 86). Next, frequencies and percentages of explicit repair and tacit repair in replacement operation practices were calculated. Furthermore, to find out any statistical differences in the use of repair methods between the two groups of EFL learners, a Chi-square test was used.

It should be noted that in order to maximize the reliability of the researcher's classification, it was passed to three intra-raters, who are professors of Applied Linguistics at the University of Isfahan. In order to make the raters' task easier, the methods were highlighted and classified in

context. That is, the whole utterance in which repair was practiced was transcribed. The raters were asked to verify whether that the researcher's classification was accurate based on the definition of each method. Their comments were taken into consideration and after necessary rectifications, the final categories and frequencies were ready.

Also, the researcher selected two groups of students from two different years of studies to find out whether offering this course to both sophomores and juniors was an appropriate decision taken by syllabus designers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Repair Methods Practices of the First Group (sophomores)

Repair Method	Frequency	Percentages
Explicit	136	83.4
Tacit	27	16.6
Total	163	100%

As can be seen in Table 1, the participants in the first group recorded 163 instances of replacement repair practices while retelling the two stories. It was observed that they tried their best to report as many events as they could; even very specific details were reported. This was evident in the average number of words used in their oral production which by means of MS Office word count, was found to be 600 words per story on average. It was also observed that all the participants in the first group used some instances of repair practices, either explicit or tacit. They practiced the two methods under investigation at the rate of 136 and 27 instances, respectively.

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Repair Methods Practices of the Second Group (Juniors)

Repair Method	Frequency	Percentages
Explicit	63	56.25
Tacit	49	43.75
Total	112	100%

Table 2 above shows that the juniors used fewer repair practices than the sophomores; they employed a total number of 112 instances of replacement repair practices, representing both methods. Contrary to the first group participants, it was noted that the third-year participants described only the key events; very specific details were not reported. This was manifested in the average number of words they produced, which was 450. Again, participants of the second group produced explicit repairs more frequently (63 cases).

In order to find out whether these differences were significant or not, a Chi-square test (*Yates correction factor*) was applied. The results of this statistical analysis procedure are discussed. The data show that the sophomores used 163 cases of replacement repair practices, while the juniors practiced 112 instances, indicating that the sophomores used more cases of replacement repair. The result of the Chi-square test ($\chi^2=23.19$) reveals significant differences between the sophomores and juniors in practicing replacement repair operation at $\alpha = .01$. The critical value

of χ^2 with 1d.f is 6.63. Thus, it can be concluded there is a relationship between the academic years of studies and practicing replacement operation. That is, the participants in the second year of their studies produced more instances of replacement repair operation.

Discussion

Above all, the results of the present study confirm that replacement operation is frequently used by Iranian EFL learners too. Also, the use of two methods of repair practices by Iranian EFL learners reveal that the findings are in line with the results of previous research on language repair (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2010). However, it was found that there were significant differences between the two groups in terms of the frequency of repair practices.

The statistical analysis presented in Tables 1&2 revealed that the learners in the first group significantly produced more explicit repair practices and fewer tacit repair instances of replacement operation in the story retelling task, when compared to those in the second group. This may have been due to a number of reasons. As stated previously, the number of words uttered by sophomores exceeded the number of words produced by juniors, which might be attributed to their lack of communicative abilities since linguistic background was controlled by homogenizing the participants through using an OPT.

Replacement operation as a self-initiated repair practice was used by both groups as an attempt made by the speaker to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item, when s/he felt that s/he made an error. Another point is that the juniors produced fewer repair instances, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story-retelling, i.e. they reported only the major events in both stories. It was possible that the juniors, due to the fact that they were more experienced, had designed a plan before attending the short stories retelling session. The answer to this question can be found by applying further research.

Also, Self-initiated repair was used when the speakers encountered problems with retrieving different items of the stories such as names of characters, story events, and main ideas. Additionally, it was noticed that replacement repair was not always successful; that is, the speakers tried to correct what they thought to be a mistake, but they did not do that successfully. This finding is thus a verification of the view that self-initiated repair is a well-organized, orderly, and rule-governed phenomenon and not a chaotic aspect of spoken discourse (Schegloff et al., 1977). Furthermore, it was found that participants in both groups were keen on taking risks to transmit comprehensible messages to their interlocutor, who was the researcher in the present study. They practiced repairs to retrieve ideas and lexical items and maintain conversation, and to produce correct forms or ideas. The participants' use of such repairs made their oral production comprehensible, despite the presence of hesitations and pauses.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate if replacement operation is practiced by Iranian EFL learners in oral reproduction of short stories and how learners prioritize their repair methods in their utterances. Additionally, this research examined if academic level of studies might have an

impact on the frequency of repair practices produced by the learners. Not surprisingly, the findings may raise the need for EFL syllabus designers and researchers to be aware of differences in producing repair practices among learners. In fact, courses offered to students must have been geared towards specific communicative abilities of the target learners, for example, when students can benefit more from their courses as they become more communicatively competent. In addition, teachers will be able to respond to the communication problems of students more effectively when they understand students' ways of resolving the conversation problems and the factors that affect them. In fact, teachers may help their students by giving awareness of appropriate strategies to overcome conversational difficulties.

Another implication is what can be used by students as learners' strategies i.e. learners get a better grasp of their own oral productions and find necessary strategies to deal with their own conversational breakdowns and in case of retelling short stories, students may find pre-planned strategies which can help them to perform the task more successfully.

The present study suffered from several limitations such as time and small samples. Also, this research included only students with an upper-intermediate level of proficiency; therefore, generalizations cannot be made to all levels of proficiency.

REFERENCES

- Allan, D. (2004). *Oxford placement test*. Oxford University Press.
- Berg, T. (1986). The aftermath of error occurrence: Psycholinguistic evidence from cut-offs. *Language and Communication*, 6, 195-213. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0271-5309\(86\)90023-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0271-5309(86)90023-6)
- Drew, P. (1997). 'Open' class repair initiators in response to sequential sources of troubles in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 28, 69-101.
- Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1982). Phatic, metalingual and metacommunicative functions in discourse: Gambits and repairs (pp. 71-103). In N. E. Enkvist (Ed.), *Impromptu Speech: A Symposium*. Åbo: Åbo Akademi.
- Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1983). Plans and strategies in foreign language communication. In Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (Eds.), *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*. London.
- Firth, A., & Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81 (3), 285 – 300.
- Fotovatnia, Z., & Dorri, A. (2013). Repair Strategies in EFL Classroom Talk. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 6, pp. 950-956. doi:10.4304/tpls.3.6.950-956
- Fox, B. A., Maschler, Y., & Uhmman, S. (2010). A cross - linguistic study of self - repair: Evidence from English, German and Hebrew. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42 (9), 2487 – 2505.
- Hoekje, B. (1984). Processes of repair in non-native speaker conversation. *ERIC*. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED250922.pdf>
- Kitzinger, C., & Lerner, G. H. (2010). *Repairing indexicals: An experiment in big - team CA research*. Panel convened at the International Conference on Conversation Analysis, Mannheim, Germany.

- Krahnke, K., & Christison, M. (1983). Recent language research and language teaching principles. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(4), 625-649. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3586617>
- Leonard, L. (1983). Speech selection and modification in language-disordered children. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 4, 28-37.
- Lerner, G. H., & Kitzinger, C. (2007a). Extraction and aggregation in the repair of individual and collective self - reference . *Discourse Studies*, 9 (4), 526 – 557 .
- Lerner, G. H., & Kitzinger, C. (2010). *Repair prefacing in the organization of same – turn self - repair* . Paper presented at the International Conference on Conversation Analysis, Mannheim, Germany.
- Levelt, W. J. M. (1983). Monitoring and self-repair in speech. *Cognition*, 14, 41-104
- Markee, N. (2000). *Conversation Analysis*. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.
- Nagano, R. (1997). Self-repair of Japanese speakers of English: A preliminary comparison with a study by W. J. M. Levelt. *Bulletin of Language Science and Humanities*, 65-90.
- Rezai, A.A. (2013). *Oral reproduction of stories*. Tehran: SAMT.
- Schegloff, E. A., Jefferson, G., & Sacks, H. (1977). The preference for self - correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language*, 53 (2), 361 – 382 .
- Schegloff, E. A. (1987a). Analyzing single episodes of interaction: An exercise in conversation analysis . *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50 (2), 101 – 114 .
- Schegloff, E.A. (1987b). *Between macro and micro: Contexts and other connections* . In J. Alexander , B. Giesen , R. Munch & N. Smelser (Eds.), *The micro - macro link* (pp. 207 – 234) Berkeley: University of California Press .
- Schegloff, E. A. (2000). Overlapping talk and the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language in Society*, 29, 1-63.
- Schegloff, E. A. (2007b). *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis 1*. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press.
- Schegloff, E. A. (2008). *Self- initiated, same – turn repair: Three core topics* . Paper presented at the workshop on repair and intersubjectivity in talk and social interaction, University of Toronto.
- Watterson, M. (2008). Repair of non-understanding in English in international communication. *World Englishes*, 27(3-4), 378-406.

Author Note

Azizeh Chalak, Assistant Professor at Department of English Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran; Amirhossein Talebi, PH.D Candidate, Islamic Azad University of Isfahan; Seyed Naser Khodaeian, PH.D Candidate, Islamic Azad University of Isfahan; Ali Asghar Pourakbari, PH.D Candidate, Islamic Azad University of Isfahan; Javad Danesh, Isfahan, Iran.

This research was self-funded. No governmental or private organizations provided financial support.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Amirhossein Talebi, Faculty of English Language, Islamic Azad University of Isfahan E-mail: Amir.h.talebi1978@gmail.com

THE EFFECT OF CHATTING IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS ON LEARNING VOCABULARY

Zahra Savaedy (Corresponding Author)

Email: Savaedy2008@yahoo.com

Samine Khadem Sameni

Email: Samine.Sameni@gmail.com

Mohammad Ali Fatemi (PhD)

Email: Fatemi35@gmail.com

English Department, Torbat-e-Heydarieh branch, Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e-Heydarieh, Iran

ABSTRACT

Teaching how to speak English is one of the important factors between educational practitioners and thus finding efficient techniques to improve this ability have long been under research. The most important element for speaking and communication is learning vocabulary. Since learning vocabulary is not easy, utilizing new techniques can help students in facilitate learning and create motivation for them. As the native speakers are the genuine source of vocabulary, this research was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of chatting with native speakers on learning vocabulary. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 56 students in Danesh Ara institution of Iran in Mashhad city were selected, who took a placement test. Subsequently, 40 intermediate students were selected, 20 as experimental group and 20 as control group. They all took a pre-test on vocabulary and then were advised to chat with the native speakers. Some students, who did not know how to chat with the native speakers, were instructed how to do so. The control group didn't have the chance to speak with the native speakers and they learned the vocabulary with traditional methods (e.g. reading the new words, repeating after the teacher and then memorizing them for the next session). After 20 sessions, the pre-test was administered as post-test, The data was entered in SPSS and the independent sample test is calculated, the results showed significant improvement on learning vocabulary in the experimental group. So chatting with the native speakers could be one of the interesting technique in facilitate learning vocabulary.

KEYWORDS: Chatting, Vocabulary, Intermediate, Native speakers.

INTRODUCTION

Most studies that were reviewed focused on the effects of using computer on language learning, and the effects of online units designed to teach L2 vocabulary on the students' achievement, attitude towards English language and satisfaction with the online unit. The examiners noticed

that there are very few online materials designed to help L2 learners learn vocabulary, and very few scales designed to measure premedical students' attitude towards English and their satisfaction with these units. This adds to the significance of the current study. The researchers made use of the communicative method of teaching English that focuses on enhancing vocabulary in designing the learning material of the current study.

As Michelin (1997) states that "The use of the Internet in English language classes exposes the students to a wider range of English than they usually encounter in their daily lives. Furthermore, the World Wide Web is an invaluable source of information both for teachers and students. With respect to other advantages of implementing the internet, it can be stated that real time technology can help to solve the problem of insufficient exposure to vocabulary practice, specifically by chatting with the native speakers.

From reviewing the literature relevant to the current research, the following are concluded:

The current study is similar to Ushida's (2003) study since both studies used online units to develop students' acquisition of vocabulary and both measured the effects of these units on the students' attitude toward English language and satisfaction with these units. Kaya's (2006) study is the most similar study to the current study in the design of the online units and using WEBCT to deliver the units to improve the students' vocabulary acquisition.

Kaya's (2006) online unit contained text, images, movie, and audio in order to facilitate the vocabulary learning process like the online unit used in the current study. As Warschauer and Healey (1998) states that through chatting, learners of a language can communicate inexpensively and quickly with other native speakers all over the world. This communication can be either synchronous with all users logged on and chatting at the same time.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any significant difference between the performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners in learning vocabulary when instructed by chatting and those who receive instruction in traditional way?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

56 participants took part in a placement test in Danesh Ara Institute in Mashhad, Iran. So, the explorers could determine their language level. Upon inclusion in the program, this sample was selected from intermediate students. Their proficiency level had been determined via the placement test administered at the institute.

Placement test has been designed for choosing the intermediate students and placing students into the six levels of the series and the other option for getting to this level was passing previous levels of English courses in institute. It could be inferred that the participants had the same, or very similar general English proficiency. After administration of the test, only 40 participants

could get score of 52-61 for placement test and thus they were selected to be the sample of this study. This clarified that participants were at level 4 (intermediate) and indicated that the great majority of subjects were homogenous. The proficiency level of the participants was also determined by passing the previous levels of English courses in the institute. The Iranian EFL learners were divided randomly into experimental group and control group.

20 participants were assigned to be the experimental group and were called group A. 20 participants were assigned to be the control group and were called group B. Both groups had the pre-test to examine their initial lexical knowledge. Then group "A" received treatment based on chatting with the native speakers. But group B did not receive this treatment. Finally both groups had the post-test after 20 sessions. Both pre-test and post-test were the same for both groups. The pretest study was different because it measured three dependent variables and provided support for the learners.

Materials and instruments

In the data gathering procedure, the first step consisted of placement test. Placement test helps the investigators to select intermediate students and collect required data. The instruments used for data collection were placement test, pre-test, post-test, online chat, computer, social network (Yahoo messenger).

The Placement test was utilized to determine the level of the participants. It is written by the Colchester English Study Centre (Appendix 1). It was administered in different occasions and the reliability is proved and it help to select intermediate students and to homogenize their proficiency level. The students who can answer 52-61 correct questions from 80 questions are selected as intermediate level. The pre-test was used to measure the learner's initial vocabulary knowledge. And the post-test was utilized to determine the efficiency of online chatting with native speakers on vocabulary knowledge. All participants were encouraged to register in free online websites and make their own ID in order to know each other and contact with native speakers of English.

The experimental group had access to the Internet and used yahoo messenger for online chatting with the native speakers. We considered and assessed the students' computer skills, typing abilities and familiarity with communication technology. Then we selected EFL learners who had similar level of skills in these regards

Design and procedures

The study started in November 2013 and ran for 20 sessions. 3 tests were used. The procedure included different stages of application such as selection of the subjects, instruments and materials.

At the first session, the intermediate students were selected via placement test. Those who obtained scores between 52 and 61 indicated that they were at the intermediate level and thus homogenous. In fact, the placement test acted as a criterion for selecting the students who were approximately at the same level of vocabulary knowledge. In order to have an effective

comparison between the level of lexical knowledge of treatment and control groups, a pre-test was administered to check their knowledge of vocabulary and proficiency level as a reference for their improvement after treatment. So after 20 sessions both groups attended the post-test. After administration of pre-test, the control group received no treatment. However the experimental group received treatment based on online chatting with the native speakers and we rechecked their ability at surfing the net, typing, and online communication and chose those who had the same and equal ability.

For the experimental group, the teacher specified the duration of online chatting for 6-8 hours per day. During this time, the teacher was also online, in order to supervise and assist the EFL learners. EFL learners used yahoo messenger software for online chatting with the native speakers and they used it as a tool to type the messages in chat box and communicate with the native speakers about any topic. Furthermore the institute administered 8 random sessions to assess the students' progress during online chatting with the native speakers. These 8 sessions helped them to understand the situation and the process of improvement of lexical knowledge. It should be noted that the control group was taught by using traditional methods (such as reading the words, repeating them and saying the meaning of each word). This group did not have the chance to chat with the native speakers. To maximize the validity of the study, we controlled some variables such as age, gender, environment, time of chatting, knowledge of vocabulary, typing ability, familiarity with online communication and checking the students simultaneously. Farhady, Jafarpour, Birjandi ,1994 state that , " one of the best ways of testing knowledge of vocabulary is via close passage test". Thus we also used close passage test in the last week to make our results more valid.

Data analysis

The data was analyzed through SPSS and One-way analysis of variance was run to analyze the average scores of the two groups. Placement test shows the homogeneity of the groups and also participants' background information. The pre-test was administered to show the knowledge of vocabulary and level of proficiency. We used the independent samples T-test to compare the results of the post-test of two groups and we also used the paired samples T-test to compare the result of pre- test with post- test for each group.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSION

To start with, the researchers had to analyze the data obtained from the administration of the Pretest/Posttest. The group statistics of the scores of the 40 students who took the Pretest/Posttest in both the experimental group and control group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of both groups in T1 and T2 - Group Statistics

Students		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Experimental Group	20	14.65	3.977	.889
	Control Group	20	14.15	3.360	.751
Posttest	Experimental Group	20	15.80	3.037	.679
	Control Group	20	14.30	3.147	.704

The next step in data analysis was computing the reliability among pre-test and post-test in experimental and control group. As the pre-test and post-test are the same, if the test is reliable, the alpha should be up to 0/75. Table 2 shows the alpha of pre-test and post-test of the experimental group is 0/944 and Table 3 shows the alpha of pre-test/post-test of the control group is 0/898. It means that the pre-test/post-test is highly reliable. Because we have two groups, experimental and control group, naturally the scores are different. The test reliability of the 2 groups which is shown in the table below is different.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.944	.962	2

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.898	.899	2

The next step was to run an independent t-test to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the pre-test (Table 1). The results, as indicated in Table 4, demonstrated that the variances fulfilled the condition of the homogeneity at 0.05 level of significant. ($F=2.402$, $p=0.130>0.05$)

Since the homogeneity of the variances of the two groups was proved, the results of the t-test was claimed to be dependable. Considering the results of the t-test ($t=0.309$, $df=38$, $p=0.759>0.05$), it was concluded that there was significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

Table 4: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.776	.384	.429	38	.670	.500	1.164	-1.857	2.857
	Equal variances not assumed			.429	36.969	.670	.500	1.164	-1.859	2.859
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.014	.906	1.534	38	.133	1.500	.978	-.480	3.480
	Equal variances not assumed			1.534	37.951	.133	1.500	.978	-.480	3.480

An independent t-test was run to compare the mean scores of the control and experimental groups on the post-test. As displayed in Table 1, the mean score for the experimental group is 14.65, with a standard deviation of 3.977 in pre-test and 14.30 in post-test, with a standard deviation of 3.147. The mean score and the standard deviation for pre-test of the control group are 15.80 and 3.037, and the mean score and the standard deviation for post-test of the control group are 14.15 and 3.360, respectively. These statistical analysis shows the differences between the control and experimental groups' mean scores on the post-test. And as shown in Table 4, Sig. (2-tailed) is more than 0.05, it indicates the effect of chatting on improving learning vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine whether chatting of the Iranian intermediate EFL learners with native speakers had any significant effect on learning vocabulary. At the outset of this study the participants were homogenized through the placement test. The results of this study indicated that online chatting with the native speakers, had a significant effect on learning vocabulary on the EFL learners. Also it is clearly observed that the learners in the experimental group were actively involved in expressing themselves freely in the chat rooms with using new vocabulary without anxiety and fear of making mistakes. This sense of security also motivated them to accomplish more as they went along during the course. Using Internet chat rooms for improving students' knowledge of vocabulary is also of great importance due to the opportunity that a chat room naturally gives to its users by combining speaking and writing (more specifically typing) so that all of them can express themselves and type their ideas at the same time without any interference with and interruptions of others' speech and also give reply from the native speakers that are the genuine source of the EFL and learn the new vocabulary from them. This is not possible in real classes. A very prominent advantage of chat room worth mentioning is that whatever is typed there can be saved on disks and further be used by the students to improve their learning and by the teacher to evaluate students and their progress and design better activities and tasks for their improvement of vocabulary.

Internet and chatting with different people all over the world are very important revolutions in the history of human communication. In the third millennium, few people would contest that English is an essential world language today and that the Internet has become a part of modern life. The investigators hope that the results obtained from this study would be beneficial for all those involved in language learning/teaching and help EFL learners improve a much coveted goal, i.e. learning vocabulary that is the key to learning every language.

All in all, according to this research, chatting of Iranian intermediate EFL learners with native speakers has a positive effect on learning vocabulary in experimental group when compared with the control group that shows the level of scores after the treatment is higher than the scores before the treatment).

Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study is problem with Internet disconnection when the students and the researcher should attend for chatting. Other limitation is that some of the students couldn't attend

on time because they have other works to do and they attend late. Then explore the real native speaker was other limitation in this study. Some people give wrong information about their nationality, at first the researcher should chat with them and when she assure that the addressee was native speaker, introduce to the students and it wasted a lot of time.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, Z. I. (2001). Computer-mediated communication and group journals: Expanding the repertoire of participant roles. *System*, 29(4), 489-50
- Ally, M. (2008). Foundations of educational theory for online learning. In T. Anderson (Ed.), *The theory and practice of online learning* (pp. 15-44). Toronto: AU Press.
- Beatty, K. (2003). *Teaching and researching computer-assisted language learning* (2nd edn.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Chanrunghanok, P. (2004). *A naturalistic study of the integration of computer-mediated communication into oral discussion in an EFL college classroom in Thailand*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania. ProQuest Information and Learning Company. UMI: 3142066
- Chun, D. M. (1994). Using computer networking to facilitate the acquisition of interactive competence. *System*, 22(1), 17-31.
- Coniam, D., & Wong, R. (2004). Internet Relay Chat as a tool in the autonomous development of ESL learners' English language ability: An exploratory study. *System*, 32(3), 321-335.
- Conrad, K. B. (1996). CALL-Non-English L2 instruction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 16, 158-181.
- De la Fuente, M. J. (2003). Is SLA interactionist theory relevant to CALL? A study on the effects of computer-mediated interaction in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 16(1), 47 – 81.
- Ellis, N. C. (1995). The psychology of foreign language vocabulary acquisition: Implications for CALL. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 8, 103-128. Erlbaum Associates [Online]. Available: <http://www.erlbaum.com>
- Goodfellow, R. (1995). A review of the types of CALL programs for vocabulary instruction. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 8, 205-226.
- Groot, P. J. M. (2000, May). Computer assisted second language vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning and Technology*, 4(1) [Online]. Available: <http://www.llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/groot/default.html>
- Harley, B. (1996). Introduction: Vocabulary learning and teaching in a second language. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53(1), 3-11.
- Hiltz, S. R., & Turoff, M. (1978). *The network nation: Human communication via computer*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Hsu, H-Y., Wang, S-K., & Comac, L. (2008). Using audioblogs to assist English-language learning: An investigation into student perception. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 21(2), 181-198.
- Kitao, S. K., & Kitao, K. (2000). *Using on-line chat in language teaching*. Retrieved on March 28, 2006

- Kim, Y. (2006) (Rev). *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Bringing Research to Practice*. (2005). Elfrieda H. Hiebert & Michael L. Kamil (Eds.). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence
- Krashen, S. D. (1987). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. UK: Prentice-Hall International English Language Teaching
- Kukulska-Hulme, A., & Jones, C. (2011). The next generation: Design and the infrastructure for learning in a mobile and networked world. In A.D. Olofsson & J.O. Lindberg (Eds.) *Informed design of educational technologies in higher education: Enhanced learning and teaching* (pp. 57-78). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference (an Imprint of IGI Global).
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Murray, D. (2000). Protean communication: The language of computer-mediated communication. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(3), 397-421.
- Mynard, J. (2002). Introducing EFL students to chat rooms. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 8(2). Retrieved on September 23, 2005, from
- Martin, B.J. (2008) *English learning chat rooms*. Retrieved on February 14, 2008, from: www.ehow.com/about_5232129_English-learning-chat-rooms.html
- Oberg, A., & Daniels, P. (2012). Analysis of the effect a student-centered mobile learning instructional method has on language acquisition. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 1, 1-20.
- Rankin, W. (1997). Increasing the communicative competence of foreign language students through the FL chat room. *Foreign Language Annals*, 30(4), 542-546.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd. ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Simpson, A. (2008). *The internet chat room as a learning tool*. Retrieved on August 21, 2008, from: www.eltworld.net/times/2008/09/the-internet-chat-room-as-a-learning-tool/
- Su, V. (2007). *Chat rooms for language learning*. Retrieved on April 18, 2008, from: www.opensource.idv.tw/paper/chatroom/ChatRoomsforLanguageLearning-1.ppt
- Tudini, V. (2003). Using native speakers in chat. *Language Learning and Technology*, 7(3), 141-159
- Warschauer, M., & Healey, D. (1998). Computers and language learning: An overview. *Language Teaching*, 31(1), 57-71.

Appendix 1: Placement test

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PLACEMENT TEST
(Written by the Colchester English Study Centre)

Choose the answer that you think is correct and circle the appropriate letter:

1.	This man has dark a) heads b) head c) hairs d) hair
2.	and a a) beard b) barber c) moustaches d) facehair
3.	He is a jacket a) wearing b) carrying c) having d) holding

4.	and he is a piece of paper. a) wearing b) holding c) having d) getting
5.	He is sitting at his a) chair b) desk c) office d) room
6.	- perhaps he is a) work b) at work c) business d) on job
7.	You arrive at a party at 8 p.m. What do you say? a) Goodnight b) Good-bye c) Good evening d) Good afternoon
8.	Someone offers you a drink. You don't want it. What do you say? a) Thank you b) Please c) No, thank you d) No, please
9.	Henderson going to work. a) likes not b) don't like c) doesn't like d) not like
10. early in the morning? a) Does he get up b) Gets he up c) Do he get up d) Get he up
11.	He to drive a car. a) am learning b) learning c) is learning d) are learning
12.	A train is a bus. a) more quickly b) quickly c) quicker than d) more quick
13.	He swim very well. a) not can b) cannot c) doesn't can d) don't can
14. the bus to work. a) Always Roberts catches b) Roberts always catches c) Roberts catches always d) Roberts does always catches
15.	Peter works in London. a) He goes there by train b) He there goes by train c) He goes by train there d) There goes he by train
16. TV last night. a) Did he watch b) Watched he c) Did he watched d) Does he watch
17.	I spoke slowly, but he understand me. a) canned not b) didn't can c) didn't could d) could not
18.	He made last year. a) many money b) much money c) a lot of money d) lots money
19.	I asked him a) to not go away b) to go not away c) not to go away d) go not away
20.	He used to live London. a) on b) in c) to d) at
21.	James to him on the phone. a) spoked b) speaked c) spoke d) spoken
22.	" Quiet, please – I" a) am doing a test! b) do a test! c) doing a test! d) does a test!
23.	I won't go to Cambridge if it tomorrow. a) rain b) would rain c) rains d) raining
24.	While he to London he saw an accident. a) was driving b) drives c) drove d) had driven
25.	Millions of cigarettes every year. a) is smoke b) are smoking c) are smoked d) are smoke
26.	He has a experience in marketing in Europe. a) grand b) wide c) large d) great
27.	I remember him in London. a) of meeting b) to meet c) to meeting d) meeting
28.	But I saw him in Frankfurt a) 3 years ago b) for 3 years c) before 3 years d) since 3 years

29.	Could you look the blackboard and read what is on it? a) to b) on c) for d) at
30.	Smith went abroad last year. abroad before. a) He had never been b) He had been never c) He never went d) He went never
31.	The last Olympic Games in Athens. a) were held b) was held c) were held d) were hold
32.	He took cheese. a) all of b) all c) the all d) all of the
33.	The committee held a last week. a) meeting b) gathering c) session d) sitting
34.	I the Prime Minister's speech very carefully. a) heard to b) heard c) listened to d) overheard
35.	He would have known that, if he the meeting. a) had attended b) would have attended c) has attended d) would attend
36.	Would you mind the door? a) open b) to open c) opening d) to opening
37.	In August he for us for 25 years. a) will have worked b) will work c) is going to work d) will be working
38. since I came back to the office? a) Did Robinson telephone b) Was Robinson telephoning c) telephoned Robinson d) Has Robinson telephoned
39.	He speaks English very well he's only 12. a) whereas b) despite c) in spite of d) although
40.	"Don't do that," I said. I him not to do that. a) talked b) told c) spoke d) said
41.	He never takes risks. He's a very man. a) mindful b) anxious c) attentive d) cautious
42.	I'd like to put a suggestion, if I may. a) forward b) over c) across d) through
43.	I this test for at least half an hour now. a) do b) am doing c) have done d) have been doing
44.	I'll speak to him when he a) will arrive b) is arriving c) arrives d) would arrive
45.	"Can you come tomorrow?" He asked tomorrow. a) if I come b) that i come c) if I could come d) that I can come
46.	He hasn't come again today. If he doesn't come, what to do tomorrow. a) he wouldn't know b) he didn't know c) he will not have known d) he won't know
47.	CONVERSATION (questions 47 – 64): Mr and Mrs Wallace want to buy a house, so they go to the office of an estate agent. Agent: Good morning. Mr and Mrs Wallace? Mrs Wallace: Mr Hogan? Agent: How do you do. Mrs Wallace: I spoke to you on the phone. is my husband. a) This b) It c) He d) That Mr Wallace: How do you do.
48.	Agent: How do you do. sit down. a) You b) Please c) Now d) Let (They all sit down at a desk.)
49.	Agent: I understand from our telephone conversation that you're a) intending b) interesting c) intended d) interested
50.	in buying a property for about £85,000, is that ?

	a) true b) possible c) not d) right
51.	Mrs Wallace: No. Well the price is right, but – er – well, we a problem. a) make b) have c) are d) seem We've been living abroad for the last ten years -
52.	Mr Wallace: Longer that. a) than b) that c) as d) to
53.	Mrs Wallace: Yes, I suppose it is – and we want to settle back here a) because b) and c) but d) so
54.	we have very different ideas of the of place we'd like to live in. a) kind b) piece c) shape d) area
55.	Mr Wallace: Yes, you see prefer to live in town, in a centrally located flat. a) I b) I'd c) we d) we'd
56.	Mrs Wallace: And I am really keen to live in country. a) the b) a c) some d) -
57.	I want a big garden. I want a new view. I want to be to go for walks. a) able b) possible c) can d) allow I want to go back to work – that is, to get back into teaching.
58.	Mr Wallace: Well, I'm sure you teach in London, in town, just as easily. a) would b) might c) should d) could
59.	Mrs Wallace: Yes, I think the chances of a) and b) but c) so d) then
60.	getting a job probably much greater in a village school a) is b) are c) will d) would
61.	and I like to be part of the community again, darling. a) would b) do c) will d) shall
62.	Mr Wallace: And I want to live in a flat maintenance included. a) for b) with c) and d) by
63.	You know – you pay for all the I mean, I'm not a do-it-yourself man. a) services b) servants c) assistance d) assistants
64.	I don't like to mend leaky , and that sort of thing. a) walls b) floors c) roofs d) ceilings
65.	AT A HOTEL (question 65 – 80) Mr Graham has just checked into a hotel, but he is not happy with his room. He goes down to the reception desk. Mr Graham: I'm there's been a mistake. My room doesn't have a bath. a) sorry b) afraid c) anxious d) regret
66.	Hotel Clerk: Well, I think your room is correct, sir. Room 118 ? a) don't you b) isn't it c) doesn't it d) can you
67.	Mr Graham:, could I have a bath, please? a) Thus b) Well c) In spite d) Thank you
68.	Hotel Clerk: Er – I'm afraid we don't a room with a bath and – a) reserve b) get c) have d) retain
69.	Mr Graham: Look, I'm very tired. I don't want to but my firm always book a room with a bath. a) shout b) denounce c) anger d) argue
70.	Hotel Clerk: Er – I'll check the a) correspondence b) mailing c) communicate d) lettering
71.	but I don't think you were into a room with a bath. a) reserved b) checked c) booked d) registered There we are, it is Mr Graham, isn't it? Mr Graham: It is, yes. The clerk shows Mr Graham a letter.

72.	Hotel Clerk: Yes, one room. a) alone b) single c) bathless d) only
73.	Mr Graham: I'll see them when I get back. Well, I that it's our mistake, a) appreciate b) deprecate c) respect d) expect
74.	but are you sure there's with a bath? a) not b) something c) anything d) nothing Hotel Clerk: Well,
75.	Mr Graham: I've just flown a very long and I'm very tired and all I want is a bath and a sleep. a) distance b) airline c) period d) timing
76.	Hotel Clerk: Well, as I've said, sir, there's nothing for tonight. a) extremely b) perfectly c) absolutely d) especially But let's see. You're here for five days, aren't you? Mr Graham: Oh dear!
77.	Hotel Clerk: I'll just have a with the manager. a) word b) sentence c) phrase d) dialogue
78.	Mr Graham: I would it. a) value b) appreciate c) thank d) reward
79.	I'm to have a long hot bath! a) despaired b) worried c) desperate d) overwhelmed
80.	Hotel Clerk: Don't worry, sir! it with me. a) Let b) Leave c) Give d) Stop

TEFL TEACHERS' REACTIVE FOCUS ON FORM: THE CASE OF IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE AND INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THEIR SPOKEN LINGUISTICS ERROR TYPES

Ahmad R. Beigi Rizi¹

(PhD Candidate, University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran)
arbeigi@fgn.ui.ac.ir

Dr. Daryoush Nejadansari

(Assistant Professor, University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran)
nejadansari@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The role of corrective feedback (CF) is debated in second language acquisition (SLA). The possible relationship among L2 teachers' spoken corrective feedback types, the learners' proficiency levels, and their error types have not been unequivocally shown, in particular, not in the case of foreign language teachers' reactive focus on form among pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. This study includes the transcripts of 120 hours of naturalistic classroom interactions recorded from ten classes of five teachers (two classes for each teacher, one pre-intermediate and one intermediate), totaling 1608 reactive focus on form episodes, known as corrective feedback. Chi-square analysis was used to analyze association between variables of this study in pairs (proficiency level and error types, proficiency level and corrective feedback types, error types and corrective feedback types). Statistically significant associations were revealed from the results of the analysis and also recasts were found to be the most widely employed corrective feedback types at both proficiency levels. Overall, the present study has shown that there is a diversity of corrective feedback reactions by the EFL teachers.

KEYWORDS: Corrective feedback, Focus on form, Reactive focus on form episode, Recast, Marked recast, Unmarked recast

INTRODUCTION

During interaction in foreign language classes, participants in the conversation may negotiate for meaning due to a lack of understanding. As part of this negotiation, foreign learners receive feedback on their language production, potentially helping to draw attention to different language problems and leading them to notice gaps between features of their interlanguage and the target language. By providing learners with information regarding their linguistic and communicative accomplishments or failures, this interactional feedback creates a favorable environment for L2 development. Through negotiation of meaning, input can be uniquely tailored to individuals'

¹ Correspondence: Ahmad Reza Beigi Rizi, Email: arbeigi@fgn.ui.ac.ir

strengths, weaknesses, and communicative needs providing language that suits their distinct development levels.

The discussions on how corrective feedback (CF) should be viewed, have developed in SLA and language pedagogy and the controversies address (1) whether CF contributes to L2 acquisition, (2) which errors should be corrected, (3) who should do the correcting (the teacher or the learner him/herself), (4) which type of CF is the most effective, and (5) what is the best timing for CF (immediate or delayed) (Ellis & Jiang, 2009). According to Lyster (1993) and Swain (1995), a communicative oriented environment is not the only necessary condition for Second Language (SL) acquisition. According to them, a way to significantly improve learners' performance is to focus on form in communicative settings, referring to formal instruction while communicative activities are performed, i.e., teachers drawing learners' attention to specific linguistic forms when a task-based syllabus is followed. For Ellis (1994), there are two ways to **focus on form**. The first is through the activities that require both communication and attention to form, and the second through corrective feedback during performance in communication activities. The latter will be the focus of this article.

Focus on form

Focus on form overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication (Long, 1991, as cited in Doughty, 2001). Focus on form involves an occasional shift in attention to linguistic code features — by the teacher and/or one or more students — triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production (Long & Robinsin, 1998).

Focus on form Instruction

FFI occurs during interlanguage construction and attempts to draw learners' attention to and providing opportunities for them to practice specific language features (Ellis, Basturkman&Loewen, 2001).

For example, a student might say, “*Everybody love flowers.*” The teacher would respond, “*love!*”. You need to use the third person singular “*loves*”.” The student would then state, “*Everybody loves flowers.*” A distinction exists between ***reactive and pre-emptive focus-on-form***. **Reactive focus-on-form** refers to error correction, corrective feedback, or negative evidence/feedback. Error correction occurs when, during the context of focus-on-meaning activities, learners' attention is drawn to errors in their production. Thus, the error triggers discourse aimed at a specific linguistic item. Contrarily, **pre-emptive focus-on-form** is defined as occurring when either the teacher or a learner initiates attention to form even though no actual problem in production has arisen (Farrokhi & Gholami, 2007).

According to Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) corrective feedback (CF) takes the form of responses to learner utterances that contain error. The responses can consist of (a) an indication that an error has been committed, (b) provision of the correct target language form, or (c) metalinguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these (p. 340).

Lyster & Ranta (1997) identified six different corrective feedback strategies: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic information, elicitation, and repetition. All of these techniques are placed in an explicit-implicit continuum. Farrokhi (2005a) also proposed a more comprehensible and applicable classification of feedback types: unmarked recasts, marked recasts, explicit correction, and negotiated feedback.

L2 proficiency and CF

This article also explores the relationship between the learners' proficiency level (pre-intermediate and intermediate levels) and the teachers' employed CF types. Proficiency in an L2 requires that learners acquire a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, which caters to fluency, and a rule-based competence consisting of knowledge of specific grammatical rules, which caters to complexity and accuracy (Skehan 1998). Evidence that proficiency level may affect teachers' choice of corrective feedback can be found in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study. They reported that the teacher of the most advanced class tended to recast learner errors to a lesser degree than the other three teachers did.

Types of errors

When foreign language teachers are correcting learners' errors, it is important to identify the type of error the learners make because it is not always the case teachers want or need to correct everything. In setting up taxonomy of errors, many researchers have established their own category of errors. In this study the researchers have used the Lyster's taxonomy of errors which distinguishes four main error types: (1. grammatical, 2. lexical, 3. phonological, and 4. unsolicited use of L1) Lyster (1998).

REVIEW OF THE RELATED STUDIES

One of the most popular questions among researchers and teachers is how to treat foreign language learners' errors. Correcting learners' errors is a vital classroom activity which is open to systematic investigations since as Guenette (2007) observes, the problem of how to handle learners' errors lies in the paucity of research which deals with corrective feedback systematically and at the same time controls many a variable involved in the process of giving corrective feedback to learners. To give or not to give feedback is no longer the question, because, thus, the majority of studies on feedback (Ashwell, 2000; Amirghassemi, Azabdaftari, & Saeidi, 2013; Bitchener, 2008; Chandler, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1997, 1999, 2006; Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts, & McKee, 2000) reveal the importance of responding to learners' output either in oral or written form; Ellis (2009) states that research on feedback can be studied from two perspectives: "the teachers' provision of feedback and students' responses to this feedback" (p. 98). He categorizes the former into: Direct CF (Corrective Feedback), Indirect CF, Metalinguistic CF, Focused and unfocused CF, Electronic feedback, and reformulation; the latter deals with whether students are required to revise or not; however, the question of what and how to respond to second or foreign language learners' speech or written essays remains unresolved; some doubt the type of feedback given to learners, some are skeptical of focus of feedback, and where these two reach a consensus, the third party opposes by questioning both on methodological grounds.

Ajideh and FareedAghdam (2012) investigated the possible relationship among L2 teachers' spoken corrective feedback types, the learners' proficiency levels (intermediate and advanced levels), and their error types. They concluded that there might be no one single way of treating learners' errors. The study provided support for the incorporation of focus on form into the context of meaning-focused instruction. This study suggested that learners of intermediate and advanced levels committed different types of errors and all the teachers employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies and the interaction between error types and CF types were statistically significant, confirming that learners' error types affected teachers' choice of CF types.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) investigated the relationship between types of corrective feedback and learner uptake in a primary French immersion classroom. Four teachers provided corrective feedback on learner errors in speech production in 14 subject-matter lessons and 13 French language art lessons. Feedbacks were classified into six types: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. Learner uptake, a student utterance following the teacher's feedback, was also categorized into two types: repair and need-repair, or in other words, successful and unsuccessful responses. The results revealed that the most frequent type of feedback was the recast. Moreover, the recast never led to student-generated repair; the learner merely repeated what the teacher had said. In contrast, elicitation and metalinguistic feedback were less frequent and were found to be effective in that they encouraged learners to generate repair.

Lyster (1998) also investigated the relationship among error types and corrective feedback in relation to immediate learner repair. The results of this study showed that the interaction between error type and feedback type was meaningful; it also confirmed that error type affected choice of feedback. To the best of our knowledge, there is not any comprehensive descriptive study investigating types of spoken errors and their frequencies across pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. So, there is a need to investigate these issues which probably have a relationship with selecting specific feedback types by teachers. This work attempted to explore different types of teachers' corrective feedback relative to different types of learners' errors across two proficiency levels (pre-intermediate and intermediate). To meet these objectives, the following research questions were formulated.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Which types of L2 learners' spoken linguistic error types are corrected most frequently by their teachers across pre-intermediate and intermediate levels?
- 2) Do L2 teachers use different types of spoken corrective feedback for learners of pre-intermediate and intermediate levels?
- 3) What types of learners' errors lead to what types of teachers' corrective feedback?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

For this study pre-intermediate and intermediate students of five teachers from Payampersa English language teaching institute in Zarrinshahr city in Isfahan province of Iran were chosen. The teachers were one male and four females. One pre-intermediate and one intermediate class per teacher were invited and the interactions of 8 sessions from each class (80 session, 120 totally) were recorded, transcribed, coded and analyzed. The total number of the students in this study were 100, aged between 13 to 35, including 48 males and 52 females. The classes ranged in size from 7 to 20 students. The teachers were unaware of the purpose of the study. They were just invited to take part in the study.

Instruments

Quick Placement Test

Besides considering these proficiency levels based on the institute' criteria, a proficiency test of Nelson test (2001) including 30 questions and a reliability of 0.873 was administrated to screen the subjects and homogenize them based on their levels of proficiency.

Course book

The course book used in the conventionally instructed group was "American Headway 2" for pre-intermediate and "American Headway 3" for intermediate level by Soars and Sayer (2010). These course books were used because they were being taught by the institute and the teachers were familiar with them.

The recording Software Program

The sessions of the classes were recorded with ZavioCamGraba IP System 3.5.57.

Analysis and data coding system

The researchers listened to the recordings, identified and then transcribed episodes containing reactive focus on form (RFF) in this study only because the teachers perceive the learners' utterance as inaccurate or inappropriate and draw their attention to the problematic feature through negative feedback.

When RFF episodes were coded, they were classified as two main parts. In the first part the linguistic errors committed by the students were included, and in the second part the teachers' responses to the errors in the form of corrective feedback were included.

- 1) The linguistic errors committed by the students were classified into four main types according to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) classification.
 - a. **Grammatical errors:** determiners, prepositions, pronouns, word order, tense, auxiliaries, subject verb agreement, noun-adjective agreement, plurals, negation, question formation
 - b. **Lexical errors:** inaccurate choices and non-target derivations of lexical items in open classes namely, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives, and incorrect use of prefixes and suffixes.

- c. **Phonological errors**: Suprasegmental and segmental aspects of the phonological system
 - d. **Unsolicited uses of LI**: students' use of Persian when English would have been more appropriate and expected
- 2) The teachers' responses to the errors in the form of corrective feedback were classified into six types based on a combination of Farrokhi (2005a) and Lyster&Ranta's (1997) classifications.
- a. **Unmarked recasts**: (teacher's implicit corrective reformulation of student's non-target like form)
 - b. **Marked recasts**: (teacher's corrective reformulation and highlighting or marking the reformulation)
 - c. **Explicit correction**: (Teacher's direct treatment of students' non-target-like form by explanation, definition, examples, etc.)
 - d. **Negotiated feedback**: (teacher provides students with signals to facilitate peer- and self-correction).
 - e. **Clarification request**: (carries questions indicating that the utterance has been ill-formed or misunderstood and that a reformulation or a repetition is required).
 - f. **Elicitation**: (a correction technique that prompts the learner to self-correct through request for reformulations of an ill-formed utterance, the use of open questions, or use of strategic pauses to allow a learner to complete an utterance).

The researchers used the raw frequencies and percentages of RFF episodes and then Pearson's chi-square analysis was performed on the raw frequencies. In order to determine inter-rater reliability of RFF episodes identification, a second rater coded a sample of 10% of the data independently. Analysis of the coding presented 83% agreement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented in three parts using different figures and tables as follows:

The learners' proficiency levels and their error types

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of error types in the entire database. A total of 1608 error turns were identified in 120 hours of meaning-focused lessons, 924 (57.5%) and 684 (42.5%) at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels respectively. It means that each RFF episode occurred at a rate of every 4.4 minutes which means that the teachers were attentive to corrective feedback, one reason could be because they were being recorded and they cared about the meaning and form and the other reason could be that the learners were eager to communicate without being worried if they were corrected by the teachers.

Table1: Frequency and percentage of error types across proficiency levels (all teachers)

Error Types	Level			
	Pre-intermediate		Intermediate	
	Raw Frequency	Percentage	Raw Frequency	Percentage
L1	126	13.6%	77	11.3%
Phonological	331	35.8%	129	18.9%
Lexical	225	24.4%	187	27.3%
Grammatical	242	26.2%	291	42.5%
Raw Total	924	100%	684	100%

The percentages of error types committed by Pre-intermediate learners are as follows: 13.6% were L1, 35.8% were phonological errors, 24.4% were lexical errors, and 26.2% were grammatical. So, phonological errors were the most frequent error type at this level. The percentages of error types at intermediate level show a different pattern, comparing with those at Pre-intermediate level. Grammatical errors accounting for 42.5% were mostly occurred at intermediate level. And lexical errors, with 15.2% discrepancy, had the second highest percentage (27.3%). Figure 1 displays an even more obvious picture of the percentage of errors.

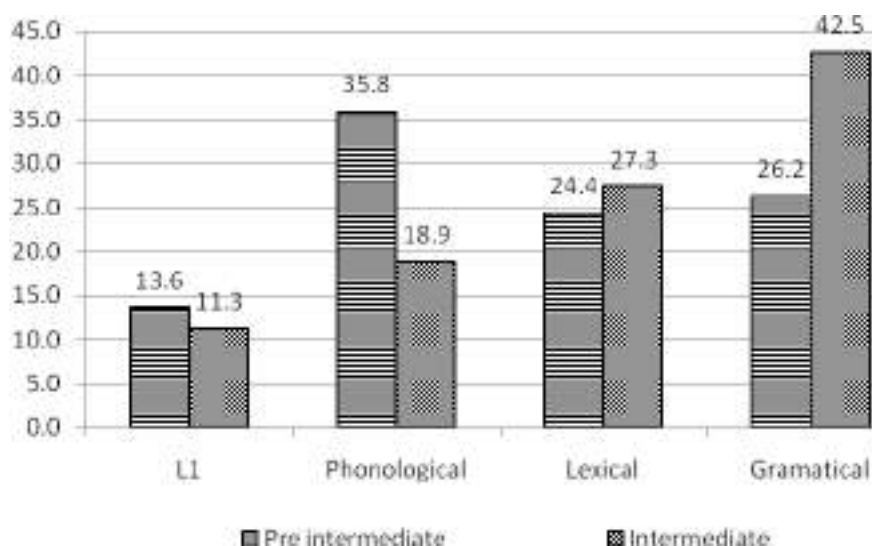


Figure 1: Percentage of error types across proficiency levels (All Teachers)

In order to find out whether there was a statistically significant association between learners' proficiency level and their error types, the chi-square test was used. The results ($\chi^2 = 0.744$, $df = 3$, $p < .05$) revealed that the association between the variables was statistically significant. This suggests that learners of different proficiencies committed different types of errors.

The learners' proficiency levels and the teachers' corrective feedback types

In Table 2 we can observe the distribution of different feedback moves employed by teachers at both proficiencies, and figure 2 shows the percentages graphically. In general 924 (57.46%) instances of RFFE's occurred at pre-intermediate classes, while there were 684 (42.54%) instances at intermediate classes. As can be seen in the table 2 and figure 2, marked recasts accounting for almost (42.3%) of all CF moves were the most widely used CF for pre-intermediate learners. And unmarked recasts (35.7%) were favored to be employed more than other corrective feedback types for intermediate learners. This might lie in the implicit nature of unmarked recasts. As the definition clarifies, unmarked recasts, in comparison with marked ones, do not highlight the learner's non-target-like form. So, unmarked recasts risk being ambiguously perceived by pre-intermediate learners as alternative forms fulfilling discourse functions other than corrective ones.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of feedback types across proficiency levels (all teachers)

Corrective Feedback Types	Level			
	Pre-intermediate		Intermediate	
	Raw Frequency	Percentage	Raw Frequency	Percentage
Marked	391	42.3%	63	9.2%
Unmarked	248	26.8%	244	35.7%
Explicit	106	11.5%	44	6.4%
Negotiated	68	7.4%	167	24.4%
Clarification	46	5.0%	57	8.3%
Elicitation	65	7.0%	109	15.9%
Raw Total	924	100%	684	100%

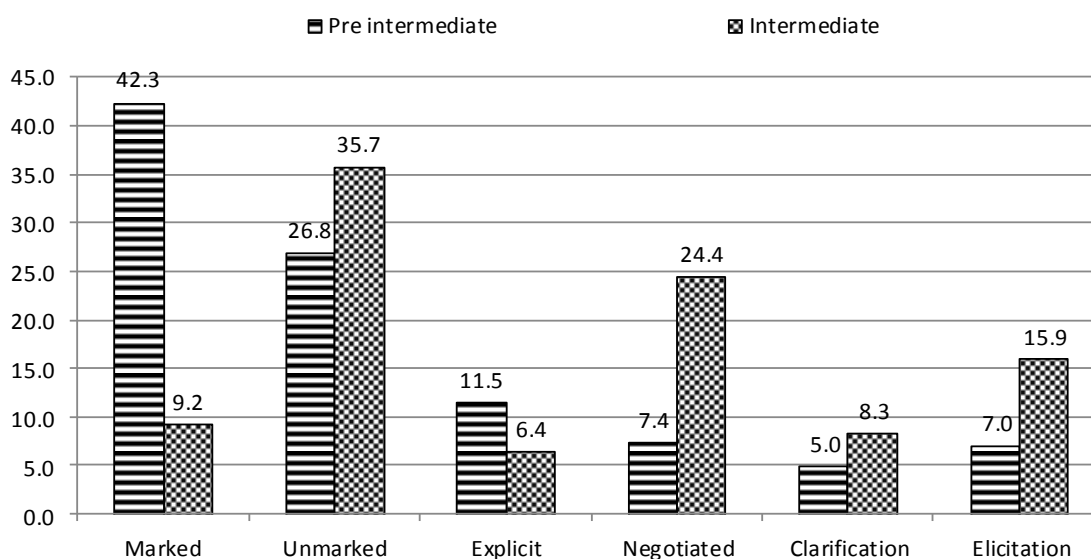


Figure 2: Percentage of feedback types across proficiency levels (All Teachers)

The results ($\chi^2=2.87$, $df = 5$, $p< .05$) indicated a statistically significant association. It means that all the teachers employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies.

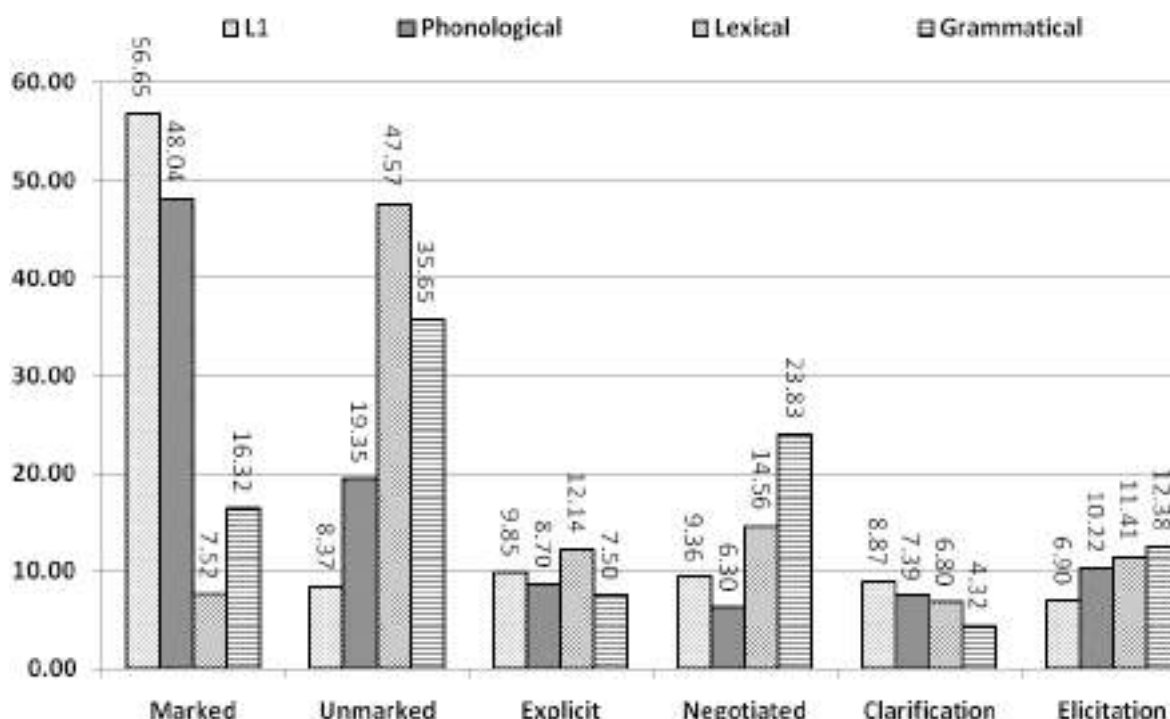
The relationship between the learners' error types and the teachers' corrective feedback types

Table 3 presents a comparison of the distribution of CF types across different error types. Unsolicited uses of L1 invited mostly marked recasts (56.65%). Other types of corrective feedback following L1 errors accounted only for 43.35% of all CF turns. Similarly, phonological errors were mostly followed by marked recasts (48.04%). The second CF type following phonological errors was unmarked recast, accounting for 19.35%. Other four types of CF have very low percentages. Lexical errors were corrected mostly using unmarked recasts which accounted for almost half (47.57%) of the total number of CF. They were secondly followed by negotiated feedback (14.56%). The third and fourth CF types used to treat lexical errors were explicit correction (12.14%) and elicitation (11.41%) respectively. Clarification request and marked recasts following lexical errors totally account for 14.32% of all FC types. And finally, grammatical errors mostly favored unmarked recasts (35.65%). Negotiated feedbacks, accounting for 23.83% and marked recasts, accounting for 16.32%, were the second and third type of corrective feedback following grammatical errors. Other three CF types totally accounts for 24.2% of the total number of CFs.

Table 3: Relationship between error types & feedback types

Corrective Feedback Types	Raw Frequency & Percentage of Error Types							
	L1		Phonological		Lexical		Grammatical	
Marked	115	56.65%	221	48.04%	31	7.52%	87	16.32%
Unmarked	17	8.37%	89	19.35%	196	47.57%	190	35.65%
Explicit	20	9.85%	40	8.70%	50	12.14%	40	7.50%
Negotiated	19	9.36%	29	6.30%	60	14.56%	127	23.83%
Clarification	18	8.87%	34	7.39%	28	6.80%	23	4.32%
Elicitation	14	6.90%	47	10.22%	47	11.41%	66	12.38%
Total	203	100%	460	100%	412	100%	533	100%

Figure 3 illustrates a clearer picture of the relationship between learners' error types and teachers' CF types. As the findings suggest, the five teachers provided corrective feedback consistently. It means that the teachers' correction of learners' errors showed some degree of systematicity in that they tended to select feedback types in accordance with error types: namely, marked recasts after unsolicited uses of L1 and phonological errors and unmarked recasts after lexical and grammatical errors.



According to the results of chi-square test ($\chi^2=3.79$, $df = 15$, $p< .05$), the interaction between error types and CF types were statistically significant, confirming that learners' error types affected teachers' choice of CF types.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this study which was based on just teachers' reactive focus on form and only on four types of learners' linguistic errors among just two levels of proficiencies showed that although the same books and the same language teaching methodology were applied in each class the EFL learners of different proficiencies (pre-intermediate and intermediate levels) committed different types of errors and the EFL teachers being affected by learners' error types, employed different types of corrective feedback for learners of different proficiencies which means that the learners' error types affected teachers' choice of CF types.

This study also shows that we probably can never expect the students of the same class commit the same mistakes because the students think differently and produce different topics to support their beliefs and comments and they use their own specific acquired language competence, culture, knowledge and feelings to create their own personal output. According to Ellis and Jiang (2009) "different perspectives on corrective feedback are offered by interactionist/cognitive theories and sociocultural theory". This study not only shows the diversity of errors among the students of different proficiency levels but also supports the fact that there is a diversity of corrective feedback reactions by the EFL teachers.

REFERENCES

- Ajideh P., FareedAghdam E. (2012). English Language Teachers' Corrective Feedback Types in relation to the Learners' Proficiency Levels and Their Error Types. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 2(8) & 2(9) August & September 2012, 37- 51
- Amirghassemi, A., Azabdaftari, B., & Saeidi, M. (2013). The effect of scaffolded vs. non-scaffolded written corrective feedback on EFL learners' written accuracy. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 22(2), 256-263. Retrieved September 10, 2013, from: [www.idosi.org/wasj/wasj22\(2\)13/16.pdf](http://www.idosi.org/wasj/wasj22(2)13/16.pdf)
- Ashwell, T. (2000). Patterns of teacher response to student writing in multiple-draft composition classroom: Is content feedback followed by form feedback the best method? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9 (3), 227-257.
- Bitchener, J. (2008a). Evidence in support of written corrective feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 17, 102-118
- Chandler, J. (2000). *The efficacy of error correction for improvement in the accuracy of L2 student writing*. Paper presented at the AAAL Conference, Vancouver, BC
- Doughty, C. (2001). *Cognitive underpinnings of focus on form*. In Robinson, P. (ed.), *Cognition and Second Language Instruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2009). "Corrective feedback and teacher development". *L2 Journal* 1(1), 3-18."
- Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., Loewen, S. (2001). Pre-emptive focus-on-form in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35, 407-432.
- Ellis, R., Loewen, S., & Erlam, R. (2006). Implicit and explicit corrective feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 339-368."
- Ellis, R., & Jiang C. (2009). Corrective Feedback and Teacher Development. *L2 Journal*, UC Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching, UC Davis, Volume 1 (2009), pp. 3-18, Available online at: <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/2504d6w3>
- Ellis, R. (1994). Formal instruction and SLA. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, 14, 611-663.
- Farrokhi, F., & Gholami. (2007). Reactive and preemptive language related episodes and uptake in an EFL class. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, 9 (2), 58-92.
- Farrokhi, F. (2005a). Revisiting the ambiguity of recasts. *Journal of Faculty of Letters and Humanities*, 195, 61-101.
- Fathman, A., & Whalley, E. (1990). *Teacher response to student writing: Focus on form versus content*. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 178–190). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferris, D. R., & Hedgcock, J. S. (1998). *Teaching ESL composition: Purpose, process, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ferris, D. R., & Helt, M. (2000). Was Truscott right? New evidence on the effects of error correction in L2 writing classes. *Paper presented at Proceedings of the American Association of Applied Linguistics Conference*, Vancouver, B.C., March 11–14, 2000.
- Ferris, D. R. (1995a). Can advanced ESL students be taught to correct their most serious and frequent errors? *CATESOL Journal*, 8(1), 41– 62.
- Ferris, D. R., Chaney, S. J., Komura, K., Roberts, B. J., & McKee, S. (2000, March). Perspectives, problems, & practices in treating written error. Colloquium presented at *International TESOL Convention*, Vancouver, BC.

- Ferris, D. R. (1995b). Student reactions to teacher response in multiple-draft composition classrooms. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 33– 53.
- Ferris, D. R. (1995c). Teaching ESL composition students to become independent self-editors. *TESOL Journal*, 4(4), 18– 22.
- Ferris, D. R. (1997). The influence of teacher commentary on student revision. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31, 315– 339.
- Ferris, D. R. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 1–10.
- Ferris, D. R. (2006). *Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the short and long-term effects of written error correction*. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues* (pp. 81 – 104). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Guénette, D. (2007). Is feedback pedagogically correct? Research design issues in studies of feedback on writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 16, 40-53.
- Long, M., & Robinson, P. (1998). *Theory, research and practice*. In Doughty, Catherine and Williams, Jessica. (Eds.), *Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M. (1991). *Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology*. In K. de Bot, Ginsberg, R. and Kramsch, C. (eds.), *Foreign Language Research in cross-cultural perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 37-66.
- Lyster, R. (1998a). Negotiation of form, recasts, and explicit correction in relation to error types and learner repair in immersion classrooms. *Language Learning*, 48, 183-218.
- Lyster, R. (1993). *The effect of functional-analytic teaching on aspects of sociolinguistic competence: A study in French immersion classrooms at the Grade 8 level*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Nelson, T. (2001). *Practice test II*. Hong Kong: Bright Sun Printing Press.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Soars J., Soars L., & Sayer M. (2010). *American Headway 2*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0194727858, 9780194727853.
- Soars J., Soars L., & Sayer M. (2010). *American Headway 3*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0194392848, 9780194392846"
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In: COOK, G.; SEIDLHOFER, B. (Ed.). *Principle & practice in applied linguistics: Studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 125-144.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXTROVERT/INTROVERT EFL LEARNERS COOPERATIVE WRITING

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran

*Head of the English Department for MA Students , Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran
Branch, Tehran, Iran
Baradaranabdollah@yahoo.com*

Mohammad Reza Alavi

*Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
mohammadalavi1821@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the difference between extrovert and introvert English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' cooperative writing. Initially 150 intermediate learners were asked to participate in the study. They sat in a Preliminary English Test PET and 90 homogenous learners, in term of language proficiency, were selected to fill Persian translation of Eysenck Personality Inventory questionnaire. Based on the results, 30 introvert and 30 extrovert learners were randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Both groups received a model of cooperative learning (CL), i.e. Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) as their treatment. After the treatment was done, they were asked to cooperatively write two essays in descriptive voice on two different topics. Their writings were scored based on Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughery (1981) scoring profile by two raters, and the mean of each student's scores were considered as their cooperative writing score. Then the performance of extrovert and introvert learners on the test was compared using independent samples t-test. The results indicated that introvert learners significantly outperformed extrovert learners. The results indicated that despite the fact that Iranian learners are mostly individualistic, some cooperative learning methods could be helpful and accepted by them. Also teacher training centers need familiarize teachers with CL techniques and syllabus designers use more exercises and tasks include CL models like CIRC.

KEYWORDS: *cooperative writing, extrovert, introvert.*

INTRODUCTION

Many EFL teachers complain and wonder why their students do not show considerable improvement in their writings every time they check the students' writings. This shortcoming on the part of a student's maybe partly due to personality traits and partly due to atmosphere of the class which is more competitive and teacher-centered rather than cooperative and learner-centered. almost all researchers working on CL have consensus on that the learners performance improves through cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2008; Kagan, 1990; Slavin, 1995; Sharan, 2010, as cited in shideh, 2011). There is also conflicting suggestions about the differences

between learning achievements of extroverted and introverted learners (e.g. Berry, 2007; Van Dael, 2005). Furthermore, only a few researches have been done in order to compare EFL learners' personality trait of extroversion/introversion and their performance in cooperative writing tasks, e.g., in Iran, Shideh (2011) has investigated this relationship in speaking tasks.

Cooperative writing is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. In this way students will interact with each other and the teacher during the instructional session. As Johnson and Johnson (2008) stated within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. According to Sharan, Y. (2010) the benefits of cooperative learning are a better mutual relationship, respect, and higher communication. It also has advantages in thinking strategies. Competitive learners have difficulty in obtaining a balance between being competitive and interacting with others. Their emotional interaction and trust are two other concerns. "The basic elements are Positive interdependence, Promotive interaction, Interpersonal and small group skills, Group processing, and individual and group accountability which are essential for effective group learning, achievement, and higher-order social, personal and cognitive skills (e.g., problem solving, reasoning, decision-making, planning, organizing, and reflecting)." (Johnson, D.W & Johnson R.T. 2005, pp.285-360).

An Overlook on Cooperative Learning

Co-operative learning has been championed by many advocates. One reason for its popularity lies in the flexibility of the term 'co-operative learning' and, consequently, in the possibility of applying it to different theories and educational contexts. At first sight this flexibility strikes one as positive, and no doubt it is. However, the term is potentially misleading if the conditions it denotes are not seen as being embedded in a particular theory, a specific domain of knowledge or a certain curricular context; for example, a common curriculum. In co-operative learning contexts students do not learn in what may be called a compositional vacuum; they are members of a class and a small group. New researches defend the claim that it is especially such compositional contexts that have consequences for learning opportunities in co-operative learning environments (Resh, 1999; Terwel *et al.* 2001; Terwel & Van den Eeden, 1994; Webb, 1982).

Co-operative learning was designed and implemented to develop social strategies and acceptable social attitudes in students, and to improve social relations within and between groups. In addition, there is a large cluster of co-operative learning models aimed at cognitive development. Sometimes co-operative learning is directed at both the social and the cognitive side of human development. There is yet a third, more comprehensive perspective, one that is not necessarily in contrast to the social and the cognitive aims of co-operative learning. It is called curriculum perspective on cooperative learning. Furthermore College and university students are increasingly being asked by faculty to work co-operatively and learn collaboratively. This increased emphasis on group learning is partly a reaction to societal changes including a new emphasis on team work in the business sector (Millis & Cottell, 1998) coupled with a realization that in a rapidly changing information society (Hansen & Stephens, 2000) communication skills are increasingly important. At the tertiary level of education, the reasons include an increasingly diverse student population who need to develop ways of learning together in order to achieve (Millis & Cottell,

1998), the increased use of teaching and learning that emphasize learner-driven approaches such as peer learning (Hansen & Stephens, 2000), the growth of online courses (Carlson, 2000) that may include a computer-mediated conferencing component requiring online dialogue, and student projects that often require a team approach because of their scope, depth and type (Puntambekar 1999).

Researchers have shown that group learning leads to academic and cognitive benefits. Group learning promotes student learning and achievement (Cockrell *et al.*, 2000; Hiltz, 1998; Johnson *et al.* 2000; Slavin, 1992), increase the development of critical thinking skills (Brandon and Hollingshead, 1999; Cockrell *et al.*, 2000), and promote greater transfer of learning (Brandon and Hollingshead 1999). Group learning also aids in the development of social skills such as communication, presentation, problem solving, leadership, delegation and organization (Cheng & Warren, 2000).

Kagan (1995) states: cooperative learning was developed originally for educating people of different ages, experience and levels of mastery of the craft of interdependence. He sees education as a reacculturation process through constructive conversation. Students learn about the culture of the society they wish to join by developing the appropriate vocabulary of that society and by exploring that society's culture and norms. Cooperative learning may be used in different situations. For example students work in pairs together in a Think-Pair-Share procedure, where students consider a question individually, discuss their ideas with another student to form a consensus answer, and then share their results with the entire class. The use of pairs can be introduced at any time during a class to address questions or solve problems or to create variety in a class presentation. The Jig Saw method (Aronson 1978) is a good example. Students become "experts" on a concept and are responsible for teaching it to the other group members. Groups subdivide a topic and members work together with those from other groups who have the same topic. They then return to their original groups and explain their topic.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1991) have summarized some principles in their definition of cooperative learning: "First, knowledge is constructed, discovered, and transformed by students. Faculty create the conditions within which students can construct meaning from the material studied by processing it through existing cognitive structures and then retaining it in long-term memory where it remains open to further processing and possible reconstruction. Second, students actively construct their own knowledge. Learning is conceived of as something a learner does, not something that is done to the learner. Students do not passively accept knowledge from the teacher or curriculum. Students activate their existing cognitive structures or construct new ones to subsume the new input. Third, faculty effort is aimed at developing students' competencies and talents. Fourth, education is a personal transaction among students and between the faculty and students as they work together. Fifth, all of the above can only take place within a cooperative context. Sixth, teaching is assumed to be a complex application of theory and research that requires considerable teacher training and continuous refinement of skills and procedures" (p1:6)

There are different models of cooperative learning: Slavin developed the STAD method (Student Teams-Achievement-Divisions) where the teacher presents a lesson, and then the students meet in teams of four or five members to complete a set of worksheets on the lesson. Each student then takes a quiz on the material and the scores the students contribute to their teams are based upon the degree to which they have improved their individual past averages. The highest scoring teams are recognized in a weekly class newsletter. In another method developed by Slavin- TGT (Teams-Games-Tournaments) instead of taking quizzes the students play academic games as representatives of their teams. They compete with students having similar achievement levels and coach each other prior to the games to insure all group members are competent in the subject matter. Other structures include: CIRC- Cooperative Integrated Reading and Comparison (Madden, Slavin, and Stevens), Learning Together (Johnson & Johnson), Jigsaw II (Slavin).

Who Gains What From Cooperative Learning

For all its demonstrated benefits, students are often apprehensive about group learning, especially those who have had previous experience with learning in groups. Students fear that other team members will not pull their weight or that they will waste their time explaining the material to be learned to slower team mates (Felder & Brent, 1996; Salomon & Globerson, 1989). Students are also resistant to student-centred approaches to learning because of its novelty; they are accustomed to teacher-centred, direct instruction where students are provided with the content they need to know (Felder & Brent, 1996). Another major reason for apprehension is that college and university students often do not know how to work together and are not given any help in making their groups functional (Phipps *et al.* 2001).

Equally important is the impact of group learning on faculty. Faculty face myriad instructional and institutional challenges when implementing group learning into their classrooms. These include the changing role of the instructor from lecturer to facilitator or coach, the shift in authority from the individual instructor to shared authority with the group of learners, careful planning of the instructional setting such as timing and efficiency concerns, and assessment issues such as group versus individual grades.

Traditionally, the instructor has been the source of knowledge in the classroom (Hansen & Stephens, 2000). As a result of the nature of this role, instructors adopted what they considered to be the most efficient instructional method for imparting information – lecturing. While lecturing is still the most common teaching method in higher education (Gamson, 1994), it simply does not occupy a very major role in the collaborative learning context. As the onus for knowledge construction, information researching and product creation rests increasingly with student groups, the role of the teacher changes from ‘the sage on the stage’ to ‘the guide on the side’. In this way, faculty become individuals who facilitate students in the learning process. They assist with knowledge discovery and investigation, subtly steer learning activities and group processes, and coach students along in the educational experience. In group learning, the relationships between students and teachers are different from more traditional educational contexts. Both learners and instructors share the responsibility for the learning experience. Students become participants who use social skills to create knowledge, and undertake and complete tasks (Matthews *et al.* 1995). For the teacher-as-lecturer to become the teacher-as-facilitator, a shift in authority within the

classroom must occur. This can be disconcerting for many teachers. However, with careful planning, flexibility, self-confidence and practice, a shift in the role of the teacher from the traditional lecturer to a facilitator/mentor can be accomplished successfully (Hanson 1995).

Group learning imposes a steep learning curve on everyone involved (Felder & Brent, 1996). The key to making group learning successful is to understand the process and to take precautionary steps to ensure success (Felder & Brent, 1996).

RESEARCH QUESTION

To investigate the difference between extrovert/introvert EFL learners' cooperative writing the following question was proposed: Is there any significant difference between extrovert/introvert EFL learners' cooperative writing?

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study is to investigate the difference between extrovert and introvert EFL learners' cooperative writing. Accordingly, 150 male EFL students were tested and 60 of them were selected to serve as the subjects of the study. These 60 learners were assigned to four different groups—two groups included extroverts and two groups included introverts. Afterwards, they will be taken a course of writing based on a model of cooperative learning, namely Cooperative Integrative Reading and Composition (CIRC). At the end of the program they were asked to sit in two writing tests and the obtained results went through the statistical analysis.

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 intermediate EFL learners studying English at three branches of Iranmehr Language Institute, namely Haft-e Tir, Dolat, and Shahrak-e Gharb, Tehran, Iran. The Participants were ranging between 20 and 30 in age. Initially 90 learners were selected from a larger group of 150 students based on their results on PET. Then, 60 students were selected based on the results of the performance on the administered short scale of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire- Revised. Half of the selected students were proved, based on the results of the questionnaire, to be extrovert and the other half to be introvert.

Instrumentation

Personality Questionnaire

The EPI (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985) is a validated 57 Yes/No item questionnaire to assess the personality traits of a person. The test provides the testees with three different scores: the E score which is related to how much extrovert a person is, the N score measuring the neuroticism, and the Lie score which tries to measure how socially desirable a person has wanted to prove to be. The E score is computed out of 24 since it consists of 24 items, the N score is out of 24, and the Lie score is out of nine. The researchers used the Farsi version provided and validated by Seena Institute of Behavioral Sciences Research in Tehran in order for the respondents to answer the questionnaire more accurately. the reliability of the administration of the EPI questionnaire was calculated to be 0.72.

Preliminary English Test (PET)

To begin with, the researcher used a sample PET to choose a homogenous sample of participants based on their level of proficiency prior to the study. PET consists of the four parts of reading and writing (paper 1), listening (paper 2), and speaking (paper 3).

The first paper (reading and writing) takes one hour and 30 minutes. The reading part consists of five parts (35 questions) which test different reading skills with a variety of texts. The writing part comprises three parts which test a range of writing skills. The test's focus here is the assessment of candidates' ability to produce straightforward written English. Paper 2 (listening) takes 30 minutes. This part consists of four parts ranging from short exchanges to longer dialogues and monologues which will be heard by students two times. The test focus in this section is assessment of candidates' ability to understand dialogues and monologues in both informal and neutral settings on a range of everyday topics. The last paper which is speaking lasts for 10-12 minutes per pair of candidates. The test focus of the speaking part is assessment of candidates' ability to express themselves in order to carry out functions as threshold level. As this research was focused on the writing ability of the learners, the listening, reading, and writing papers of the PET was administered. The reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the pilot PET – using Cronbach Alpha was 0.72. The inter-rater reliability of the two raters scoring the writing papers proved significant ($r = 0.832$, $p = 0.003 < 0.01$). Hence, the researcher was rest assured that the two raters could proceed with scoring all the subsequent writing papers in this study.

Essay Writing Test

Two essay writing test were used to fulfill the purpose of this study. The students will be asked to cooperatively write two essays on two different predetermined topics in a descriptive voice. Their performances on these tests were scored by two raters and the mean of each learner's score were served as the data for final data analyses.

Writing Rating Scales

The analytic writing scale which was used to rating participants performance on the both essay writing tests is based on analytic scoring profile of Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey (1981, as cited in Weigle, 2002, p.116). In this rubrics, essays are rated on five different rating dimensions of writing quality in different parts: content (30 points), organization (20 points), vocabulary (20 points), language use (25 points), and mechanics (5 points). Also, there are several sample answers to the Writing Part 3, with marks and examiner comments, in order to help teachers to assess the standards required in PET. In the present study, marks for Part 3 of PET were given according to the Cambridge Mark Scheme ranging from 0-5. The inter-rater reliability of the scores, calculated based on the first 10 papers scored by them, was proved significant ($r = 0.791$, $p = 0.007 < 0.01$)

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Participant Selection

The first step in the process of participants' selection was to pilot PET. Since the purpose of this study was to measure the writing ability of the participants, the speaking section of PET was excluded from PET. Following the piloting of the PET, the descriptive statistics of this administration were calculated with the mean and standard deviation standing at 48.83 and 7.79, respectively. after piloting the test, item analysis was done. Item facility measures fell between .33 and .75 and item discrimination amounts ranged from .14 to .54. Therefore, there was no mal-functioning item; and thus, no need to revision on any of the items. Moreover, the reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the pilot PET – using Cronbach Alpha was 0.72.

Following the piloting, the PET was administered to 150 students with the aim of selecting 90 of them for the study. The aim of this administration was to homogenize learners in terms of their language proficiency. The descriptive statistics of this process are presented below with the mean and standard deviation being 52.28 and 7.98, respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for PET Proficiency Test

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
PETadministration	150	32.00	69.50	52.2800	7.98036	-.297	.198
Valid N (listwise)	150						

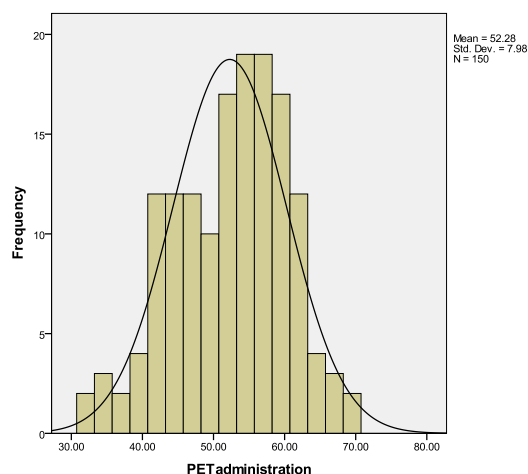


Figure 1: Histogram of the Scores Obtained on the PET Administration

The next step was to identify extrovert and introvert learners participants were asked to fill in the Persian translation of Eysenck Personality Inventory. In order to save the validity of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer to the all items of the questionnaire. Only the E score of them, however, was utilized in identifying the degree of extroversion. Descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in the 24 items of the questionnaire devoted to measure the degree of extroversion (E-score) is provided in table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Participants' E-Score in EPI

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Escore	90	3.00	22.00	11.0667	5.55018	.281	.254
Valid N (listwise)	90						

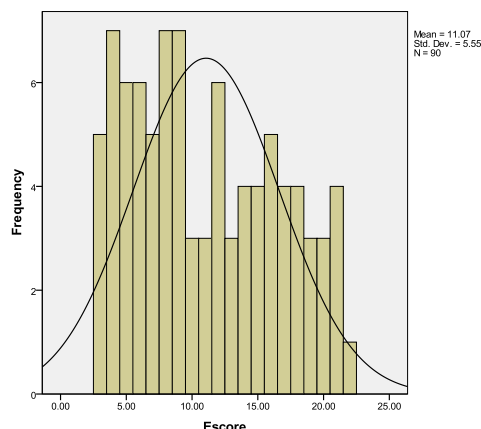


Figure 2: Histogram of the E Scores of the Participants in EPI

The researcher administered the two cooperative writing tests as posttests in the two experimental groups.

As shown in Table 3 below, the mean and standard deviation of the introvert group were 78.97 and 8.39, respectively. In the extrovert group, however, the mean was 72.63 while the standard deviation stood at 8.93.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Essay Writing Posttest in Both Groups

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Introvert	30	62.00	94.00	78.9667	8.39328	-.202	.427
extrovert	30	60.00	91.00	72.6333	8.93070	.367	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

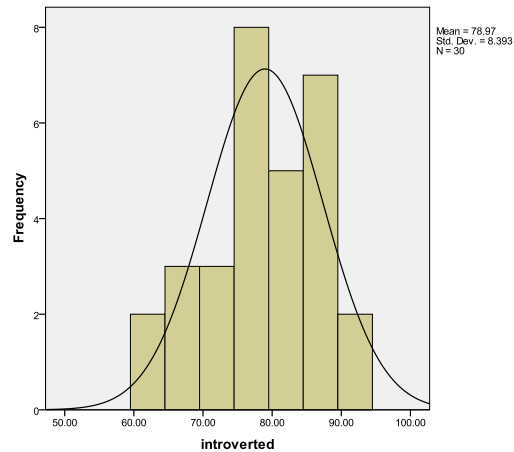


Figure 3: Histogram of the Writing Posttest Scores Obtained by the Introvert Group

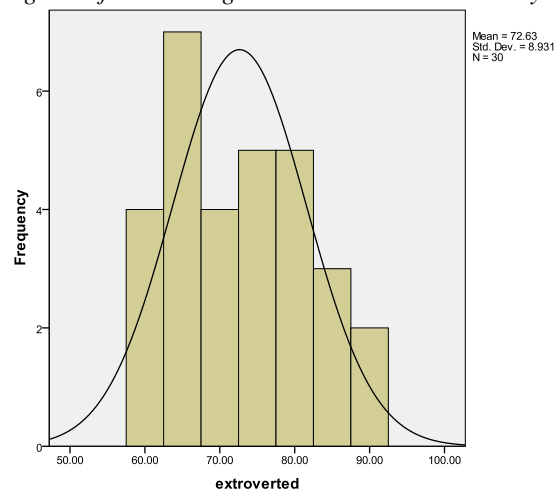


Figure 4: Histogram of the Writing Posttest Scores Obtained by the Extrovert Group

Finally to test the null hypothesis an independent sample *t*-test was run in order to find out if there is any significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups at the final exam.

Table 4: Independent Samples T-Test on the Performance of Both Groups in the Essay Writing Posttest

Independent Samples Test

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
			F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
										Lower	Upper
Writing Scores	Equal variances assumed		.529	.470	2.830	58	.006	6.33333	2.23759	1.85431	10.81236
	Equal variances not assumed				2.830	57.778	.006	6.33333	2.23759	1.85394	10.81273

CONCLUSION

In implementing cooperative learning contextual factors and personality factors should be taken into account. Although extroverts seemed to benefit more from the activities of CIRC, the introverts outperformed them in the writing. The results were in line with the findings of other researches that reported inverse relationship between the degree of extroversion and writing performance. The reason for this difference could be that introverts “use different pathways in the brain, ” when they do writing. Another reason could be lowering significantly the level of anxiety. When they don't need to retrieve the words immediately, they can better code the words from their long term memory and write it down.

Teacher training centers and institutions need to familiarize teachers with explicit techniques of CIRC which is proved to be more effective in the process of writing.

The results indicate that despite the fact that Iranian learners are mostly individualistic and prefer to work on their own, some cooperative learning methods could be helpful and accepted by them.

The results of this research may have implication for syllabus designers to insert more exercises that include cooperative learning of the materials.

It provides insights for the material developers to use more of CIRC exercises and tasks in their material when they are aimed to improve the writing of the students.

It is recommended that more CIRC tasks and exercises be applied in a lesson in the form of well-designed tasks to enhance students' learning. This will allow teachers to teach less and students to learn more through constructing their own knowledge over learning.

Limitations of the study

Since the educational culture in Iran is individualistic, it is difficult to convince learners to work in groups. The majority of the students depend on the teacher providing them with the correct answers. Therefore, persuading students to work in groups requires a lot of effort. Since CIRC,

by definition, is developed for the upper elementary grades (Stevens et al., 1987, as cited in Slavin, 2011, p 14), the participants of this study were limited to upper elementary learners.

REFERENCES

- Brandon, D.P., & Hollingshead, A.B. (1999). 'Collaborative learning & computer supported groups', *Communications Education*, 48, 109–26.
- Carlson, S. (2000). 'Campus-computing survey finds that adding technology to teaching is a top issue', *Chronicle of Higher Education, Online Edition*. Available at: <<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/10/200010120.htm>> (accessed 15 July (2002)).
- Cheng, W., & Warren, M. (2000). 'Making a difference: using peers to assess individual students' contributions to a group project', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 5, 243–55.
- Cockrell, K.S., Hughes-Caplow, J.A., & Donaldson, J.F. (2000) 'A context for learning: collaborative groups in problem-based learning environment', *Review of Higher Education*, 23, 347–63.
- Daele, V. (2005). "The effect of extraversion on L2 oral proficiency", *De Linguistica Aplicada a la Comunicacion*, 24, 91-114.
- Dewaele, J., & Furnham, A.(1999). "Extraversion: The unloved variable in applied linguistic research", *Language Learning*, 49 (3), 509-535.
- Eysenck, S. B. G., Eysenck, H. J., & Barrett, P. (1985). A revised version of the psychoticism scale. *Journal of Personality & Individual Differences*, 6(1), 21-29.
- Eysenck, H. (1970). *Reading in Extroversion-Introversion: theoretical & methodological issues*. London. Staple Press.
- Felder, R.M., & Brent, R. (1996). 'Navigating the bumpy road to student-centered instruction', *College Teaching*, 44(2), 43–7.
- Gamson, Z.F. (1994) 'Collaborative learning comes of age', *Change*, 26(5), 44.
- Hansen, E.J., & Stephens, J.A. (2000) 'The ethics of learner-centered education: dynamics that impede the process', *Change*, 33(5), 40–7.
- Hirvela, G. Jr. (1999). *Research on written composition: New direction for teaching*. Urbana, IL: NCRE/ERIC
- Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (1994). Learning together & alone, cooperative, competitive, & individualistic learning. Needham Heights, MA: Prentice-Hall.
- Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Holubec, E. (2008). Advanced Cooperative Learning. Edin, MN: Interaction Book Company.
- Johnson, D.W., & Johnson R.T. (2005) New developments in social interdependence theory. "Psychological monographs", 131, 285-360.
- Kagan, S. (1990). The structural approach to cooperative learning. *Educational Leadership*, (4), 12-15.
- Kagan,S. (1994). Kagan cooperative learning. 2nd ed. San Clemente, CA: Kagan Publishing.
- Matthews, R.S., Cooper, R.L., Davidson, N., & Hawkes, P. (1995) 'Building bridges between cooperative & collaborative learning', *Change*, 27(4), 34–7, 40.
- Millis, B.J., & Cottell, P.G. (1998) *Cooperative Learning for Higher Education Faculty*, Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.

- Phipps, M., Phipps, C., Kask, S., & Higgins, S. (2001) 'University students' perceptions of cooperative learning: implications for administrators & instructors', *Journal of Experiential Education*, 24, 14–21.
- Puntambekar, S. (1999) 'An integrated approach to individual & collaborative learning in a web-based learning environment', in C. Hoadley & J. Roschelle (eds) *Proceedings of the Computer Support for Collaborative Learning (CSCL) 1999 Conference*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Raimes, A. (1983 a). Anguish as second language? Remedies for composition teachers. In A. Freedman, I. Pringle, & J. Yalden (Ed.), *Learning to Write: First language/second language* (pp. 258-272). London: Longman.
- Raimes, A. (1983 b). *Techniques in Teaching Writing*. Oxford University Press.
- Raimes, A. (1991). Out of Woods: Emerging traditions in teaching of writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25/3, 407-423.
- Salomon, G., & Globerson, T. (1989) 'When teams do not function the way they ought to', *International Journal of Educational Research*, 39, 70–9.
- Sharan, Y. (2010). Cooperative Learning for Academic & Social Gains: valued pedagogy, problematic practice. *European Journal of Education*, 45 (2), 300-313.
- Shideh, Sh.(2011). Relationship between EFL learners' personality trait of extroversion/introversion & their performance in cooperative speaking tasks. Unpublished master's thesis. Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran, Iran.
- Slavin, R. E. (1995). *Cooperative learning: Theory, research, & practice* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Terwel, J., & Van den Eeden, P. (1994) 'Effecten van klassensamenstelling & kwaliteit van instructie bij wiskunde [Effects of class composition & quality of instruction in mathematics education]', *Pedagogisch Tijdschrift*, 19, 155–73.
- Webb, N.M., & Farivar, S. (1994). *Promoting helping behavior in cooperative learning*.

The Authors

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran is the Assistant Professor of TEFL and the chairman of the foreign languages faculty at Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. As for his professional background, he has taught many courses in teaching language at the graduate level. He has published several papers in national and international journals and presented in numerous seminars.

Mohammad Reza Alavi (Corresponding Author) has got his M.A from Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. He has worked as an interpreter for many years. His main areas of research interest comprise Teacher Education, Psychological Issues of ELT, Cooperative Learning, Bilingual and Multilingual Teaching and Teacher Training.

THE RELATIONSHIPS OF FIELD INDEPENDENCE-DEPENDENCE WITH EFL LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THEIR PERFORMANCE ON GRAMMAR TESTS: A CASE OF HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS

Chiman Zolfaghari

*Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran
Chiman.zolfaghari@gmail.com*

Habib Soleimani, Ph.D.

*Department of English Language, Sanandaj Branch,
Kurdistan University, Sanandaj, Iran*

Adel Dastgoshadeh, Ph.D

*Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran*

ABSTRACT

Recently, the interest of both teachers and researchers in the field of foreign language learning and teaching has increasingly focused on the learner, including the strategies which an individual uses in learning and communicating. The problem under investigation was to see whether there is any significant relationship among the field independence-dependence, attitudes and performing on grammatical structure by students from high schools of Sanandaj. It also examines separately the relationships of FD/I cognitive styles and the students' grammatical performance and also the relationships of attitudes and students' grammatical performance toward learning English. So 60 students of Farzanegan high school were selected. To measure the students' FD/I level the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) was administered. The means of the students' scores were used to represent their grammar tests performance. The results of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation revealed a significant correlation between the FD/I cognitive styles and the grammar scores. But again according to those results there isn't any significant correlation between attitudes and grammar scores. One of the most important implications of this study may be in that teachers can classify their students based on their FD/I cognitive styles to teach structure (Grammar) skills more efficiently and systematically. In fact, the Iranian EFL teachers should take this into account that the learners' 'cognitive styles (FD/I) are considered to be determining factors in the process of teaching and learning structure skills.

KEYWORDS: Field-dependent/independent learner's, Attitude, Performance grammar tests.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of attitudes has since long been one of the most generally applied concepts by psychologists and sociologists (Allport, 1935; Ajzen, 2001). Although many theoretical approaches in social psychology have given their own specific meaning to the concept (Van der Pligt & De Vries, 1995; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), some general notion of attitude is common to all interpretations. Generally accepted is the conception that attitudes have an intermediary role in the psychological process between stimuli from some object (person, situation, and instance) and behavioral responses.

In most approaches attitude is referring to some evaluative condition or process which explains the consistency of individual behavior with respect to some object. Cognitive as well as affective elements (positive or negative) are generally considered as intrinsically related to attitudes. Although behavioral elements are related to attitudes, it is accepted rather broadly that they are not parts of attitudes: attitudes are the evaluative responses that explain (in some degree) the behavioral acts (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Field dependence (FD) refers to a cognitive style in which an individual tends to look at the whole of a learning task which contains many items. The FD individual has difficulty in studying a particular item when it occurs within a field of other items. The "field" may be perceptual or it may be abstract, such as a set of ideas, thoughts, or feelings. Field independence (FI), on the contrary, refers to a cognitive style in which an individual is able to identify or focus on particular items and is not discredited by other items in the background or context (Brown, 2000; Gollnick and Chein, 1994). It appears possible that language tests of today may favor learners with certain cognitive styles. The present study is an attempt at finding the possible relationships of field independence-dependence, with EFL learner's attitudes towards the English language and their performance on grammar tests: A Case of High-School Students.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A number of studies have noted that the distinction between Field-Dependent and Field-Independent individuals is similar to that of differentiating Holists and Serialists (e.g., Jonassen & Grabowski, 1993; Riding & Cheema, 1991). Field-Dependent individuals typically see the global picture, ignore the details, and approach a task more holistically. Field-Independent individuals tend to discern figures as being discrete from their background, to focus on details, and to be more surrealistic in their approach to learning.

What Affects Field Dependence-Independence?

Thus far the discussion has focused on things that are affected by field dependence-independence. There are a few factors, however, that affect the degree to which we are each field dependent or independent.

Child Rearing Practices

Witkin (1973) believed that field dependence-independence tendencies result from child rearing practices that emphasize gaining independence from parental controls (Korchin, 1986). The early

studies of child rearing done by Witkin (1973) showed that when there is strong emphasis on obedience to parental authority and external control of impulses, the child will likely become relatively field dependent. When there is encouragements within the family for the child to develop separate, autonomous functioning, the child will become relatively field independent.

Gender

There is mixed evidence on the effect of gender on field dependence-independence. Studies of children have not found any differences at all. However, in studies of adults when differences between sexes and field dependence-independence are found, males always achieve scores that are indicative of greater field independence. The effect of gender on field dependence-independence is so small that this factor is practically insignificant.

Age

There appears to be some effect of age on field dependence-independence. Children are generally fielded dependent, but their field independence increases as they become adults. Adults (especially adult learners) are more field independent (Gurley, 1984). After that time, field independence gradually decreases throughout the remainder of life, with older people tending to be more field dependent than younger people (Witkin, et al., 1973).

The present study, investigates the relationship between the learning styles (dependent and independent styles) of the students in English language achievement by considering age and gender of the learners.

Research in the Realm of Field Dependency and Field Independence in Iran

In his study, Salmani-Nodoushan (2007) titled "Is Field Dependence or Independence a predictor of EFL reading performance" investigated the Field Dependency or Independency on systematic variance into Iranian EFL students' overall and task-specific performance on task-based reading comprehension tests. Having selected a large number of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students, all majoring in English at different Iranian universities, he administered the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) to the participants. His study demonstrated that individuals 'cognitive styles made a significant difference in their test performance in the proficient, semi proficient, and fairly proficient groups, but this was not the case in the low- proficient group. In addition his study revealed that cognitive style resulted in a significant difference in participants' performance on specific tasks such as true-false, sentence completion, outlining, scanning, and elicitation in all proficiency groups.

Yarahmadi (2011) did a study on Field Independence/Dependence and ownership writing differences found that for both male and female students there was a relationship between Field Dependency and ownership in writing. She concluded that the use of first person singular pronouns and /or possessive adjectives was more characteristic of Field Dependent students. She argued that students are able to improve their writing ability by being aware of style areas in which they feel less comfortable, and this provide avenues to enrich their nonintellectual growth. In the same vein, teachers can identify learning style patterns in writing classes and make the best

use of such information by devising lesson plans which takes into account individual learning style preferences.

Ahmady and Yamini (1992) conducted a study on the relationship between Field Dependency/Independency and listening comprehension strategy use by female Iranian English language learners. Selecting 138 students at the intermediate level, chosen out of 208, they were given the Strategy Inventory for Listening Comprehension to determine the type of strategies they used. Correlation coefficients illustrated that metacognitive, memory, cognitive and social strategies were significantly related to the cognitive style, whereas affective and compensatory strategies did not demonstrate a significant correlation. They concluded that FI students used metacognitive, memory, and cognitive strategies more frequently than the FD counterparts, but FD students used social strategies more than FI ones.

Nilforooshan and Afghar (2007) did a study on the impact of Field Dependence-Independence in EFL learners' writing performance. They found that there is a significant difference between Field Dependent/ Independent groups in writing skill in general and narrative writing in particular with Field Independent learners outperforming the Field Dependents.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study aims at answering four research questions:

1. Is there any relationship of field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj?
2. Is there any relationship of attitude towards English language and performance grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj?
3. Can GEFT significantly predict attitude toward learning English?
4. Can GEFT significantly predict grammar tests towards learning English?

NULL HYPOTHESES

In line with the above questions, the following three hypotheses are formulated:

1. There is no relationship between field independency-dependency and learning grammatical structure among high school students in Sanandaj.
2. There is no relationship between attitudes toward English and learning grammatical structure among high school students in Sanandaj.
3. GEFT cannot significantly predict attitude toward learning English.
4. GEFT cannot significantly predict grammatical structure toward learning English.

METODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the study were initially 60 students who studied at grade two in Farzanegan high school of Sanandaj. The age of the participants ranged from 16 to 17. There were no boy students in this study.

Instruments

For collecting information from participant two questionnaires and one grammar test from lessons 1-5 of high school student's book were employed. The measurements of each of these variables are discussed in the following sections:

Group Embedded Figure Test

The Group Embedded Figure Test (GEFT) was used to categorize students as field dependent, field independent, or bimodal for the purposes of providing their attitudes toward English and learning structure. The GEFT is a group administered test that requires the subject to outline a simple geometric shape within a complex design. The subject must locate or separate the relevant information from the contextual field and restructure it to design the correct shape. In theory, this task discriminates the extent to which the person perceives analytically and is able to identify the relevant information within the organized field. The estimate of reliability of the GEFT is reported at .82 (Witkin, Oltman, Raskin, & Karp, (1971).

The GEFT test was presented in a booklet form. During the GEFT test, participants were required to finish all 25 items within 12 minutes. Within each complex figure was embedded one of eight simple figures, participants were asked to trace the simple figure with a pencil. In the first two minutes, participants worked on seven practice items, which were not scored. In the following ten minutes, participants completed the 18 items that comprised the actual test. The completed tests were individually scored by the researcher. The total possible score ranged from 0 to 18. Omitted items were scored as incorrect (Witkin et al., 1971).

Participants in this study were classified as field dependent (FD) and field independent (FI) based on their scores on the GEFT test. Participants who scored greater than one-half standard deviation above the mean were considered field independent, while participants who scored less than one-half standard deviation below the mean were considered field dependent (Dwyer & Moore, 1991-1992).

Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (ATMB)

Another test that was used for this study is Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). This test was performed to measure the student's attitudes. This test consisted of 104 items that they can answer the items independently. Since I selected this test for high school students, I have translated the questionnaire from English to Persian.

Grammar test

And the last questionnaire was grammar test, in which I selected 40 questions from khat Sefid book of high school students for investigating the score of their grammars. And since this book was designed by some experts of language teaching so this book is valid and it is used in all English classes of schools.

Procedures

At the beginning of each session, the researcher read a detailed explanation outlining the research process. Participants were asked to complete the GEFT test first. They were given two minutes to

work on the 7 practice items, and then 10 minutes to take the actual test. Standard oral directions from the manual for the Group Embedded Figures Test were given during the test to ensure that all participants received the same message.

The tests of this study were accomplished in 3 days and also in two classes of high school in Sanandaj. At first day, the participants finished the GEFT test which took an average time of 10 minutes, at the second day, they were asked to answer the grammar test which took an average time of 20 minutes independently. There was no interaction between participants during the session.

And in third day, they were asked to answer the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which took an average time of 25 minutes to complete. This test consisted of 104 questions that students answered them according to their attitudes and feelings toward English language.

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected through questionnaire. First, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was performed in order to find their own feelings based on everything they know and have heard. There is no right or wrong answer. Second, Group Embedded Figure Test (GEFT) was performed to illustrate the field dependent and independent students. Third, the grammar test was performed in order to examine the student's score in grammar. And at last to examine the relationships among these three variables, correlation analysis was performed.

A descriptive analysis was first conducted to generate detailed information, including means, standard deviation, and frequency data, to describe and infer characteristics of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Is there any relationship between field independence-dependence and performance on grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj?

A point-biserial correlation was run to probe any significant relationships of field independence-dependence and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj.

Table 1: Point-Biserial Correlation Matrix to Learning Structure with Types of Personality Traits

		Personality Traits
Grammar Test	Pearson Correlation	.609
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	40

The results ($R_{pbs}(40) = .609, P < .05$) indicated that there was a significant relationships between field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj. Thus the first null-hypothesis **was rejected**.

2. Is there any relationship of attitudes toward English language and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj?

A Pearson correlation was run to probe any significant relationships of attitudes toward English and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation for correlation of Learning Structure with Attitude toward Language Learning

		Attitude
Grammar Test	Pearson Correlation	.262
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102
	N	40

The results ($R(40) = .26$, $P > .05$) indicated that there was not any significant relationship between attitudes toward English language learning and performance on grammar tests among high school students of Sanandaj. Thus the second null-hypothesis **was supported**.

KR-21 Reliability

Table 3 : Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Variance	KR-21
Attitude	60	400.717	2345.800	.90
Grammar Test	60	14.892	5.043	.54
GEFT	60	11.900	16.227	.74

According to the table 3, for attitude reliability as the number of students is 60, the mean is 400.717, the variance is 2345.800, and the KR-21 is .90 so this test is acceptable amount. For grammar tests reliability as the number of students is 60, the mean is 14.892, the variance is 5.043, and the KR-21 is .54 so this test is acceptable amount. And for the reliability of last tests GEFT as the number of students is 60, the mean is 11.900, the variance is 16.227, and the KR-21 is .74 so this test is acceptable amount.

Construct Validity

A factor analysis was run to probe the underlying constructs of the attitude, grammatical structure and GEFT tests. The SPSS extracted one factor which accounted for 53.05 percent of the total variance.

Factor analysis to probe the underlying constructs of the attitude, structure and GEFT tests

Table 4: Total Variance Explained for the extracted factor

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.592	53.052	53.052	1.592	53.052	53.052
2	.963	32.093	85.145			
3	.446	14.855	100.000			

As displayed in Table 5 the attitude, grammar tests and GEFT tests loaded on the only extracted factor.

Table 5: Components Matrix for the extracted factor

	Component
	1
GEFT	.873
Grammar Test	.847
Attitude	.335

As displayed in Table 5 the attitude, grammar tests and GEFT tests loaded on the only extracted factor. Based on these results it can be concluded that for the present sample, these three tests tap on the same underlying construct although the Attitude seems to have the least contribution to this trait (factor).

3. Can GEFT predict students' attitude toward learning English?

A regression analysis was run to predict students' attitude by using GEFT as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Model Summary Attitude on GEFT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.159 ^a	.025	.009	48.2243

a. Predictors: (Constant), GEFT

b. Dependent Variable: Attitude

Based on the above Table, GEFT can predict only 2.5 percent of students' attitude ($R = .15$, $R^2 = .025$). This small amount could be attributed to the fact that FI/D is a cognitive factor while attitude is an affective factor which may not be so correlated.

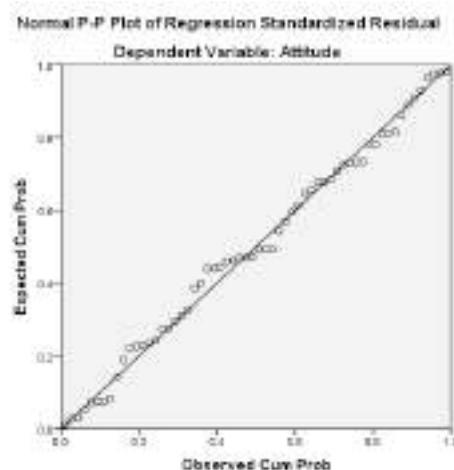


Figure 1: Normal P-P Plot 2 regression model for normal distribution

The Normal P-P Plot 1 indicated that the regression model enjoyed normal distribution because majority of the dots fell along the diagonal.

Normal P-P Plot: Attitude on GEFT

4. Can GEFT predict students' performance on grammar tests?

A regression analysis was run to predict students' structure by using GEFT as it is observed in Table 7.

Table 7: Model Summary Structure on GEFT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.547 ^a	.299	.287	1.8964

a. Predictors: (Constant), GEFT

b. Dependent Variable: Structure

Based on the results indicated in Table 7 GEFT can predict 29.9 percent of students' structure ($R = .54$, $R^2 = .199$). This higher amount of correlation could be attributed to the fact that performance on grammar tests and GEFT are both cognitive factors.

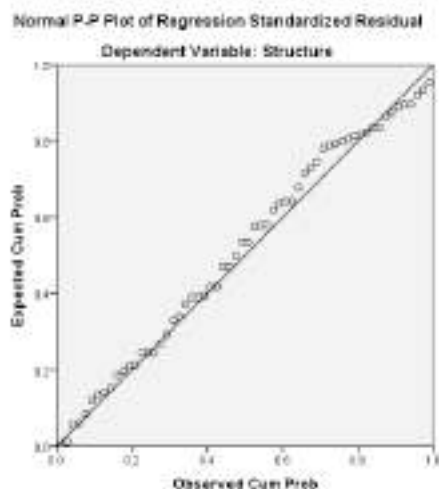


Figure 2: Normal P-P Plot 2 regression model for normal distribution

The Normal P-P Plot 2 indicated that the regression model enjoyed normal distribution because majority of the dots fell along the diagonal.

Normal P-P Plot: Structure on GEFT

The results obtained in this study show that field dependence- independence are related to the performance grammar tests of high school students. But there isn't any significant relationship between attitude and performance grammar tests of high school students.

As field dependence has been associated with naturalistic second language acquisition and field independence with classroom learning (See Ellis, 1985; Brown, 2000; Carter, 1988), it seems natural for FI students to use more meta-cognitive strategies to enhance their grammatical learning. Similarly, FI students make more use of cognitive strategies including translation,

repetition, transfer, rehearsal, etc. This can also be attributed to conscious learning and the activities that can be found in formal classroom situations.

In regards to the students' attitudes towards the English language the results revealed that besides supporting the idea that English should be the medium of instruction in the secondary schools and at least some subjects like Physics and Chemistry should be taught in English, they were of the view that the teaching of English should start as early as the first grade in the schools. For their attitudes toward the Western culture, the students' findings revealed that more than half of them showed their interest in the culture of the English speaking World as represented by English-language films. A possible interpretation of these findings might be the result of social tendencies affected by globalization. On the other hand, most of the students, in the present study, had negative attitudes toward the importance of using the English language in schools. Concerning the students' English language attitudes, on the other hand, interesting findings were obtained. With regard to their attitudes towards the social value of English, the findings reveal that whilst most of the students responded positively to the idea that "*the development of our country is possible mainly by educated people who know English well*", the majority of them responded negatively to "*the use of English in government and business offices helps in getting things done easily*".

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to explore the relationships of field independence-dependence, with EFL learner's attitudes towards the English language and their performance on grammar Tests and to determine whether this field independence-dependence and attitude were related to the performance grammar tests of high school students. The results showed that there was significant relationship between field independence-dependence and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj. So the first null hypothesis was rejected. No significant relationship was also found between attitude toward English and performance grammar tests among high school students in Sanandaj. Therefore the last two null hypotheses were supported.

And according to the last two questions because GEFT can predict 29.9 percent of students' structure, so performance on grammar tests and GEFT are both cognitive factors. And at last because GEFT can predict only 2.5 percent of students' attitude, so this small amount could be attributed to the fact that FI/D is a cognitive factor while attitude is an affective factor which may not be so correlated.

Limitations of the study

This study, like many other studies, has a number of limitations. The number of the participants was relatively small (N= 60). This limitation may be due to the lack of time of students in the school. Factors like this might limit the generalizability of the results of this study to other populations. The other problem lies in the fact that this sample was a convenient sample, not any randomly selected. This may also limit the generalizability of the results of the study to other contexts. Another limitation is that in this study just one high school is selected.

REFERENCES

- Allport, G. (1935). "Attitudes" in *a Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. C. Murchison. Worcester, MA: Clark University Press, 789–844.
- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980), *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Ch. 15.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Carter, E. F. (1988). The Relationship of Field Dependent/Independent Cognitive Style to Spanish Language Achievement and Proficiency: A Preliminary Report. *Modern Language Journal*, 72 (1), 21-30.
- Dwyer, F. M., & Moore, D. M. (1991) (1992). Effect of color coding on visually and verbally oriented tests with students of different field dependent levels. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 20(4), 311-320.
- Gurley, M.P. (1984). *Characteristics of motivation, field independence, personality type, learning style, and teaching preference of the adult learner as compared with traditional-age college students*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Catholic University of America), Dissertation Abstracts International, 45, 1268.
- Jonassen, D. H., & Grabowski, B. L. (1993). *Handbook of individual differences, learning and instruction*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Korchin, S.J. (1986). Field Dependence, Personality Theory, and Clinical Research. In *Field Dependence in Psychological Theory, Research, and Application*. (Bertini, M., Pizzamiglio, L. & Wapner, S., Eds.)
- Salmani-Nodoushan, M. A. (2007). *Cognitive style as a source of systematic variance in Iranian EFL learners' performance on communicative language tests*. Retrieved August 5, 2011, from <http://www.translationdirectory.com/article820.htm>
- Van der Pligt, J. & N.K. De Vries (1995), *Opinies en attitudes: meting, modellen en theorie* (only in Dutch), Amsterdam/Meppel: Boom.
- Witkin, H. A., Oltmann, P. K, Raskin, E., & Krap, S. A. (1971). *A manual for the embedded figures tests*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologist Press.
- Witkin, H.A. (1973). "The role of cognitive style in academic performance and in teacher student relations." Paper presented at a symposium on "Cognitive Styles, Creativity and Higher Education," sponsored by the Graduate Record Examination Board, Montreal, Canada. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, Research Bulletin 73 - 11.

EVALUATION AND CONTENT ANALYSIS OF “ENGLISH FOR AVIATION FOR PILOTS AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS” TEXTBOOK AS AN ESP BOOK

Ali Zolfagharian

Imam Khomeini International University

Javad Khalilpour

Allame Tabataba'i University

ABSTRACT

Books in language learning and teaching have an undeniable significant role. Since English language teaching is essential for air traffic controllers and pilots all around the world, the aim of this study is to clarify the role of a coursebook used in educating and training air traffic controllers and pilots. This study conducted an analysis and evaluation of an ESP book in aviation industry named “English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers” by Oxford University Press. The analysis of this book is done by responding to the five questions about skills, content, sequencing, sociolinguistic factor of variety of language and format. To do this, a series of checklists from “teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: Substance and Techniques” by Betty W. Robinett(1978), “Choosing your Coursebook” by Alan Cunningsworth(1995), and “Language Curriculum Design” by Nation(2010) were used. “English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers” is analyzed and evaluated as suitable book for both purposes of classroom book and self-study. Notwithstanding some weaknesses, the book can satisfy the needs and interests of students whom are pilots and air traffic controllers to do their job with the first goal of safety.

KEYWORDS: communication, English language, aviation, ICAO, skills, activity, content.

INTRODUCTION

Some catastrophic accidents happened from the very beginning of aviation industry that were caused by language problems such as language misusing, misinterpretation of language used, malfunctioning in means of communication, different regional or social dialects and accents, lack in language knowledge or language use. English language is the unique language of aviation all around the world which is used not only in routine flights, but also in an emergency situation. Having the English language knowledge is vital for the safe conduct of flights and passengers lives. For instance, if an emergency occurred the pilot must be able to utter as simple and fluent as possible the nature of the situation and on the other hand the controller has to understand it completely without any missing part and then must take the proper action in order to resolve the emergency or assist the pilot of aircraft. Hence since 2008 ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) published and regulated the ICAO language proficiency requirement for

operational level (level 4) to unify the globally use of English language in aviation industry by ATCs and pilots.

Sometimes the pilot or air traffic controller says a phrase that cannot be interpreted by the officer on the other side of the communication and then caused an accident or incident. For instance in Tenerife North Airport disaster the crash killed 583 people, making it the deadliest accident in aviation history in which the KLM co-pilot read back *WE ARE AT TAKEOFF* then the tower controller, who could not see the runway due to the dense fog, initially responded with "OK" (nonstandard phraseology), which reinforced the KLM captain's misinterpretation that they had takeoff clearance. The controller misinterpreted that they were in takeoff position and ready to begin the roll when takeoff clearance was received, but not in the process of taking off. The controller then immediately added "stand by for takeoff, I will call you," indicating that he had not intended the clearance to be interpreted as a takeoff clearance. Therefore one of the reasons in this crash was the use of ambiguous non-standard phrases by the KLM co-pilot ("We're at take off") and the Tenerife control tower ("OK").

Consider that in face to face interaction apart from listening and speaking skills, we have body language, facial expressions, etc in order to pass our intention to the hearer, but in aviation there is no other mean than listening skill and ability in radiotelephony communication which is more difficult, challenging and requires higher degree of language proficiency than face to face communication. In addition the sound quality may be poor; and there exists garbled voice, and background noises. Therefore a proficient aviator must be able to use his/her language in any unpredictable situation effectively.

Hymes (1972) claims that in order to achieve communicative goal, second language learners must learn to speak not only grammatically, but also "appropriately". Here in aviation English, this "appropriateness" is the matter that authors try their bests to achieve it by providing authentic, comprehensible, meaningful, contextualized instructional materials.

The goal of language learning is communicative competence. Therefore the aim of all language learning books is to teach learners communication. Apparently Aviation English communication is pilot-ATC, pilot-pilot and ATC-ATC communications.

The language proficiency requirements for Aviation English (AE) by ICAO apply to listening and speaking skills only and do not address the reading and writing. It is also worth to consider that nowadays the number of international flights, which fly over several different countries with variety of languages and accents, are increasing. Therefore the need for an international language like English and also its acquisition or learning is increasing too.

Table 1: ICAO language proficiency rating scale for pilots and air traffic controllers (ICAO Annex 1)

Level	Pronunciation	Structure	Vocabulary
Operational 4	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the L1 but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding.	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are used creatively and are usually well controlled. Errors may occur, particularly in unusual or unexpected circumstances, but rarely interfere with meaning	Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances
Pre-operational 3	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the L1 and frequently interfere with ease of understanding	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns associated with predictable situations are not always well controlled, errors frequently interfere with meaning	Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics, but range is limited and the word choice often inappropriate. It often unable to paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary
Elementary 2	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, are heavily influenced by the L1 and usually interfere with ease of understanding.	Shows only limited control of a few simple memorized grammatical structures and Sentence patterns.	Limited vocabulary range consisting only of isolated words and memorize phrases.
Pre-elementary 1	Perform at a level below the Elementary level	Perform at a level below the Elementary level	Perform at a level below the Elementary level
Level	Fluency	Comprehension	Interaction
Operational 4	Produces stretches of language at an appropriate tempo. There may be occasional loss of fluency on transition from rehearsed or formulaic speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not prevent effective communication. Can make limited use of discourse markers or connectors. Fillers are not distracting.	Comprehension is mostly accurate on common, concrete, and work related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users. When the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies.	Responses are usually immediate, appropriate and informative. Initiates and maintains exchanges even when dealing with an unexpected turn of events. Deals adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming or clarifying.
Pre-operational 3	Produces stretches of language, but phrasing and pausing are often inappropriate. Hesitations or slowness in language processing may prevent effective communication.	Comprehension is often accurate in on common, concrete, and work related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of	Responses are sometimes immediate, appropriate, and informative. Can initiate and maintain exchanges with reasonable ease on familiar

	Fillers are sometimes distracting.	users. May fail to understand a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events.	topics and in predictable situations. Generally inadequate when dealing with an unexpected turn of events.
Elementary 2	Can produce very short, isolated, memorized utterances with frequent pausing and a distracting use of fillers to search for expressions and to articulate less familiar words.	Comprehension is limited to isolated, memorized phrases when they are carefully and slowly articulated.	Response time is slow and often inappropriate. Interaction is limited to simple routine exchanges.
Pre-elementary 1	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.

At the same time books are important resources for teachers in order to help students to learn the instructional material and they are basic and main sources of data for the users.

Oxford University Press published English for aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers after IACO regulated its operational level 4 rating scale and its deadline in 2008. the goal of the book is to train and educate not only the students of air traffic services and pilots, but also the current pilots and ATCS who are at work. Taking into account the ICAO rating scale, the researchers attempt to see this ESP book deals with six subskills of pronunciation, structures, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and interaction. The book suggests that it can be used either as a coursebook in a class or a self-study book.

Objectives of the study

Because of the essential and unique role of language proficiency in aviation industry as a means of communication, the researchers try to analyze the defined areas of ICAO language proficiency rating scale. The present study believes that having a broader and deeper knowledge of content materials can assist teacher, designers, trainers, ESP material developers, ATCs and pilots, and aviation authorities to discover new approaches to improve the quality of coursebooks and consequently the quality of teaching and learning and also to provide a newly established ways of teaching.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To conduct, the current research provides methods in analysis of the book: Language skills, general content, sequencing, sociolinguistics factors, format (impression) evaluation and seeks to respond to following questions:

1. Does the book integrate the “four skills”? is there a balanced approach toward the skills?(language skills)
2. Does the book reflect what is now known about language and language learning?(general content)
 - a. Authenticity of language
 - b. Appropriateness and currency of topics ,situations, and contexts
 - c. Proficiency level-is it pitched for the right level?
3. How is the book sequenced?(sequencing)
4. Does the sociolinguistics factors are mentioned in the book? E.g. variety of language-American, British, standard.
5. Is the book attractive, durable and usable?(format)

METHODOLOGY

Materials

The ESP coursebook “*English for Aviation for Pilots and Air Traffic Controllers*” by Sue Ellis and Terence Gerighty is the main material of this study in which there are 8 units arranging from Preflight and ground movements to landing phase and on the ground again. The main purpose of the book is to develop communicative competence of pilots and air traffic controllers and their language production while they are on duty of control center or tower and in command of aircraft.

Instruments

To manage the analysis, series of checklists from the three mentioned books in introduction are used. “Teaching by Principles” by Brown(2001) and “Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching” by Richards and Rodgers(2001). and other books are implemented to assist the evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language Skills

According to content-based instruction, English language skills must be integral in drills and activities. “It is important to integrate all the skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar in an authentic context”, Larsen-Freeman (2011). Therefore beside integrity of skills, authenticity is salient too. An authentic activity makes the learner feel in real situation or real life condition. So it helps the learning process in the learners mind.

Activities should be in a way to make learning meaningful in a real context. Stoller (1997) believes that language activities should be in service of language skills improvement. This study conduct an evaluation on each of the ICAO rating scale skills in details based on different types of activities and their frequencies in the book.

Six ICAO language skills are: vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, fluency, comprehension, and interaction.

Vocabulary

As shown in ICAO rating scale in Table 1, pilots and ATCs must be able to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics and often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected situations. Table 2 illustrates the different types of drills and tasks which are presented in the book and their frequencies.

Table 2: Vocabulary Activities

Activities	frequency	Activities	frequency
Pair-work	4	Matching	5
Listen and Choose	2	Using pictures and maps	8
Listen and check	1	Listen and write	1
Sentence completion	6	Listen and talk	1
Question answering	3	Experience telling	2
paraphrase	1		

According to Larsen-Freeman, Teaching should build on students' previous experiences, therefore the book has two experience-telling which wants the students to talk about their real experiences in work.

As indicated in ICAO scale students can paraphrase the sentences when they lack in vocabulary knowledge. Only the last unit of the book has a paraphrasing activity. Paraphrasing is so important for pilots and air traffic controllers while they are working and they do not know the exact word or the other person does not understand a specific vocabulary, he/she must paraphrase the meaning of that word. In vocabulary activities of the book beside other types of activities, there are five listening activities that indicate the integrity of skills, likewise writing and speaking activities. According to Content-Based Instruction skills must be integrated in an authentic context. "Instructional materials should have authenticity and comprehensibility" Jack C. Richards. The most frequent activity is using map and pictures which are eight. These use visual memory of the learners in order to internalize target vocabularies.

In question answering activities also we can see integration of skills because they have writing and talking too. Activities have discussion and pair-work tasks which are in accordance with CBI. It is worth to mention that units 5 and 6 do not have vocabulary activities.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is fundamental for comprehension, fluency and interaction. If the speaker cannot pronounce the sounds correctly, the hearer cannot understand and react properly. And also if there is no correct pronunciation there will be no fluency.

Table 3: pronunciation activities

Activity	frequency
Recognition	10
Listen & Repeat	2
Pair work	2

One of the activities that students are suggested to improve is recognition which has the most frequency through the book. When a person realizes or recognizes the missed item (here is pronunciation), before it, he/she must have comprehended the meaning. Therefore recognition indicates the comprehension of the students. In almost all of the pronunciation activities in the book, first there is a recognition task, then provided by an audio track in the CD to check and monitor the students recognized input. The teacher in the classroom can correct the learners' mistakes or in case of self-study, the student can self-monitor him/herself.

Unit one is merely dedicated to ICAO numbers and alphabet pronunciation. Unit one is the only unit which has listen and repeat exercises (two activities) and there is no trace of repetition in other units. So repetition which is in support of behaviorism in second language acquisition is neglected among the book with the exception of unit 1 and follows the functional, interactional and cognitive method of teaching pronunciation, for instance, recognition and pair-work drills.

In teaching of pronunciation, the book seems to have a sequence and order. Unit one has numbers and alphabet. Unit two works on 2-syllable words stress pattern. Unit three dedicated to stress pattern in sentences, e.g. interrogative and declarative sentences. Unit four discusses how to pronounce /s/, /ʃ/, /t/ phonemes and also stressed words in sentences. Unit five tries to teach vowels and some diphthongs. Unit six talks about how to read a broadcast in a correct phonetic form and a pairwork. The broadcast context is aviation that provides comprehensibility and authenticity to the activity. Unit seven has activities about 3-syllable words stress pattern and even 4-syllable words. Unit eight provides three ways of pronouncing regular past tense [ed] verbs and consonant clusters in words. Therefore the book has an easy-to-difficult order of activities and pronunciation content material.

Structure

Pilots and air traffic controllers must know and use the correct and proper forms (structures) of English while they are communicating. Not having the knowledge of structure and even more important, not having the knowledge of how to use it in aviation communication may cause problems, incidents or even accidents. The purpose of the book is to train pilots and air traffic controllers to reach operational level 4 in which error may occur but rarely interfere with meaning.

Table 4: frequency table of structural activities

Activity	frequency	Activity	frequency
Gap filling (completion)	5	Writing activity	1
Rearranging scrambled sentences	1	Underlining the correct form	1
Pairwork	3	Listen and complete	1
Matching	3	Retelling the story	1
Listen and choose	2	talk	2

Gap filling (completion) is the most frequent type of activity in structure parts, then matching and pair-work

Again pair-work is detected as somehow an important activity in this area through the book to be compatible with communicative competence and CBI. The book tries to practice and work on all aspects of communicative competence. Canale defined the four aspects of communicative competence as: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, strategic competence. For instance by pairwork activity the book works on sociolinguistic and strategic competence while here in structure section the main focus is on grammatical competence too.

In teaching structure, the authors provide other skills like speaking, writing, listening and interaction. Therefore here the book has integrity of skills too.

In each structure activity, after having enough exercised the tasks by learners, the book provides a small box in order to show the structural patterns of what the learner exercised. As it is known, this way of teaching grammar is called "induction". So the book follows inductive teaching of structures. Functions are important in structure. Grammatical structures are fit to that specific function of the exercise.

In unit four, there is a structure box with no activity before and after it.

Fluency

ICAO: students must be able to provide sentences at an appropriate tempo and can make limited use of discourse markers and connectors. Fillers are not distracting.

The book seeks to teach the students the above goal.

Table 5: fluency activities and their frequencies

Activity	frequency	Activity	frequency
matching	4	Multiple choice test	1
Pair-work	7	underlining	1
Listen and question answering	4	Sentence completion	1
Question answering and talk	7	Picture matching	1
Experience telling	2	reading	10

Pair-work, question answering and talk are thereof the most frequent activities in this area which are all communicative in nature. There are ten reading exercises in which students will learn their fluencies. Fluency in reading is different from fluency in speaking. The book mostly tries to improve reading fluency ability of the students and tries less in speaking fluency. This amount of frequency shows the weakness of the book that the most frequent activity in fluency section is reading. As mentioned only fluency in speaking is significant in aviation and there is no use of reading in aviation. Although fluency in reading can effect on fluency in speaking, there is not a

straight and complete relationship between these two types of fluencies. Two experience telling activities provide authenticity and contextualization.

Experience telling makes the environment contentful. By contentful, we mean there will be a relationship between language and work related real personal memories. Other students can add some points and comment on the told experience to have peer interaction.

On page 41, the book has a multiple choice test. Unit four has only reading fluency activity. Six listening activities depict the importance of this skill in obtaining fluency.

It is clear that in fluency section, the book has integrity of skills. For instance reading, writing and speaking as well (table 5 shows this fact).

Interaction

Pilots and ATCs can speak in an interactive manner; otherwise they will encounter a problem in their work. The learners should reach the level to check, confirm or clarify the misunderstandings. Responses are usually immediate, appropriate and informative. They can initiate and maintain exchanges even in unpredictable situations. Therefore students should learn interaction and its techniques and skills through 13 pair-work communicative activities in the book. Pair work is the most frequent activity in the book in this area. It is reasonable and logic because when the learner starts interaction there must be another learner or participant to interact. Therefore pair-work is relevant and appropriate to be the most frequent one.

Table 6: interaction activities and their frequencies

Activity	frequency
Pair-work	13
Listen and check	1
explanation	1
Group-work	1
Listen and answer	1

Beside pair work activities, there are only four other activities among the whole book. This is another sign that interactive pair work activities are playing the major role in this area. The book demonstrates a good image of interaction for learners with its 13 pair work communicative exercises. It is clear from the table that first students are asked to listen to the audio, then check, answer or explain the heard voice. Listening is a comprehensive skill and speaking is a productive skill. Both are needed in interaction. So we have comprehension and production with each other. It is worth to mention here the significance of the role of interaction in aviation that if there is no capability to interact, ATCs and pilots will not work at all.

Comprehension

Comprehension is the most vital language skill for pilots and ATCs. If a pilot or an ATC cannot understand the meaning of the message correctly, the consequences will probably be dangerous and when they misunderstand the meaning, the situation will be even more dangerous.

Table 7: comprehension activities and their frequencies

Activity	Frequency	Activity	Frequency
Listen & Answer the questions	14	Listen & Match	5
Listen & Find the difficult area	2	Matching	2
Discussion	3	Picture Matching	1
Listen & Choose	5	Experience Telling	2
Listen & Check	3	Reading	2
Listen& Complete	9	Comprehension	

Here in this book, comprehension skill is the same as listening to some extent. Six activities out of 11 types of activities throughout the book are dedicated to listening skill. It shows the significance of listening comprehension in aviation and the role of it in AE.

Again in this area the book has two experience telling activities show the authenticity of the book as an ESP book. Interestingly the book has two reading comprehension parts in which students attempt to improve their comprehension ability in reading skill too. The need for reading comprehension is much less than listening comprehension.

It is worth to mention that having the knowledge of different accents is necessary for pilots and ATCs, because pilots may fly over different regions and countries around the world and ATCs have variety of international over flight, arrival and departure flight in their area of responsibility with different accents and dialects. At least being familiar with the American and British English is necessary and needed. This book attempts to show some of the differences between them.

38 activities are in listening and 3 are in matching. This contrast shows that comprehension ability or skill must be learnt by listening tasks. If there is no comprehension, there will not be production and performance. Hence comprehension is the base of performance. By performance, it is meant interaction, speaking and writing of which this study discusses the interaction and speaking. In this area there are interaction, reading, listening, discussion and experience telling. Hence, as CBI method suggests, integrity of skills is clear.

Content

Willis and Willis have provided six questions that can help us to evaluate the curriculum in respect of belonging to task-based language teaching or not. Fives are appropriate in evaluation of the books. The answers of these questions are as follows:

1. The book engages the learner's interests via interesting, work related and situational audio tracks and readings, etc.
2. Of course the focus of the book is on meaning.
3. The outcome of the book is getting ICAO operational level 4 examination.
4. To some extent completion is the priority of the activities of the book.
5. Activities are in authentic and real contexts.

Thus we can conclude that the content is task-based.

The students of this book are ATCs and pilots, so they have background knowledge of Aviation and English language. Therefore the proficiency level of the book is suitable for the level of the learners. In Krashen's (1985) term it is $i+1$ in order to be effective in the acquisition process.

The learners are seeking to reach ICAO level 4 of language proficiency and the book's goal is exactly the same. Therefore the content suits the needs of learners. As mentioned before the content suits the interests of them too. Ideas can help the learning of language and are useful to the learners. The idea content of this book is a specific academic subject (aviation English). As this book is an ESP course book, this idea content suits the interests and needs of the learners.

The content is aviation and the learners are adult pilots and air traffic controllers. So the age and content are appropriate.

Sequencing

The book consists of eight units. The first unit of the book is "Introduction to Air Communications". As the name suggests, it is an introductory unit. It starts with the basics and teaches basic information in aviation and aviation English e.g. pronunciation standards.

The order of the book is chronological which starts from "Pre-flight", then "Ground Movements" to "Landing" and "On the Ground" again.

Unit two begins with preflight checks and unit eight ends in Taxiing and getting to the gate. In the topics under the title of each unit, there are some non-routine situations that provide some emergency or unusual conditions in the field of aviation in order to prepare pilots and ATCs to be ready for them. Non-routine and emergency situations are inevitable and inseparable events in aviation industry.

Each unit has a Starter section which is accompanied by pictures and is followed by a kind of warm-up exercise that includes discussion, checking, matching, completion or reasoning and talking in pairs communicatively. At the end of the book, there are appendixes. The first is "Test Yourself!" which is crossword puzzle for evaluating and testing vocabulary knowledge of the students' lexicon (Chomsky's term (1957)).

Then, there are the "Partner Files" which are used in pair work interaction tasks. After them, there is "Answer Key" which is the answers of the activities through the book. The book is used for self-study as well as a coursebook in a class. In former, the learner may need some of the responses which can be obtained from this part.

Finally, there is "Transcripts" which are used for CD audio tracks. At the end of each unit a section exists which is called "Output". It is a kind of reading comprehension. Another part is "Over to You" that is an activity of discussion, thinking and giving opinions, telling experiences and real past stories. Responds to this part is not obligatory in classroom by the teacher. The book follows the linear approach to sequencing because has an easy-to-difficult order of providing the items and skills. This kind of sequencing (linear) is appropriate for the development of

vocabulary, structural items, fluency, pronunciation, comprehension and. Therefore once an item has been presented in a class, it has been learned and does not need focused revision (Nation, 2010, Language Curriculum Design). As the instructed materials will not be exercised again during the course, if a student cannot obtain that material completely or the matter of absenteeism is the disadvantage of linear approach. So each unit designed on the basis of previous knowledge of the students and knowledge provided in previous unit. Therefore the book helps learners make the most effective use of previous knowledge (learning burden). It is worth to mention again here that the integrity of skills through the whole book has a positive effect on each other for learning and so that interference effects are avoided. (Interference)

According to the fluency of the exercises in each of the skill areas, the book provides the best possible coverage language through inclusion of items. The book progressively covers useful language items and skills (keep moving forward). Teachers of this coursebook should be aware of aviation knowledge and is recommended to be an ATC or a pilot, and he/she can account of when the learners are most ready to learn the skill. So far the study covered these areas of content: 1.learning burden 2.interference 3.teacherability.

Sociolinguistic Factor (variety of language)

Variety of language is significant in aviation English because it is an international language which the participants are from different countries with different mother tongue and its own linguistic rules. They must learn, speak and understand the standard English being used in aviation. Books should provide materials in order to teach the learners this issue.

Throughout the book variety of English language is mentioned in different sections and in variety of forms. For instance, there is a part in the book that indicates the different pronunciations such as British and American. In other part there is a box which shows the different kinds of dictation of English, for example aerodrome/airport or aeroplane/airplane. There is standard phraseology in many situations in aviation radio telephony communications which there is no trace of it in the book.

Format

As the book is an ESP book, it is apparently a meaning-focused book. It focuses also to the skills of language proficiency of AE (ICAO), so it is language focused too, including the fluency in AE. Therefore it meets the four strands principle which is meaning focused input, language-focused learning, meaning focused output and fluency.

As mentioned above the input is based on meanings, because meanings are vital and essential in the aviation industry. So the book has comprehensible input. Activities aimed at increasing the fluency through the book in order to make learners use their knowledge receptively and productively. But honestly speaking it is the weakness of the book that the majority of these field activities are in reading.

In the 21st century, technology, beauty, colors and design are essential elements for the books to affect the reader (learner). Therefore publishers must focus on these issues to be influential and

successful. The book includes CD ROM and audio CD with attractive relevant effective radio telephony extracts. CD ROM has an alphabetical word list and interactive exercises in different colors.

The cover of the book is blue with a very attractive design. The three images make the front cover attractive. Each unit starts with pictures and their relevant exercises. All units are started with different real images with the exception of unit 3 and 8. These units are started by sign pictures. Each page of the book includes one color at least other than the color of the heading of exercises and their stems. So the book is multicolored. Different kinds of pictures are shown in the following table.

Table 8: frequency table of pictures

Picture	Frequ ency
Real Image	57
Cartoon	89
Picture	
Aeronautical	1
Chart	
Box	31
TOTAL	147

147 pictures in only 95 pages indicate that each page of this book has at least one picture. Real photos consist of peoples' faces, aircraft in variety of angles, flights in different phases. Different incidental or accident situations like burst tire, ground crash, wild animal or fire onboard and also meteorological phenomena like volcanic ash and etc. Therefore the design of the book is attractive and pleasant for the readers. They will not be bored while they are studying this book. As the book itself suggests, students can use this book as either a coursebook in class or self-study book. For this purpose, the book has the Audio CD, CD ROM and Answer Keys and a section in all units named Over to You.

The major content of boxes in the book is variety of language, structural clues and useful language tips.

If the teacher of the course with this instructional material intends to teach aviation English and general English via topics, he/she will not be able to use this book. Because the book does not have situational-topical unit titles, the units cannot be taught randomly, and the learners lose the other provided materials. The other reason for not being able to use the book randomly is the linear order of the book. The third reason is that the book follows easy-to-difficult way of material presentation.

Based on the purpose of the book which is to train and teach pilots and ATCs for higher and better proficiency according to ICAO operational level 4, the book is durable, but the design, pictures and images may need to be changed in future to include more recent images of that era. This book fits to the needs of pilots and ATCs in instructional issues. Instructional issues are those six language skills of ICAO, but not the needs of teachers completely, because the chronological order of units and easy-to-difficult way of providing materials.

The book could satisfy the interests of learners to some extent and not completely, because most learners are interested in situational unit titles (based on a research on Iranian air traffic controllers). Some situational topics in aviation industry is: sick passenger, runway incursion, excursion, shortage of fuel, fire, dangerous goods, pressurization, landing problems, strikes, communication failure and etc. therefore the problem is time sequential order of units.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate an ESP book in aviation industry named “English for Aviation for pilots and ATCs”. In this analysis some questions in the domain of the skills, contents, sequencing, sociolinguistic feature of variety of language and format were responded. In order to answer these questions a series of checklists from “*Teaching English to speakers of other languages: substance and techniques*” by Betty W. Robinett (1978), “*choosing your coursebook*” by Alan Cunningsworth(1995), and “*Language Curriculum Design*” by Nation were used.

It is vital for ATCs and pilots to recall ICAO operational level of English to avoid catastrophic accident resulted from lack of English knowledge. This knowledge consists of comprehension and production. In vocabulary sections throughout the book, according to frequency table of vocabulary activities, using picture and maps is the most frequent one. These use visual memory of the learners to internalize target vocabulary. Only the last unit of the book has paraphrasing. A pilot or an ATC should be able to paraphrase in conditions when the intended word cannot be comprehended or cannot be recalled to say. An effective and influential book should work on paraphrasing because it is essential in the field of aviation, especially in abnormal and unusual situations while safety is the first issue at work. Totally, vocabulary activities are evaluated as compatible with modern methods in language learning and teaching, but with some lacks and weak points. Having natural pronunciation is necessary in aviation for the sake of safety. The major activity in pronunciation sections of the book is recognition which works on both comprehension and production.

There is an easy-to-difficult order of activities in pronunciation. Providing structural patterns in the book has an inductive way. Gap filling, pairwork and matching are the most frequent activities in the book. The book has integrity of skills through combination of different language skills like speaking, writing, listening and interaction in order to practice on structures. Fluency is the weakest point of the book, because the most frequent activity is reading which is irrelevant to the nature of aviation. Experience telling and pairwork provide authenticity and contextualization. As the nature of interaction is to have two participants to exercise, pairwork is the most frequent activity. The authors provided a god deal of interaction exercises in the book to learn interaction to the learners. Despite interaction in these practices the book has listening activity too. In the comprehension area, 38 activities in listening and 3 in matching were used. It shows that comprehension skill must be learnt by listening tasks. In a number of pages, the book tries to teach and present some tips in language variations between American and British English. Knowledge in variety of language helps the pilots and ATCs to work with persons that have different mother tongues.

The book follows linear approach to sequencing because has an easy-to-difficult order of providing items and skills. As evaluated in the discussion section, it has its own benefits and disadvantages. Finally in the domain of format and presentation, the book meets the few strands principle which in meaning-focused input, language-focused input, language- focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency.

REFERENCES

- Ellis, S., & Gerighty, T. (2008). *English for Aviation for pilots and air traffic controllers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cunningsworth, A. (2004). *Choosing your Coursebook*. Oxford: Mcmillan Education.
- Nation, I.S.P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language Curriculum Design*. New York: Routledge.
- Robinet, B.W. (1978). *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages: Substance and Techniques*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Personnel licensing. Annex 1 to the convention on International Civil Aviation. (2001).
- Aircraft accident and incident investigation. Annex 13 to the convention on International Civil Aviation. (2001).
- Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Requirements. Document 9835. (2004).
- Khosravani Fard, H. et al. (2015). An analytical evaluation of Aviation English textbook. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 4 (1), 61-70.
- Hymes, D. (1972). "On Communicative Competence". In J.B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.) *Sociolinguistics*. Hamondsworth, UK: Penguin Books.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, J. (2011). *Techniques & Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, T.S. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Brown, H.D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles, an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Pearson Education (Longman).
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis*. London: Longman.

THE EFFECT OF PEER FEEDBACK ON COHESION IMPROVEMENT IN WRITING SKILL AMONG EFL LEARNERS

Ahmad Yaghoubi (Corresponding author)

*PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Roudehen Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran
Email: ayaghoobi@riau.ac.ir*

Hadi Ghanei

*M.A. Graduate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language,
Roudehen Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of peer feedback on cohesion improvement in writing skill among English as foreign language (EFL) learners. This study focused on using peer feedback as a teaching tool in order to improve cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners at Shokuh institute in Kashmar, Iran. The participants of the study were 87 upper intermediate EFL learners who were selected from the institute. The boys' and girls' groups studied separately; there were 20 students in male control group; 21 students in the male experimental group, and 23 students in each of the female experimental and control groups. The quasi-experimental design was used to examine the hypotheses of the study. The same process of managing classes was applied to all groups, but the students in the experimental groups received feedback from their classmates. Finally, after considering the statistical analysis, the results revealed that peer feedback can significantly improve the cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners. In addition, there was a statistically significant difference between the males and females in benefiting from peer feedback. The results of the study suggest that the teachers can use peer feedback as a teaching tool to improve cohesion in the students' writing and improve their participation in their classes, but since the male students were less likely to benefit from the peer feedback process in comparison to the females, teachers must have more concentration on the male learners in order to improve their performance in the process of peer feedback.

KEYWORDS: Cohesion, Cohesive Writing, Peer Feedback

INTRODUCTION

Cohesion refers to the ways in which texts are 'stuck together', the ways in which sentences are linked or connected by various linguistic and semantic ties (Kennedy, 1998). According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), "the concept of cohesion is related to semantic; it means that there is a relationship between the meaning that exist in text and that define it as a text" (p. 48). Many researchers have highlighted the importance of text cohesion claiming that a

text stands as a text by means of cohesion. Without cohesion, sentences would be disjointed and would result in a number of unrelated sentences (Hinkel, 2001).

According to Bijami (2013), as writing process approach has changed the way of teaching writing from students' final products to the process of writing, peer feedback has come to take an important part in writing instruction. Moreover, based on this process oriented approach, there are many teachers of English who even believe that teaching writing skill to EFL learners is more complex than teaching other communicative skills (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2001). Traditionally, the teacher is the only one who has high knowledge to provide feedback to students' writing. But nowadays, peer feedback has been known as a critical technique for improving students' writing. EFL learners often feel stressful and anxious when writing in a foreign language and make a variety of errors or mistakes when writing. As a result, researchers and teachers have made an attempt to know how they can help students to minimize their mistakes in their writing. However, they also admit that it is impossible for them or any teacher to read and correct all the students' compositions on writing compositions because correcting written work is time-consuming, especially for large classes.

While the teacher feedback tends to generate more comments at the grammatical level, peer feedback can generate more comments on the content, organization, and vocabulary (Paulus, 1999). As well as beneficial effects on the quality of writing, peer feedback has advantages such as developing critical thinking, learner autonomy and social interaction among students (Yang, Badger & Yu, 2006). The practice of peer feedback allows students to receive more individual comments as well as giving reviewers the opportunity to practice and develop different language skills (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

Peer feedback with its advantages can be a good way to persuade learners to read and provide comments and suggestions for making improvement in their peers' writings before the last versions of their works are submitted to their teachers. Peer feedback works as an important tool in the process oriented approach to writing instruction because in addition to learners' demands for enhancement of writing ability, it helps them understand their learning level.

Moreover, peer feedback can be a very good technique to make learners improve critical thinking and critical reading more than teacher feedback. To put it in another way, peer feedback helps students make good use of their own efforts to make their writings valuable and efficient (Macpherson, 1999). Nevertheless, despite of its role and impact on the process of writing, it seems that peer feedback has not been paid much attention in Iran.

The present study tried to discover if peer feedback could be used as a teaching tool in order to improve cohesion in the student's writing skill. The study also focused on finding the effect of gender on students' cohesion improvement in writing owing to the implementation of peer feedback. The participants' performances in the pre-and post writing exams as well as their experiences in peer feedback give helpful insights to writing instructors. Findings of the present study could contribute to enhance the effectiveness of using peer feedback in writing classes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RELATED HYPOTHESES

The present study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Does peer feedback have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners?
2. Is there any significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate learners' cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback?

The following null hypotheses were proposed on the basis of the aforementioned research questions:

1. Peer feedback does not have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.
2. There is no significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate EFL learners' cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Eighty seven upper intermediate Persian EFL learners from English classes in one of the institutes in Kashmar (the researcher's hometown), named Shokuh, were the participants of this study who were selected by convenience sampling. To ensure that the participants were at the same level of proficiency, a Preliminary English Test was administered to them. Forty one male learners and 46 female learners were selected in each group. Their age ranged from 17 to 22. There were 20 students in male control group; 21 students in the male experimental group, and 23 students in each of the female experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation

Instruments that were used in the study are as follows:

The Preliminary English Test (PET): PET is a Language Proficiency Test designed for people who study English at an intermediate level. It was used for homogenizing the participants of the study. The test is divided into 4 sections: Reading and Writing, Listening and Speaking. Reading and Writing sections were administered in this study. The allocated time for this test was around 35 minutes for Reading Skill including 35 items, and 30 minutes for Writing Skill including 8 items. In order to investigate the reliability of the PET, the Test Retest method was used. Therefore, the test was piloted in a time interval of two weeks with a group of 35 learners who had the similar characteristics with the participants of the study. The results showed that the correlation coefficient of the scores was (0.921), which was an acceptable reliability for the measurement instrument.

The Pretest: Students in both control and experimental groups took part in a pretest that was designed to assess the knowledge of cohesion among participants. Since there was not any standard test available for this purpose, this pretest was designed and standardized by the researcher. In order to determine the reliability of the Cohesion Test, in a pilot study, 17 questions have been completed by a group of 30 students other than the main sample. According

to Cronbach's alpha index, the reliability of the test was 0.85, which indicated a high level of reliability for the test.

The Posttest: The posttest which administered at the end of the semester was the same multiple choice cohesion test that implemented as the pretest at the beginning of the semester

Procedure

In order to answer the questions of the research, the research was started by choosing 87 upper intermediate students from an institute in Kashmar. They were qualified enough in writing to be a part of this study. When all the students gave their consent to be part of the research, they attended a 30 minute English class, twice a week for a whole semester (18 sessions). These 30 minutes were a part of their routine class time in the institute. Students were selected from a group of 92 students in four classes of two female and two male ones. These students were selected through convenience sampling.

The students in each session asked to write about a topic that was provided from previous years standard TOEFL tests. Next, the students in the experimental male and female groups were asked to read their classmates' compositions and to give them some written feedbacks. The control group went through the same process except that they did not receive any feedback from their classmates.

Both control and experimental groups had teacher feedback, but the peer feedback was merely presented in the experimental groups. Therefore, this assured the researcher that the change in the students' performance was the result of the treatment in the experimental group. At the beginning of the semester students in both control and experimental groups took part in a cohesion multiple choice test, and at the end of the semester the students performed the same test as the posttest to see if the process of giving peer feedback to each other had any effect on improving their cohesive writing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As there were two experimental and two control groups, and the first research question was "Does peer feedback have any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners?", t test and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were used in order to find the answer to this question.

The second question "Is there any significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate EFL learners' cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback?" answered through using analysis of covariance too. The following data have been provided to answer these research questions.

Analysis of the Pretest

Table 1 demonstrates the mean scores of pretest in the control and experimental groups. There were 44 students in the experimental groups and 43 students in the control groups. According to

the table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the pretest mean scores in experimental and control groups. There was no significant difference in the scores of the experimental ($M=11.93$, $SD=1.17$) and control ($M=12.21$, $SD=1.28$) groups; $t=1.491$, $p = 0.136$. These results suggest that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups' pretest scores.

Table 1: The Comparison of Pretest Mean Scores in the Control and Experimental Group

	N	Mean	SD	Levene's Test		T Test	
				F value	Sig.	T value	Sig.
Experimental	44	11.93	1.17	1.204	0.271	1.491	0.136
Control	43	12.21	1.28				

Table 2 demonstrates the mean scores of the pretest in the girls' and boys' groups. Forty one students in the boys' group and 46 students in the girls' group have been examined.

Based on this table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the pretest mean scores in boys' and girls' groups. There was not a significant difference in the scores of boys' ($M= 12.21$ $SD=1.20$) and girls' ($M=11.96$, $SD=1.20$) groups; $t = 1.372$, $p = 0.170$.

Table 2: Comparing the Mean Scores of the Pretest in Both Girls' and Boys' Groups

	N	Mean	SD	Levene's Test		T Test	
				F value	Sig.	T value	Sig.
Girls	46	11.96	1.20	1.008	0.487	1.372	0.170
Boys	41	12.21	1.20				

Testing the First Hypotheses

Table 3 demonstrates the mean scores of posttest in the control and experimental groups. According to the table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the posttest mean scores in experimental and control group. There was a significant difference in the scores of experimental ($M=14.09$ $SD=1.12$) and control ($M=12.42$, $SD=1.20$) groups; $t = -9.092$, $p = 0$. These results suggest that the peer feedback really had an effect on improving cohesion in writing. Specifically, our results suggest that improving in the experimental group's cohesion in writing was greater than the control group.

Table 3: The Mean Scores of the Posttest in the Control and Experimental Groups

	N	Mean	SD	Levene's Test		T Test	
				F value	Sig.	T value	Sig.
Experimental	44	14.09	1.12	1.154	0.319	-9.092	0.000
Control	43	12.42	1.20				

In a second attempt, in order to better see the differences between the experimental and control groups with controlling the effect of their pretest scores, an analysis of covariance was implemented. According to table 4, there was a significant effect of grouping on the students' posttest scores, after controlling for their pretest scores ($F(1, 84) = 213.248$ $P=0.000<0.05$). Considering the eta coefficient in this model, there was a significant effect of being in the experimental or control group on improving cohesion in the students' writing after controlling for their scores. As a result, the effect of putting students in two control and experimental groups was statistically significant and it can be concluded that Peer feedback improves cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.

Table 4: Analysis of Covariance Related to the Effect of Peer Feedback on Cohesion in Writing

Source	The Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Squares Mean	F	Sig.	Eta Coefficient	Power
Model	293.280	2	146.640	107.956	0.000	0.720	1.000
Constant	175.430	1	175.430	129.151	0.000	0.606	1.000
Pretest	0.002	1	0.002	0.001	0.970	0.000	0.050
Group	289.661	1	289.661	213.248	0.000	0.717	1.000
Error	114.099	84	1.358				
Total	18138.000	87					

Figure 1, compares the obtained scores in the Experimental and Control groups. In this graph, we can observe that the frequency of the higher scores in the EG is greater than CG. Therefore the significant difference between the two groups was concluded which was the effect of the treatment.

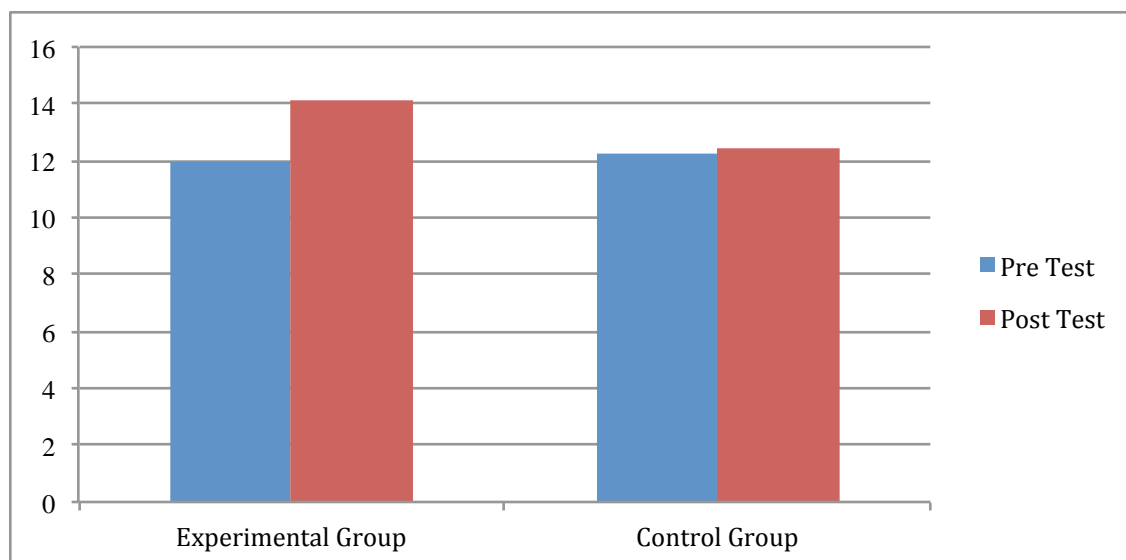


Figure 1: The Effect of Peer Feedback on Improving Cohesion in Writing among Learners

Testing the Second Hypotheses

In Table 5, the posttest mean scores of both boys' and girls' groups are demonstrated. According to this table, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the posttest mean scores among boys and girls. There was a significant difference in the scores of girls' group ($M=13.54$, $SD=2.48$) and boys' group ($M=12.98$, $SD=1.75$); $t(85) = -1.743$, $p = 0.081$. These results suggest that the gender really has an effect on improving cohesion in writing through using peer feedback. Specifically, our results suggest that improvement in the female students' writing cohesion is greater than the male students.

Table 5: Comparing the Posttest Mean Scores in Boys' and Girls' Groups

	N	Mean	SD	Levene's Test		T Test	
				F value	Sig.	T value	Sig.
Girls	46	13.54	2.48	2.005	0.011	-1.743	0.081
Boys	41	12.98	1.75				

In a second effort to better see the differences between the girls' and boys' groups with controlling the effect of their pretest scores, an analysis of covariance was implemented. According to Table 6, there was a significant effect of gender on the students' posttest scores after controlling for their pretest scores ($F(1.84) = 6.822$, $P = 0.011 < 0.05$). This model was statistically significant and regarding eta coefficient in this model, there was a significant effect of gender in benefiting from the peer feedback process. As a result, it can be concluded that: Female upper intermediate EFL learners had better outputs "regarding improving cohesion in their writing" than male learners owing to implementation of peer feedback. Also Figure 2 compares the obtained scores in the girls' and boys' groups. In this graph, we can observe that the frequency of the higher scores in the girls' group is greater than boys' group; therefore, the significant difference between the two groups was concluded which was the effect of the treatment.

Table 6: Covariance Analysis Related to the Effect of Peer Feedback on Improving Cohesion in Writing among Males and Females

Source	The Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Squares Mean	F	Sig.	Eta Coefficient	Power
Model	301.946	3	100.649	79.233	0.000	0.741	1.000
Constant	148.120	1	148.120	116.604	0.000	0.584	1.000
Pretest	0.530	1	0.530	0.417	0.520	0.005	0.098
Group	293.185	1	293.185	230.803	0.000	0.736	1.000
Gender	8.66	1	8.666	6.822	0.011	0.076	0.733
Error	105.433	83	1.270	1.			
Total	18138.000	87					

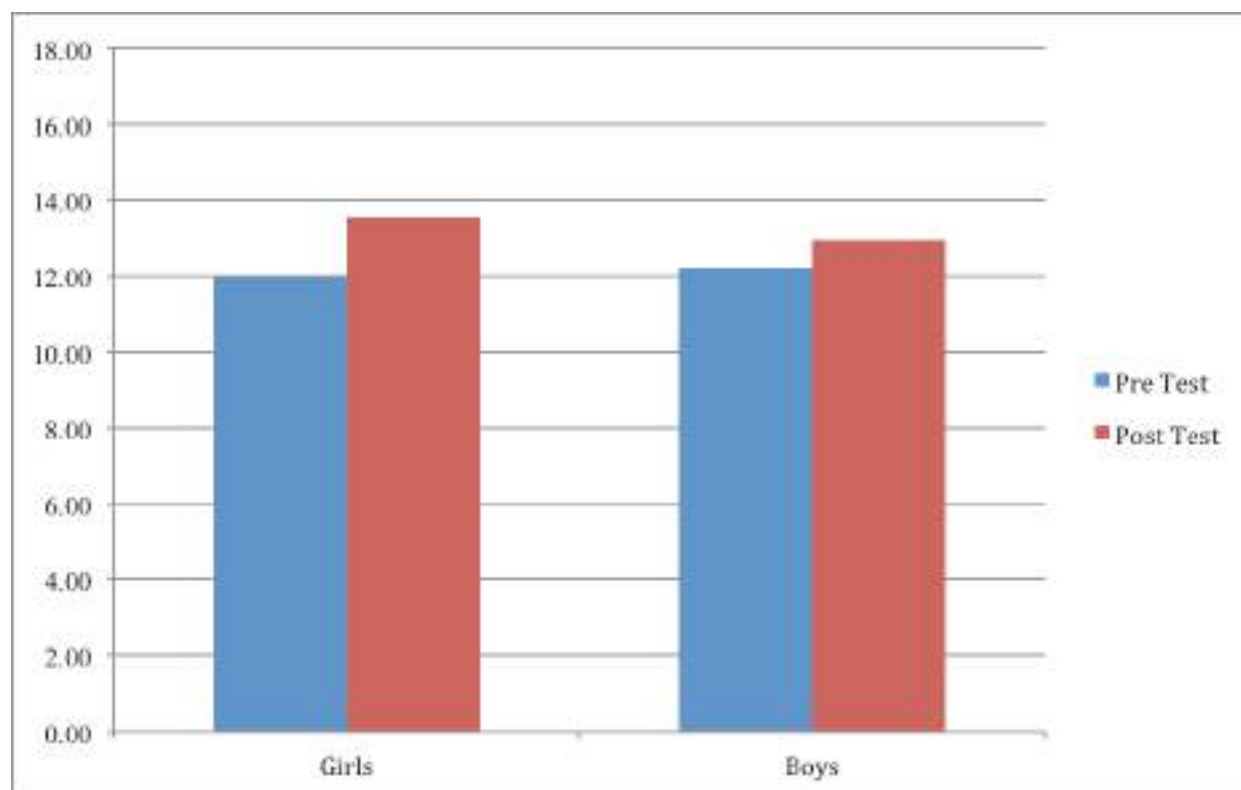


Figure 2: The Impact of Gender on Improving Cohesion in Writing Owing to the Implementation of Peer Feedback

Discussion

The findings of the present study, which indicates that using peer feedback as a teaching tool improves the cohesion in the students' writing, are somewhat inline with the findings of wakabayashi (2013) who accomplished a study with 25 Japanese university students. The study revealed significant increase in the mean scores of those who were benefited from peer feedback. Therefore, it was concluded that peer feedback improved the EFL students' writing skill.

Furthermore, in another study in line the findings of this research, Maarof, Yamat and Li Li (2011) showed that engaging learners in critical evaluation and presenting peer feedback for the purpose of exchanging help for revision can enhance more successful and effective writing. According to the findings of the study it was also concluded that peer feedback could affect the cohesion in writing among EFL learners. Moreover, they concluded that peer feedback encouraged students to participate in the classroom activity and made them less passively teacher dependent.

Findings of the first research question also support the findings of Hyland (2003) who state that peer feedback is one of the effective ways to improve students' writing, and it facilitates further writing development. Hyland and Hyland (2006), also propose that feedback is perceived as an essential element to help writers make better subsequent drafts, which is somehow inline with the findings of the present study.

Moreover, the findings of this study, which revealed that the female learners had more improvement in their writing owing to the implementation of peer feedback, were not in line with the findings of Aljamal (2006) who carried out a research to find out if there were any statistically significant differences between the achievement of the males and females on peer response in the learners writing skill, and he found no notable differences between the male group and the female group in their peer responses.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of peer feedback on cohesion improvement in writing skill among EFL learners. The first research question inquired whether peer feedback had any significant effect on improving cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners. The results of the study indicated that the null hypothesis related to the first research question was rejected, and it was concluded that Peer feedback improved cohesion in writing among upper intermediate EFL learners.

In addition, the second research hypothesis which reiterated that there was no statistical significant difference between the male and female upper intermediate learners' cohesion in writing improvement owing to the implementation of peer feedback" was rejected due to the obtained results. Therefore, it was concluded that gender was an effective factor regarding the improvement in writing cohesion due to the implementation of peer feedback. As the result, the effect of gender was statistically significant and female upper intermediate learners had better outputs regarding improving cohesion in their writing than male learners owing to implementation of Peer feedback.

Like other studies, this research faced a number of limitations and delimitations which have to be considered while attempting to generalize its findings. First, the implemented sampling procedure was convenience sampling from upper intermediate EFL learners in an institute in Kashmar. Convenience sampling can limit the generalizability of the study's findings (Creswell, 2003). Moreover, since there were two classes for each group, it was difficult to make the two classes conditions exactly like each other. Finally, concerning the delimitation which was set by the researcher, the present study was exclusively done on Iranian upper intermediate English learners, who were considered as EFL students.

REFERENCES

- Aljamal, D. (2006). *The Impact of Peer Response in Enhancing Ninth Grader's Writing Skill*, Department of Curricula and Instruction Mu'tah University, Jordan.
- Bijami, M. (2013), peer feedback in learning English writing: advantages and disadvantages, *Journal of Studies in Education*, 3 (4).
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Halliday, M., & Hassan, R. (1976). *cohesion in English*. United Kingdom: Combridge.

- Hinkel, E. (2001). Matters of cohesion in L1 and L2 academic texts. *Applied Language Learning*, 12, 111–132.
- Hyland, K. (2003). *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kennedy, M. (1998). *Theorizing Composition: A Critical sourcebook of theory and scholarship in contemporary composition studies*. Greenwood Press.
- Lundstorm, K., & Baker, W. (2009). To give is better than to receive: The benefits of peer review to the reviewer's own writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18(1), 30-43.
- Maarof, N, Yamat, H. & Li Li, K. (2011). *Role of teacher, peer and teacher-peer feedback in enhancing ESL students' writing*. Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Macpherson, K. (1999). The development of critical thinking skills in undergraduate supervisory management units: Efficacy of student peer assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 24(3), 273-284.
- Mazdayasna, G., & Tahririan, M.H. (2001). Peer-review, teacher feedback and EFL learners' writing development. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)*.
- Paulus, T. M. (1999). The effect of peer and teacher feedback on student writing, *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 265-289.
- Walkabayashi, R. (2013). The effects of the peer feedback process on reviewer' own writing. *English Language Teaching*, 6(9).
- Yang, M., Badger, R., & Yu, Z. (2006). A comparative study of peer and teacher feedback in a Chinese EFL writing class. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 15 (3), 179–200.

INVESTIGATING POLITENESS STRATEGIES FOR USING DISAGREEMENT BY IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS AT DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Maryam Norouzi

(MA, Faculty of Foreign Language/Department of English language and Literature Islamic Azad
University, Maraghe, Iran)

Corresponding author's email: norouzi.maryam27@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of politeness strategies in different disagreement situations by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. The sample involved 50 Iranian students Institute. They were divided equally into intermediate and advance group. A Discourse completion Test (DCT), consisting of five situations in which learners' disagreement strategies was explored. The taxonomy from Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) was employed for counting and analyzing the utterances of disagreement from the responses. The findings of the study revealed that disagreement strategies are related to skills of language, EFL learners acquire pragmatic and linguistic knowledge. To help students realize maximum pragmatic success, teachers need to make their students fully aware of the specific speech act sets and the accompanying linguistic features to produce appropriate and acceptable complaint and other important speech acts. The major findings of this research that, intermediate and advance learners use the same type of strategies, however, they differ in the type and frequency of use of these strategies.

KEYTERMS: disagreement, politeness strategies, speech acts

INTRODUCTION

Defining different speech acts has been established since 1960 (Meijers, 2007), recently there has been a shift towards empirical studies which focus on perception and production of various speech acts by EFL or ESL learners. Flor and Juan (2006) regarded pragmatics as a "linguistic concept related to language use which involves speaker's intentions while communicating utterances as a reaction to Chomsky's abstract construct of language in which grammar played a predominant role" (p. 5). The present study was carried out to achieve the objectives, to identify politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners across different proficiency levels in showing disagreement and to find out the similarities and differences between at two different levels of proficiency (intermediate and advance learners). The findings will help Iranian English language teachers and syllabus designers to explain situations in which students may fail pragmatically and to develop material to handle these problems. The findings may provide the interactant, with knowledge and courage to handle disagreement without impolite or unpleasant conducts, this help the social interactants to developed richer and healthier relationship. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide some worthwhile knowledge into the teaching and training of communication skills in EFL courses. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), disagreement

by its nature is a face-threatening act which threatens the solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. Disagreement by its nature restricts the action environment of the addressee by the way of what he can say or do because it creates a slot in which an answer to the content of the disagreement is expected (Locher, 2001). Due to the complexity of pragmatic instruction and assessment, as well as widespread pragmatic variation, pragmatic instruction is still largely ignored in foreign language classrooms since classrooms attention, focuses mostly on linguistic features of the target forms, rather than the social and cultural aspects so essential to their use (Felix-Bardfer, 2004).

Therefore, based on the result of the other studies, there is a need for further research on the pragmatic competence of Iranian EFL students in all aspects.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical background

This part includes both theoretical and empirical structures. In the theoretical studies section, politeness and speech act theories are highlighted. The other section reviews empirical studies on the speech act of disagreement with the aim of providing a framework for the current investigation.

Pragmatic

The word "pragmatics" refers to "social speech" but in the field of disabilities it has taken on a wider meaning encompassing all skills that involve social interaction. In order to have meaningful interactions with people, one must have a desire to interactions with people, one must have a desire to interact, recognize people as separate beings from one's self, have the capacity for joint attention, physical perspective taking, mental perspective taking, tolerance for differences on the most basic level, understanding of giving and receiving nonverbal cues, and the ability to rapidly interpret and integrate all of this information. All living creatures both emit and interact with each other and survive. When two people communicate, they generally use both verbal and non-verbal language to give and receive signals (pragmatic language). Interpreting and understanding these signals and using inference enable us predict what the other person is feeling or trying to say (Theory of Mind). By understanding this information, conversations happen, relationships build, and social relationships can flourish (social interaction), (leech, 1983).

Politeness

The academic study of politeness was a new field when leech published his first paper on the subject-language and Tact- in 1977, shortly before Brown and Levinson's more extensive and influential study appeared in 1987: 'Universals of language usage: Politeness phenomena.' Since then, the field has grown enormously: Watts (2003) says that he has "a bibliography [on politeness] that contains roughly 1,200 titles and it is growing steadily week by week"(p. 83). There is now an international journal dedicated to this field: the Journal of politeness research, founded in the current year (2005).

Brown and Levinson's seminal treatment of politeness (1987), reissued as a monograph in 1987 has remained the most frequently cited publication on language and politeness. Indeed, since its publication, in spite of heavy criticism, it has held its ground as the model that other writers turn to as the starting-point of their own research perspective. Leech (1983) own treatment of politeness in principles of pragmatics has also often been bracketed with Brown and Levinson (1987) as a pioneering, essentially Gricean treatment of politeness, and has been criticized in a similar way.

Speech act Theory

The speech act theory is largely attributed to the British Philosopher Austin (1962) who claims that many utterances, termed performatives, do not only communicate information, but are equivalent to actions. That is to say, through the use of these utterances, people do things for them; they apologize, promise, request, refuse, complain, etc. utterances that used to realize the above functions are known as speech acts. Just as linguistics have tried to understand how speakers might be able to produce an infinite number of sentences given a very finite set of rules for sentences, philosophers have tried to understand how an infinite number of sentences might reflect a very finite set of functions, the philosophers reasoned that the number of things we do with words is limited, we ought to be able to assign functions to utterances.

The problem with assigning functions to sentences is that speaker's intent and sentence's meanings are not always the same. Speaker intent may be more or less, or actually the opposite, of sentence meaning or function. Nevertheless, philosophers such as Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) have shown that it is possible to classify utterances into a very small set of functions. Austin's original insight was that stating or describing is only one function of language. In fact, he argued, statements do not even have any privileged position.

Empirical Background of the Study

Kotthoff (1993) looked upon disagreement and concession in German and Anglo-American disputes. The findings suggested that the preference structure can change once a dissent-turn-sequence is displayed. Concessions occur when interlocutors are unable to defend their position. This finding showed that "giving up a position that has already been argued for can also be face-threatening because it could be interpreted as submissiveness" (p. 213). It is obvious that interactants are after solidarity which keeps their face.

Nancy Bell (1998) in the paper "politeness in the speech act of Korean ESL learners" examined the production of three face threatening speech acts (disagreement, request, and giving advice suggestion) by a group of high beginning Korean ESL students. This study was conducted in the context of vocabulary grammar elective class which consisted of 11 students. The data which consisted of 29 speech acts including five requests, six suggestions, and eighteen disagreements was collected through audio or video taping of each class meeting. The main framework for data analysis was Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies (five of 10 negative politeness strategies and two of 75 positive politeness strategies were used). By comparing the ESL Korean learners' strategies they use when requesting and giving suggestion, different results obtained. The learners in this study used direct, bald on-record strategies in performing the speech act of

disagreement, but they revealed a high linguistic level and the ability to increase the politeness of the act when making request and giving suggestion. It was argued that sensitivity to status, which in the Korean context includes a great emphasis on age differences, is a major factor for these differences.

Vera (2010) explored the negotiation of (im) politeness carried out by Argentine speakers of English in the discourse of disagreement in simulated business meeting. For this purpose, a corpus consisting of 20 videotaped dyadic business simulations was collected. The participants' whose ages ranged between 20 to 50 years old were all business people with decision-making positions in international companies and with an excellent level of proficiency in English. The data was analyzed from a socio-pragmatic perspective combining Watt's discursive model of relational work with the notion of Graduation and Engagement from Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). The analysis revealed that the speakers draw on a range of different discursive strategies to voice disagreement in business negotiations. These have been summarized into four sub functions, namely Contradictions, Challenges, Counterclaims, and Counterproposals. In the first phase of the negotiation, where participants take a stand and introduce their proposals, very few contracting and challenging acts were detected.

Shrif and Noor (2011) in their article "Disagreement Politeness among Adolescents" examined, some adolescents were deemed guilty of poor L2 spoken politeness due to their low proficiency level. Thus, to identify the extent of this factor, a contrastive study of disagreement politeness between L1 and L2 was carried out where a discourse completion test method [1] was adapted for data induction and taxonomy of disagreement [2] was adopted for data elicitation. Two variables, i.e. social distance and power difference were analyzed. Findings suggested both variables did significantly influence adolescents' spoken disagreement politeness. The research concluded that a polite adolescent might not be bound to a language in adhering to politeness despite the variables.

Regardless of language, place formality, and topic of disagreement, an intuitively polite adolescent may adhere to disagreement politeness strategy. S/he may portray a better disagreement politeness when addressing a friend (-Power) at a formal situation (+Distance) while arguing a formal topic, as opposed to a friend (-Power) at an informal place (-Distance) on an informal topic. This may be due to the greater application of self-denigration in a situation with greater social distance. In a disagreement with someone of higher level of superiority like an educator, adolescents may use less tact depending on the severity of the face threatening situation. The adolescents have been placed under pressure to defend their positive face wants despite the positive power difference (+Power) and social distance (+Distance) (lecturer-student). In general, the students would show a greater disagreement politeness in formal situations (+Distance)/ (+Power). In an informal situation (-Distance) with lower level of superiority (-Power), the students would adhere the least to politeness strategies during disagreement handling.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

The present study investigated the interface of politeness in the realization of disagreement in language data. Politeness is important phenomena in face-to-face interaction. Disagreement is an arena in which this key concept is likely to be observed. In so doing, the aim was to find answers for the following research questions:

1. What are the different disagreement strategies uses by Iranian EFL learners in two different levels of proficiency? (Intermediate and advance).
2. Are there any differences between intermediate and advance Iranian EFL learners in expressing disagreement strategies?
3. What types of politeness strategies are employed by two groups?
4. Are there any differences between intermediate and advance Iranian EFL learners in using politeness strategies?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 50 Iranian learning English at Shoukoh Institute in Iran, Astara. A community sample of 50 EFL learners participated in this study, comprising 25 males and 25 females, their age-range vary between 21to 25. They were all EFL learners studying in language institutes in Astara.

Instruments

Two instruments were employed to obtain the research data. The English Language Proficiency Test (TOEFL Actual Tests 2004), (see appendix I) and Discourse Completion Test (DCT), (see appendix II). The English Language Proficiency Test was used to assure the homogeneity of the Iranian group in terms of their L2 proficiency. This test included fifty listening comprehensions, fifty structures, fifty written expression, and five reading comprehension texts consisting of fifty multiple choice items (see appendix I). Each item was assigned one point, and the overall scores were one hundred and fifty.

Procedure

The approach used in this study was survey based. In order to investigate politeness in the realization of disagreement, the participants in two groups were given DCT which consisted of five scenarios (see appendix II). The questionnaire used here presented a brief description of certain situations, which specified the setting, the social distance between interlocutors and their status relative to each other. When identifying the utterances of disagreement from the responses, the taxonomy from Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) were applied.

In this taxonomy, five types of disagreement: irrelevancy claim, challenge, contradiction, and counterclaim are recognized. Finally, the responses of the learners were compared with Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze the collected data and find an answer for the imposed research questions, the research used SPSS program and frequency of each data at each proficiency level was determined. In this step, the actual disagreement realizations were analyzed. First, the occurrences of the features in question were counted for the intermediate and advance learners. Second, possible relationships between proficiency level and disagreement realizations were analyzed, Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) have identified four types of disagreement: Irrelevancy claims (IC), challenges (CH), contradiction (CT), and Counterclaims (CC). The strategies of avoiding explicit disagreement such as using positive marks, partial agreement and so on can indicate indirectness and being polite in the speech act of disagreement. Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) propose that there exist a fifth type in which disagreement type is the combination of contradictions followed by counterclaims.

Intermediate group expressed their disagreement implicitly (indirect level or off-record strategies) by use of mitigating devices and positive markers. It showed that even the intermediate learners were able to select a polite, conventionally indirect strategy in the L2 and they were careful about face wants of their interlocutors. This study was designed to address the important issue of pragmatic development of disagreement strategies in Iranian EFL learners. The findings of this study provide some evidence of relationship between the learners' level of language proficiency level and type of disagreement strategies. The findings indicated that remarkable components that used in both group were contradictions and counterclaims. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) term disagreement inherently threatens either the hearer's or the speaker's face-wants, and that politeness is involved in redressing those face threatening acts. This is in line with the findings of Pearson (1986) and Beebe and Takahashi (1989) that native speaker's strategies for expressing disagreement are generally characterized by mitigation, that is, by reducing the directness of the disagreement and with it the strength of FTA. Inappropriate performance of learners in different disagreement situations might be resulted from their linguistic limitations. This result is in accordance with the findings of Umar (2006) by Sudanese learners on the speech act of complaint and Jalilifar (2009) by Iranian subjects on request strategies. They found that lower proficiency learners may, to some extents, have pragmatic competence, but they lack sufficient linguistic competence to perform appropriately in a foreign language. The higher the proficiency level, the more appropriately they will utter their disagreements.

The results of this study indicated that disagreement is more severe when it personally threatens the interlocutors' feelings. If primary aims are politeness and maintenance of social harmony, then it would be predicated that fewer politeness markers would be used for less severe disagreement, and more politeness would be used for less severe disagreement. We can find that Iranian learners indirectly disagree with their interlocutors, and learners use more politeness in front of their professor, boss, and his/her friends. In the present study in some instances, this was the case, but not in all.

Table 1: Disagreement to the Supervisor

Types of disagreement	Levels	Frequencies
Irrelevancy claims	Intermediate Advance	4% 0%
challenges	Intermediate Advance	44% 44%
contradictions	Intermediate Advance	36% 24%
counterclaims	Intermediate Advance	12% 28%
contradictions Followed by counterclaim	Intermediate Advance	4% 4%

Table 1 above shows that in the advance level, participants used challenges with the frequency of (44%), counterclaim with the frequency of (28%), contradiction with the frequency of (24%), and contradictions followed by counterclaim with the frequency of (4%). The remarkable components in the intermediate level were challenges with frequency of (44%), contradiction with frequency of (36%), counterclaim (12%), Irrelevancy claim (4%), and contradictions followed by counterclaims (4%).

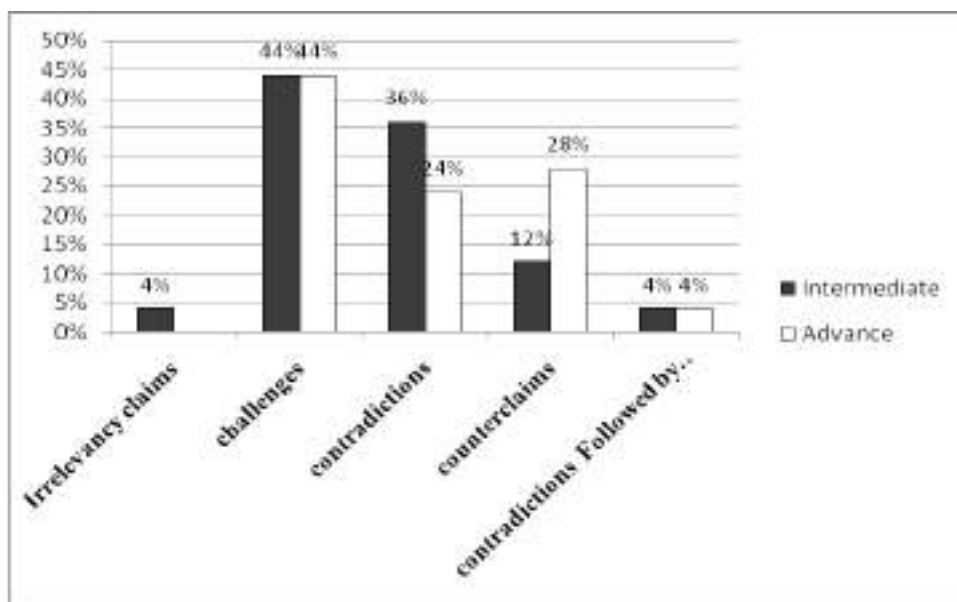
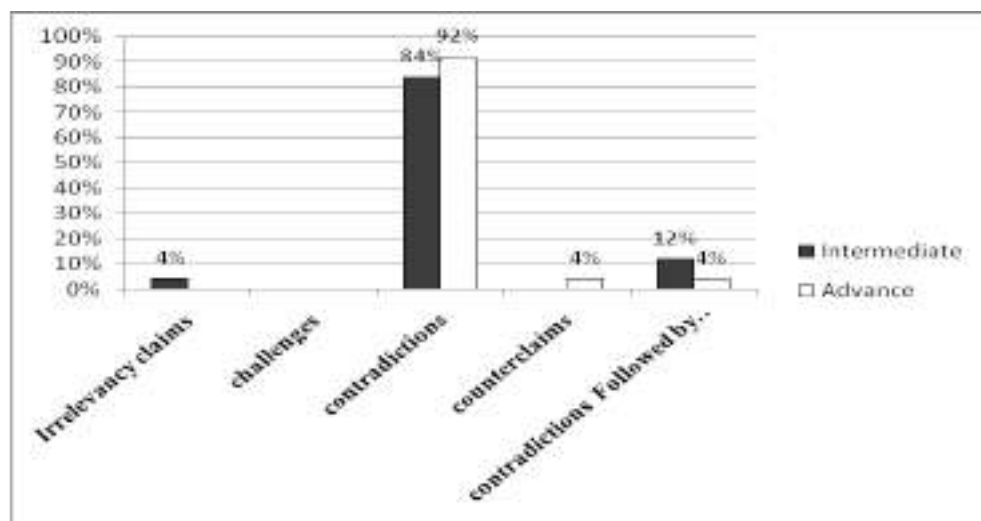


Figure 1: Disagreement to the Supervisor

Table 2: Disagreement to Boss

Types of disagreement	Levels	Frequencies
Irrelevancy claims	Intermediate Advance	4% 0%
challenges	Intermediate Advance	0% 0%
contradictions	Intermediate Advance	84% 92%
counterclaims	Intermediate Advance	0% 4%
contradictions Followed by counterclaims	Intermediate Advance	12% 4%

Table 2 shows that in the intermediate level, participants used contradiction (84%), contradictions followed by counterclaims (12%), and Irrelevancy claim (4%). In the advance level, they used contradiction (92%), counterclaim (4%), and contradiction followed by counterclaim (4%).



In the intermediate level, participants used contradictions followed by counterclaims (28%), Irrelevancy claims (24%), contradiction (20%), counterclaim (16%), and challenges (12%). The advance learners used counterclaim (36%), Irrelevancy claim (28%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (16%), and contradiction (12%), and challenge (8%).

Table 3: Disagreement to Friend

Types of disagreement	Levels	Frequencies
Irrelevancy claims	Intermediate	8%
	Advance	8%
challenges	Intermediate	32%
	Advance	4%
contradictions	Intermediate	8%
	Advance	16%
counterclaims	Intermediate	40%
	Advance	56%
contradictions Followed by counterclaim	Intermediate	12%
	Advance	16%

In this situations intermediate level used counterclaim (40%), challenge (32%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (12%), Irrelevancy claim (8%), and contradiction (8%). In the advance level, they used counterclaims (56%), contradiction (16%), contradiction followed by counterclaim (16%), and Irrelevancy claim (8%), and challenge (4%).

Table 4: Disagreement to Classmate

Types of disagreement	Levels	Frequencies
Irrelevancy claims	Intermediate	24%
	Advance	28%
challenges	Intermediate	12%
	Advance	8%
contradictions	Intermediate	20%
	Advance	12%
counterclaims	Intermediate	16%
	Advance	36%
Contradictions Followed by counterclaim	Intermediate	28%
	Advance	16%

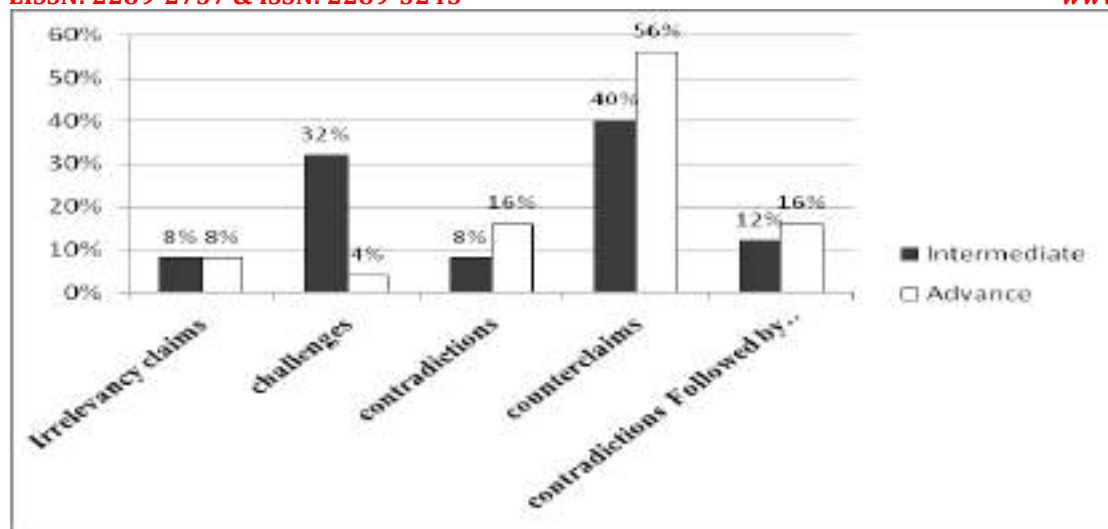


Figure 3: Disagreement to Classmate

Table 5: Disagreement to the Younger sister

Types of disagreement	Levels	Frequencies
Irrelevancy claims	Intermediate	12%
	Advance	12%
challenges	Intermediate	4%
	Advance	8%
contradictions	Intermediate	0%
	Advance	16%
counterclaims	Intermediate	80%
	Advance	48%
contradictions Followed by counterclaim	Intermediate	4%
	Advance	16%

In the intermediate level, participants used counterclaim (80%), Irrelevancy claim (12%), contradiction followed by counterclaims (4%), and challenges (4%). In the advance level, participants used counterclaim (48%), contradictions followed by counterclaims (16%), Irrelevancy claim (12%), contradiction (16%), and challenges (8%).

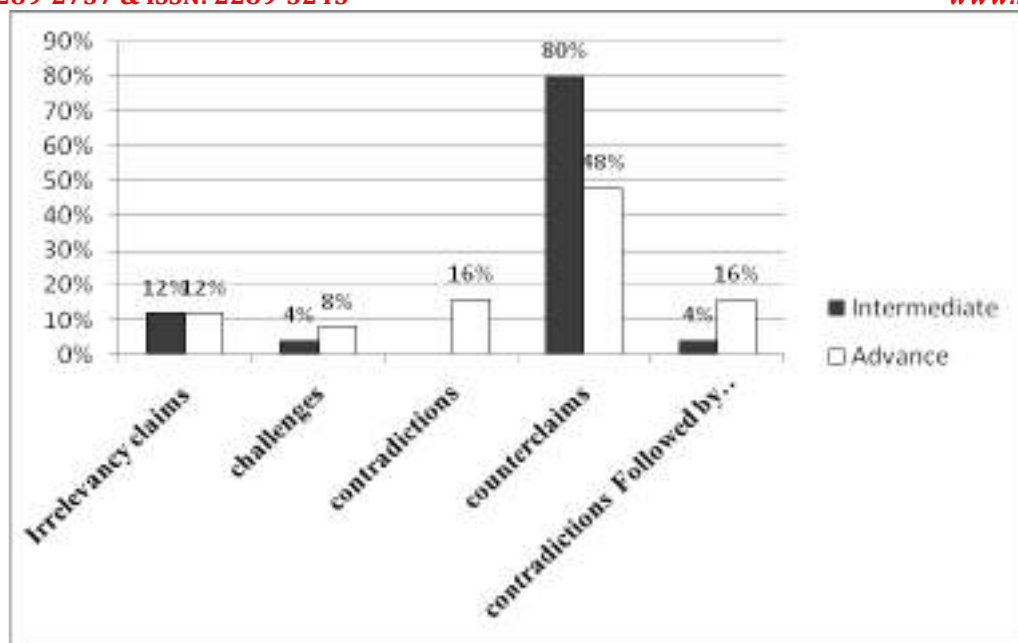


Figure 4: Disagreement to the Younger sister

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Finding of the study revealed that disagreement strategies are related to skills of language. That is, as learning progress, EFL learners acquire pragmatic and linguistic knowledge.

It was revealed that learners are more sensitive to the use of more politeness strategies in disagreeing to the boss, professor, and also their friends. It was found that EFL learners may have access to the range of speech acts and they may have enough pragmatic competence, but they may use just limited number of these strategies due to the lack of linguistic competence.

The use of counterclaims is the first most frequently used strategies, by Iranian EFL learners. It was revealed that with the use of counterclaims, speakers propose an alternative claim that does not directly contradict or challenge other's claim. The strategies of avoiding explicit disagreement can indicate indirectness and being polite in the speech act of disagreement. More importantly, even in the high proficiency levels (advance), EFL learners fail to act out different function of speech appropriately. So, EFL learners must be aware of foreign language pragmatic rules and socio-cultural constraints on speech acts as well as grammatical rules in order to have successful communication. Schmidt (1993) suggested that, if an English language learner is to acquire pragmatics; he/she needs to take into account linguistic functions and the context.

Teacher can develop pragmatic competence in L2 with different speech act set in the materials in their curriculum. Bardovi-Harlig (2003) states that "teaching pragmatics by increasing the pragmatic knowledge of the learners enables them to use and interpret socially appropriate language in particular situation. This in turn will help them to develop a higher level of confidence in their communication abilities"(p. 87).

We need to help our students develop pragmatic of English language norms in both EFL and ESL context.

Certain limitations were imposed on this study. First, the number of participants in this study was 50; the result of the study would be meaningful if we could have access to a large number of participants in different situations and places which might increase the acceptability of the results. Second in order to have clear idea about the issues of politeness strategies focusing disagreement, a comparative study of two different cultures, at different levels may be very beneficial, but this research was conducted only Iranian EFL context. Third if the production questionnaire were in a dialogue form instead, we had the chance of more intact disagreement forms and the results could be different. Results would have been much more reliable if an interview was conducted.

The delimitations of the study are as follow: first, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the wider population due to the relatively restricted number of respondents. Second, due to using DCT as a form of written open ended questionnaire with limited number of situations, the data for the present study was limited to this type of methods were used. If the production questionnaire was in a dialogue form instead, the research had the chance of more intact disagreement forms and the result could be different. The delimitations of this study were the number of context; more contexts would probably have allowed a more manageable data collection and more exhaustive data analysis and results.

RERERENCES

- Austin, J. (1962). How to do things with words. In A.Jaworski & N. Coupland (Eds.), *the discourse reader* (pp. 63-75). New York: Routledge.
- Al-Tayib Umar, A. M. (2006). The speech act of complaint as realized by advanced Sudanese learners of English. Umm Al-Qura University. *Journal of Educational & Social Sciences & Humanities*, 18, 2, Jumada II 1427AH.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Dornyei, Z. (1998). Do language learners recognize pragmatic violations? Pragmatic versus grammatical awareness in instructed LS learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32 (2), 233-262.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Taylor, M. R. (2003). Teaching pragmatics. Retrieved on November 22, 2007 from <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/>
- Beebe K., & Takahashi T. (1989) . Do you have a bag? Social status and patterned variation in second language acquisition. In Gass S. et al. (Eds) *Variation in Second Language acquisition*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Bell, N., (1998). Politeness in the speech of Korean ESL learners. *Penn Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, 14 (1), 25-47.
- Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A Cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied Linguistics*, 5 (3), 196-213.
- Brown, P. (1998). How and why are women more polite: some evidence from a Mayan Community. In: C. Jennifer (Ed.), *language, and gender: A reader* (pp.144-162). Oxford, England: Blackwell.

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1978). "Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena". In E. Goody (Ed), *Questions and politeness: strategies in social interaction* (pp. 56- 289). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Félix-Brasdefer, J. César. (2004). La mitigación en el discurso oral de mexicanos y aprendices de español como 77 lengua extranjera. *Pragmática sociocultural: Estudios sobre el discurso en cortesía en español*, ed. by Diana Bravo and Antonio Briz, 285-299. Spain: Ariel.
- Goffman, Erving, (1967). *Interaction Ritual. Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. Allen Lane: The Penguin Press.
- Grice, H. P. (1975) "Logic and conversation," *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, Cole, P. & Morgan, J. L. (eds.), New York: Academic Press.
- Grimshaw, A. (1990). *Conflict talk: Sociolinguistic investigations of argument in conversations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meijers, A. (2007). Collective Speech acts. *Theory and Decision library*, 41(1), 93-110.
- Muntigl, P. (1995). The Conversational Structure and face implications of everyday arguing. Retrieved August 10, 2010, from <http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/8101>. Muntigl, Peter and Turnbull, William (1998). *Conversational structure and facework*
- Scollon, R., & Wong Scollon, S. (1995). *Intercultural Communication. A discourse approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Turnbull, W. (1992). A conversation approach to explanation, with emphasis on politeness and accounting. In M. L. McLaughlin, M. J. Cody and S. J. Read (Eds.). *Explaining oneself to others: Reasons giving in a social context* (pp. 105-130). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Van Dijk, T. (1977). *Text and context*, London: Longman.
- Vera, V. (2010). *The negotiation of politeness in Business Meeting: A study of Argentine Speakers of English*. Retrieved October 3, 2010, from <http://www.ub.edu.ar/>
- Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge university press.
- Wilson, S., & Meischke, H. (1997). *A revised analysis of directives and face. implications for argument and negotiation*. (pp. 470-480).
- Wood, L., & Kroger, R. (1994). The analysis of facework in discourse: Review and proposal. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 13, 248-277. arguing.

Discourse Completion Test

Five scenarios are described below in which you are expected to disagree with the speaker on different occasions. How would you respond? Please write out what you are to SAY in real life scenarios.

1. Your supervisor questions the originality of the term paper you submit. S/he says to you, "I'm sorry, but I don't think these ideas are yours." However, they are yours. In response, you will say,

"....."

2. You work in a company. Your boss presents you with a plan for reorganization of the department that you are certain will not work. Your boss says isn't it a great plan? In response, you will say,

"....."

3. Your friend makes the following comment on your thesis, "I think you should supply more data to support your arguments. You know, your conclusion is a little bit weak." However, you think that there has been enough evidence and the problem is how to give a better explanation of the data. In response, you will say,

"....."

4. In a seminar class on the effect of modern technology, one of your classmates says, "The so-called modern technology is endangering the environment. It causes too much pollution". However, you believe such problems are only temporary and can be solved gradually. In response, you will say"

"....."

5. You are watching the movie Titanic with your younger sister at home. When the ship is about to sink and the first mate calls out, "Women and children first" to get on the lifeboat, your sister suddenly blurts out, "It's really unfair and prejudiced to women: we're no weaker than men. Why should women instead of men go first with the children?" In your opinion, women are, physically speaking, not as strong as men. Your response will be:

"....."

THE EFFECTS OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON IMPROVING WRITING ABILITY OF INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Parissa Pedram Parsi

MA graduate from Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, Tehran, Iran

Dr. Reza Vahdani Sanavi

Assistant Professor at Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT

The present study was intended to investigate the impact of teaching two techniques on the writing proficiency of Iranian English as Foreign learners (EFL) in Tehran, Iran. To achieve this goal, the researcher selected 45 female intermediate learners of Royan Institute in Tehran based on their performance on the preliminary English test from 70 intermediate level learners. The participants were divided into three groups, two experimental groups and one control group. One experimental group was exposed to Form-Focused Instruction and the other experimental group received Conference Writing and the third group was randomly chosen as the control group. All of groups were tested prior to and after the training of the experimental groups. One way Anova was run to detect any possible differences among the means of the three groups. The statistical procedure indicated that, those students who received the Conference writing treatment outperformed the other groups. Some pedagogical implications were finally inferred in the end. Accordingly, teaching Conference Writing in the English class has a positive impact on the writing proficiency of intermediate EFL learners. It also helps the teachers to incorporate DA into the classes and identify the weaknesses of their learners and provide mediation when and where needed.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic Assessment, Interactionist, Conference Writing, Form-Focused Instruction

INTRODUCTION

Background knowledge

Dynamic Assessment (DA) is based on the theory of development proposed by Vygotsky (1986). When he was studying the development of children's mental abilities, he found out that what a child can do independently only showed a part of the child's full ability and assistance. He further claimed that mediation offered by a teacher can help a child to do more than it was expected of him/her. Based on Vygotsky's theory, what the child can do independently showed a view of the child's post development, but what a child can do after mediation represents the child's future development.

Vygotsky named this difference between what a child can do independently and what the same child can fulfill with assistance, ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). Interaction in the field of the ZPD is a guidance for promoting that development. "According to DA theory, a good

instruction involves assessment and good assessment involves instruction” (Lantlof&Poehner, 2004, p. 2).

Vygotsky (1986) suggested a whole range of possible interactive interventions to be used during ZPD assessment, such as asking leading questions, modeling, starting to solve the tasks and asking students to continue and so on, but he produced no standardized procedure for the ZPD assessment. Vygotsky also made no particular distinction between ZPD assessment and static assessment in content-based learning area (Kozulin & Garb, 2002). The fully operationalized programs for DA of general cognitive functions were developed by Budoff in the USA and Feuerstein in Israel (see Lidz, 1987). Budoff (as cited in Kozulin & Garb, 2002) suggested DA as a better tool for classification of students and prediction of their future achievements, but Feuerstein claimed that the goal of DA is to discover and actualize the students' propensity toward cognitive change. Currently a wide variety of dynamic cognitive assessment procedures is available. What is united in all of these procedures is based on test-teach-test program. And what distinguishes them is the nature of "teaching" that occurs between pre and post-tests (Campione, 1996; Haywood & Tzuriel, 1992; Lidz & Elliot, 2000)

In the Iranian EFL context, despite new methods and approaches which have been successful in other EFL contexts all over the world, most of techniques used to teach writing skill nowadays are still traditional, i.e. the teacher focuses on the end product and does not lead the students through the process of writing (Birjandi & Malmir, 2009).

One of the ways to improve learners' writing skill is the systematic feedback that learners may receive from teachers as it signifies the importance of learning as a process. To have such a formative feedback, through prompts and recasts and conference writing as means of DA, the learners can take the opportunity to actively involve in the process of learning as well as diagnosing the problems and reflecting upon them by means of systematic and effective feedback.

It should be mentioned that, DA is new to applied linguistics and not many practical investigations have been done in the area of language teaching and testing (Birjandi&Sarem, 2012). However, there have been some studies that have explored the applications of these procedures to L2 instructional contexts (Ableeva, 2008; Anton, 2003; Birjandi&Ebadi, 2010; Birjandi,Estaji & Deyhim, 2013; Kozulin & Garb, 2002; Lantlof, 2009; Pishgadam,Barabadi & Kamrood, 2011; Poehner, 2008).

Researchers have been especially interested in how assessment influences students' learning strategies and leaning processes and since students want to proceed and succeed in their studies, they care to know what aspects of their performance are assessed and how. Not only do most assessment results arrive far too late to influence learning but also they are not in a form which can be used by learners to aid their development.

Assessment informs students about their strengths and weaknesses and indicates the following steps to take in the learning process. Through appropriate assessment, students can also make an

active contribution to their knowledge construction, which is beneficial to the learning outcomes. In this research, the researcher used CW as one DA technique and FFI as conventional technique for differentiated instruction, constructivist pedagogy and principles of DA in second language acquisition to address the writing needs of second language learners.

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of DA technique versus conventional technique on English language acquisition and differentiated instruction for intermediate level of foreign language female Iranian students in an Institute.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

DA is an interactive approach to psychological or psycho-educational assessment that embedded intervention within the assessment procedure. Most typically, there is pre-test followed by an intervention and a posttest. This allows the assessor to determine the client or the students' response to the intervention. There are a number of different DA procedures that have a wide variety of content domains. One purpose of DA is to determine if a student had the potential to learn a new skill. DA posits a qualitatively different way of thinking about assessment from how it is traditionally understood by classroom teachers and researchers.

As the researcher mentioned above, DA proceeds from an ontological perspective on human abilities, and it developed more than 80 years ago by Vygotsky. Poehner (2008) pointed out:

Vygotsky's research into the development of cognitive functions revealed that this process is not a matter of innate abilities growing into a mature state, but that it is the emergence of new ways of thinking, acting, and being that result from an individual's engagement in activities, where he or she is supported by cultural artificial and by interactions with others. In this way, the social environment is not merely the stage on which development plays out; it is in fact the driving force of development (p.1).

An important consequence of this view of mental abilities is that observing individual's independent performance reveals, at best, the results of past development.

The Vygotskian approach to education offered that teaching and learning had a leading role in development. This statement was not similar to many leading theories of education including that proposed by Piaget. Vygotsky (1978) suggested that instruction should not wait for developmental readiness, but rather, development happens when learners take part in activities that are beyond their current level of ability and the total combination of assessment and instruction can only be achieved when learner development becomes the aim of educational activities which is the major aim of DA.

If one wishes to understand the processes of development, to intervene, to help individuals overcome difficulties, and to support their ongoing development, then more observation of solo performance is insufficient. Instead, active collaboration with individuals simultaneously reveals the full range of their abilities and promotes their development. "In educational contexts, this

means that assessment (understanding learner's abilities) and instruction (supporting learner's development) are dialectically integrated activities. This pedagogical approach has come to be known as DA" (Poehner, 2008, p.2).

Based on the critical review of DA, Sternberg and his colleague Grigorenko proposed that DA procedures were not only necessary to integrate assessment and instruction but also crucial for insights into the depth of individual's ability. They focused on the poor performance and the specific ways of supporting development. They argued that DA broadened the view of learners' knowledge and abilities and that enabled them to use the result of assessments more effectively and DA principles created a new generation of tests (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002).

Models of DA

Lantlof and Poehner (2004), proposed the terms interventionist and interactionist to describe the two kinds of mediation that DA researchers offered to educators. However, mediation can entail a wide array of support, ranging from standardized hints to dialogic intervention.

Interventionist DA

The first characteristic of interventionist approaches to DA is that the mediation which is given to educators is standardized. The instructors must follow a highly disciplined approach to mediation in which all prompts, hints and leading questions have been prepared in a hierarchical manner, from implicit to explicit, and are usually assigned a numerical value.

The followers of interventionist approach emphasized the incorporation of using psychometric terms which lead to maximizing the assessment objectivity. In this approach learners' performance is measured in a quantified form as scores (Poehner, 2008).

Interactionist DA

Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience: Feuerstein and his colleagues (as cited in Poehner, 2008) conducted the work on the basis that human beings are not closed systems, they are open systems. They showed that with intervention one could develop the human cognitive abilities. Feuerstein's theory called "Structural Cognitive Modifiability" (SCM) suggested that cognitive abilities of human beings are not the same as their biological specifications such as height and color of eyes, but rather they can promote in a variety of ways depending on the quality of interaction and instruction Feuerstein (as cited in Poehner, 2008) It was the same as Vygotskian theory that uniquely human forms of consciousness was rooted in participation in social activities. Feuerstein and his colleagues believed that in educational testing assessment, the ability of individuals begin to change and one can develop their abilities which are very different from their previous ability that they have shown. So this approach is far from the unstated belief that mental abilities were static (Poehner, 2008).

Feuerstein and his colleagues discussed that most education systems predicted the future functioning of learners based on their present performance, "ignoring the possibility that the predicted destiny may not materialize if powerful intervention take place" (Feuerstein et al., 1988, p.83).

In interactionist DA, the important thing is learner development. The flexible and dialogic nature of interactionist DA is used by instructors in classrooms.

Interactionist DA in the Educational Setting

Newman et al. (1989) investigated the development in the classroom setting within the framework of ZPD. They made an important difference between “assessment by teaching”, and “assessment while teaching”. They believed that in a traditional classroom, learning of students has hierarchies that constitute “a sequence of increasingly difficult tasks”. Deciding about how successful the learners are in the class is often measured by achievement tests at a particular stage in the teaching sequence. In assessment while - teaching environments, instruction is not prepared according to ‘a neat sequence of levels to be mastered in an invariant sequence with a single correct route to mastery’. Task and knowledge are chosen based on the teacher's assumptions about how they can be taught from simplicity to complexity, but when teachers and learners involve in instructional activities many unanticipated direction and invariable rates may happen (see Coughlan and Duff, 1994). Teachers always must be prepared for a suitable type of mediation and know how they can use it when learners started to mediate themselves.

Theory in Use: ZPD

Vygotsky (1986) developed the concept of ZPD. It is a way for the teachers to assist their students to have logical thinking and have a schema of scientific concepts which he refers to as a fabric of concepts.

The ZPD shows skills and concepts that a student can successfully obtain if the teacher provides with him/her the assisted performance. It is an important theoretical basis for differentiated instruction. The teacher can provide the students the classrooms with different ability levels, not only in terms of what they can do independently but also in what they can do under conditions of assisted performance.

To conclude, Vygotsky's ZPD shows us a new model of learning. Teacher gives various forms of mediation, and then by giving assistance, the ability of student may mature until it internalizes. There are two important factors in this process: first, teachers can accurately estimate the student's ZPD, the best measure of ZPD will be actual real- time student performance when the teacher has given her/him proper mediation (i.e., teacher observation and reflection). However, the teachers cannot deny the validity of assessment that measures independent performance. Second, the teacher should have given a proper reflection that acts upon this information to choose the right and proper instruction that is truly suitable for the student's ZPD, at least some part of the day must be dedicated to focusing on true learners' needs instead of performing regularly curriculum.

In this research, the researcher used two techniques of TBI(Task Based Instruction) in two classes: FFI & CW.

Form – Focused Instruction

The concept of FFI is related to TBI as a technique of developing grammatical competence within the frame of a communication language approach developed. FFI is not one method, but it

is a combination of methods grading from explicit and planned to implicit and reactive. Long and Robinson (1998) described FFI as a method that shifts our attention from meaning to grammar, similar to what happened in real life when a communication broke down.

Conference Writing Instruction

The researcher in this research tested a new line of inquiry and that is using the writer's conference as a jigsaw task, a two way information-gap task. It is a new way in which the researcher used the writing process as a tool for second language acquisition. As mentioned before, Lightbown (1998) saw one aspect of TBI as a teacher -student dialogue where by the student would self-correct oral grammar through incisive teacher questions. A conference between the teacher (the native or native -like English speaker) and the student (the English language learner) to go over a rough draft through the steps of the writing process for incorporating TBI into classroom considering the writing process.

Vygotsky likened written language to a conversation with a blank piece of paper, lacking both the expressive qualities of oral speech and a live interlocutor, he saw it a highly abstract form of communication that did not repeat the development of speech. Vygotsky (1986) stated that:

Written speech is monologues, it is a conversation with a blank sheet of paper. Thus, writing requires a double abstraction, abstraction from the sound of speech and abstraction from the interlocutor Our studies show that the child has little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it. He feels no need for it and has only a vague idea of its usefulness (p.181).

How can the researchers use this theory in the field of second language acquisition and how can they make it possible for second language learners to improve their writing ability by using these principles? What role does grammar instruction have within the classroom? One proposed answer to these questions raised in the above paragraph is Task Based Instruction (TBI). It represents the middle ground between naturalistic forms of communicative language teaching focused on comprehensible input and traditional language teaching focused almost exclusively on grammar (Ellis, 2003).

In this method TBI through CW students produce discourse about writing. This discourse includes many elements such as content, language, text structure, purpose, reader, writer's intentions, graphic dimensions, etc. In addition to assisting in writing the text, the writing conference also helps the students to produce discourse about writing. This discourse strongly depends on the interaction with the teacher, being linked to the communicative situation in which it occurs, where the student, the teacher, and the text are co-presented. A CW technique can help students in mobilizing the concepts and the words that are needed to provide the written texts that they have produced.

In this research, the researcher uses TBI as a new method for improving the learners' writing ability. There are two techniques which the researcher wants to examine in this research:

- 1) One manifestation of TBI/FFI as a teacher-student dialogue whereby the student would self-correct oral grammar mistakes through teacher questions.
- 2) A one-on-one conference between the teacher (the native or native like speaker) and student (the English language learner) to move a rough draft through the stages of the writing process that could be vehicle for incorporating DA into the classroom.

An Overview of Related Research Studies

A number of research studies have been done on Dynamic Assessment and language improving skills. In their paper titled "A comparative study of the impact of DA models on the writing ability and attitude of Iranian EFL learners" Hassaskhah and Haghparast (2012) revealed the results of their research "DA is considered superior to traditional assessment approaches in that it takes into account the individual differences between the learners, additionally it is development - referenced."

Shrestha and coffin (2011) published their study of DA and academic writing development. They found DA is an assessment approach that blends instruction and assessment. "It consisted interaction between tutor-researcher and two business students across various drafts in line with DA approach, the analyses of such interaction suggested that DA can help to identify and respond to the areas that students need the most support. They concluded that a learning theory- driven approach such as DA helps undergraduate students to develop their academic writing by responding to their individual needs.

In a quantitative study on the using of DA approach for promoting speaking skill of Iranian EFL learners, Shokuohi (2011) tested 80 adult English language learners. She divided the participants into three groups: the control group and the two experimental groups. One experimental group was taught conventional approach and the other was taught DA approach. The findings revealed that the experimental group that using DA approach outperformed the conventional one.

Garb and Kozulin (2002) designed and tested a Dynamic EFL Assessment in a population of at – risk students in Israelian which they concluded that the instructional value of DA lies in the fact that its results can be used for the development of individual learning plans for students with different learning needs. They confirmed that the paradigm of DA is useful not only in the field of general cognitive performance but also in other curricular domain as EFL learning.

In another research Pishghadam, Barabadi and Kamrood (2011) studied the impact of teaching DA and using prompts via developing software on Iranian MA students' reading skill and reported that the participants, when had had opportunity to become familiarized with these techniques and procedures, gained better scores in comparison with the time when they did not use these techniques. This study confirmed that DA in general was useful and helpful for the students.

It is concluded that these studies show outstanding results by teaching DA techniques on improving language skills.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question posed in this study is: Do types of instruction have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

This section provides a thorough description of what was done to take us to the answer of the question posed in this study.

Participants

To investigate the efficacy of each commentary technique of conference writing and form focused writing five female classes including seventy participants in intermediate level were selected. They were students at Royan Institute located in Tehran, Iran. The students in the five classes were studying English “Interchange III” book. In addition, the entire participants had prior training in writing, as it was part of the skills taught by their text- books. A Nelson Quick Test was administered to make sure that the students are at the same level in general language proficiency. The researcher calculated the mean and variability for determining the statistical significance of difference among the five groups. After the scoring process, she compared the means of them by using one way ANOVA. She found out there were outliers, so they were crossed out from the research groups. And 45 participants were selected and divided into three groups: Group A and B as experimental ones and group C as the control group.

The treatment took place after the Institute class hours for group A, 25-30 minutes twice a week for two months and a half. But in group B they wrote their compositions as homework and then brought them to researcher, while group C did not receive any special feedback about writing.

Instrument

The Nelson quick test was used for homogenizing the participants of the study and the preliminary English test (PET) from Cambridge ESOL exams (writing section) was adopted in order to prove that three groups enjoyed the same level writing proficiency prior to the main study. For measuring the reliability of the Nelson test , the researcher used the KR-21 measurement and it was 0.88. (The result has shown in Table1 and Table 2). The researcher used the same PET writing test as the writing post-test at the end of the semester. The classes were held in twenty 105 minutes sessions within two- month and a half period.

Procedure

The study involved three groups of female Iranian adult intermediate learners, with two groups as experimental groups and one group as the control group. They were attending 20 sessions of general English training, and CW group after each session had mini conferences for 25-30 minutes to receive feedback about their compositions. In FFI group students wrote their compositions as homework and then brought them to the researcher to receive feedback and in the control group, they did not receive any special feedback in their writing task. The students’ level for writing proficiency was assessed before and after the training sessions to determine any changes made as a result of the treatments that they received. In order to avoid any threats to the

reliability of the scores, the pretest and posttest were scored by the researcher and a second scorer. The mean of the two scorers' score for each participant was calculated and reported as the participant test score.

Design

The present study employed a quasi-experimental design in its quantitative approach to study the effects of performing FFI and CW techniques on the writing proficiency of two groups of female Iranian adult intermediate English learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using quantitative approach of this study the researcher sought to find the answer to the following question: Do types of instruction have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners?

The data were collected through a quasi-experimental design and analyzed. The SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) software was employed to analyze the data collected from the control group and experimental groups.

Nelson Test of General Language Proficiency

The Nelson test of general language proficiency was administered to 70 students. Based on the mean of 37.93 and standard deviation of 8.27 (Table 4.3), 45 subjects were selected and divided into three equal groups for the main study. The KR-21 reliability for the test was 0.88.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics; NELSON

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	KR-21
Proficiency	70	37.93	8.278	68.531	0.88
Valid N (listwise)	70				

A one-way ANOVA was run to compare the means of the Conference Writing, Form Focused and Control group on the Nelson test in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study. Before discussing the one-way ANOVA results, it is worth mentioning that the three groups enjoyed homogenous variances on the Nelson-test, i.e. their scores did not show markedly different distributions. As displayed in Table 2 the Levene's F-value of .036 was not significant ($P > 0.05$).

Table 2: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0.036	2	42	0.965

Based on the results displayed in Table 3 ($F(2, 42) = .0089$, $P > 0.05$; $\omega^2 = 0.042$ representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between means of the participants in Conference Writing, Form Focused and Control groups on the Nelson test. Thus, it can be claimed that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA; NELSON by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.244	2	0.622	0.089	0.915
Within Groups	293.200	42	6.981		
Total	294.444	44			

As displayed in table 4 means of the learners in CW , FFI, and the control group on the Nelson test are 38.67, 38.93 and 39.07 respectively.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics; NELSON by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Conference Writing	15	38.67	2.690	0.695	37.18	40.16
Form Focused	15	38.93	2.658	0.686	37.46	40.41
Control	15	39.07	2.576	0.665	37.64	40.49
Total	45	38.89	2.587	0.386	38.11	39.67

Another one-way ANOVA was run to compare the means of the students in the two experimental groups and the Control group on the pretest of writing in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study. As displayed in Table 5 means of the CW, FFI and Control group on the pretest of writing test are 12.86, 12.66 and 12.26 respectively.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics; Pretest of Writing by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Conference Writing	15	12.867	2.2318	0.5762	11.631	14.103
Form Focused	15	12.667	2.0931	0.5404	11.508	13.826
Control	15	12.267	2.3135	0.5973	10.985	13.548
Total	45	12.600	2.1784	0.3247	11.946	13.254

The same writing test (PET) was given to the participants after the experiment was carried out. Based on the results displayed in Table 6, it can be concluded that there were significant differences between means of CW, FFI and control group on gained score of writing.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics; Posttest of Writing by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Conference Writing	15	17.467	1.7674	0.4563	16.488	18.445
Form Focused	15	16.067	1.3870	0.3581	15.299	16.835
Control	15	13.133	1.4075	0.3634	12.354	13.913
Total	45	15.556	2.3602	0.3518	14.846	16.265

Thus it can be claimed that the null hypothesis of instruction that the types of instruction did not have any significant effect on the improvement of writing ability of the Iranian EFL learners was rejected, and as displayed in Table 6 the CW group showed a higher gained score on the writing test.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Findings and Conclusion

The first finding of this study indicated a rejection of the null hypothesis, as displayed in Table 4 the CW shows a higher mean score on the posttest writing in comparison with the other groups. Thus, there were statistically significant different among the experimental groups and the control group.

However, the results showed that in the field of Task-Based instruction there is slight difference between two techniques and using DA technique is a new way for assessing the students and it has completed the conventional method of testing.

The overall results of this study showed that using CW as means of dynamic assessment has a major influence on writing ability of the Iranian female adult EFL learners. The findings in this study supported that, what Haywood and Tzuriel (2002) had extracted from several conclusions of DA studies in the educational settings. Test performance improves after teaching or mediation. Almost always mediation leads to greater performance gains. e.g. Burns; 1991; Kester & Pena; 2001, Missiuna & Samuels, 1989 in apply DA in second language contexts.

The findings of this study revealed that DA is not a replacement for static assessment, but a procedure which complements traditional methods of assessing students.

The finding is similar to findings of Birjandi et al. (2013) showed that DA methods are in accordance with conventional methods and there is a slight difference between them. In addition, the findings of this study were different from Van Lier's views (2006, as cited in Hassaskhah & Haghparast, 2012) that saw DA as a threat for dominating testing techniques or because it is too different from the static assessment (Sternberg & Grigrenko, 2002).

On the whole, the privilege of CW found in this study might have been due to the difference in the degree and nature of feedback and depth of metacognition of the learners in the process of assessment resulting in obtaining a deeper view of the criteria for assessment and thus a struggle for achieving those criteria.

As we saw in this research, the nature of collaborative CW between the teachers and students and the co-construction of the entire assessment scheme in the Conference writing group may have played a crucial role in developing the learners' writing ability.

The results of this research indicated that only through interaction and assisted performance can new concepts and ways of thinking can be successfully assimilated into student's existing knowledge base (Bevridge, 1997; Delisi & Golbeck, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986).

Also this study presented another evidence for the effectiveness of getting the learner's involve in the process of assessment. However, what the findings of this study aligned with the literature was that from the two types of procedures, CW technique was significantly more effective in improving students' learning. This might have been due to the fact that CW, based on the feedback that the researcher provided the learner with, learners felt that they can improve their writing competence and build up their writing confidence in the following chain of reflection. Besides, students who used DA, liked activities more than before and stated that internalizing the rules and techniques got easier. Interacting with the teacher revealed students' improvement to themselves clearly and completely, thus their confidence in writing better in the future was built up, and the probability of transferring these experiences in the writing task to a future similar one or more complicated one was definitely reasonable unlike other assessments that set their aims on evaluating the students or providing feedback for their study, the ultimate goal of DA is promoting development.

The researcher hopes this study and similar studies help English teachers to perform better in their classes and help the students to write more accurately and promote their writing ability.

Limitations of the study

Second language acquisition is a complex process that typically spans over many years, but the study took place over a period of only two and a half months; therefore, it was difficult to extrapolate second language acquisition from such a short time frame. Furthermore, one of the major limitations of this study was the small number of participants which limits the conclusions drawn from the results of this study in terms of its generalizability.

Pedagogical Implications

The present study provided empirical evidence on the effect of DA approach on the complexity of Iranian EFL learners' written production and could provide some pedagogical implications in the EFL contexts. Since the study came to a significant result, the researcher aimed to provide some suggestions or ways in order to introduce or improve DA approach in Iranian education context.

The findings supported the theory that dynamic assessment of writing ability is a valid method of improving writing skill. It complements static assessment by providing more elaborate information regarding the students' writing profile (Birjandi et al., 2013).

DA technique may introduce some benefits to the field of writing in second language learning. Therefore, the findings of this investigation may be important for different groups of people within the field. That is to say, their application has to be investigated from the perspective of these beneficiaries of the research.

Foreign Language Learners

EFL learners will profit most from DA, because their writing ability can be more accurately assessed which can in turn lead to higher level of writing performance (Birjandi et al., 2013). If learners' awareness about the benefits of DA technique is raised, it can result in higher degrees of motivation in conducting conference writing and thus improvement of their writing proficiency.

Language Teachers or Testers

Language teachers can also benefit from the results of this study. It provides language teachers with rationale to carry out writing group work activities in class to improve students' writing skill with the focus both on meeting the objectives of the task and assessing the extent to which those objectives are met. It also helps the teachers to incorporate DA into the classes and identify the weaknesses of their learners and provide mediation when and where needed. Moreover, this study by providing practical guidelines in this method gives teachers more confidence to implement DA in to their classes (Hassasskhah & Haghparast, 2012).

Syllabus designers and material developers

This study may be helpful to syllabus designers who need to emphasize more flexibility. In DA, learners are the most important side of the educational program. If the syllabus is not in line with the needs of learners, teacher may take the syllabus designer's role. Therefore, there should be enough flexibility in the syllabi to satisfy the needs of the students. This study may inspire the material developers to develop materials for writing course or workshops focusing on learners' needs, give the possibility of diagnosing the problematic areas to the teachers, and make language courses more relevant to students' needs (Birjandi et al, 2013).

ESP Teachers

In addition, the result of this study may be a great benefit and value to ESP teachers involved in teaching English for specific purposes in which they aim at improving the writing proficiency for a specific purpose. Since in ESP classes, the students' needs are the focus of attention, through interaction of both parties, the learners and the teacher can pave the path to meet the learners' needs. For such teachers it might be necessary to involve the learners in the process of assessment through conference writing to make themselves as well as the learners more sensitive about the needs and interests of the learners and thus, benefit more from the courses.

REFERENCES

- Ableeva, R. (2008). The effects of dynamic assessment on L2 listening comprehension.
In J.P. Lantlof & M. E. Poehner (Eds.). *Sociocultural theory and teaching of second languages*, (pp.57-86.) London, UK: Equinox.
- Antón, M. (2003). *Dynamic Assessment of Advanced Foreign Language Learners*. Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C., March 2003.
- Beveridge, M. (1997). Educational implementation and teaching. In L. Smith, J. Dockrell, & P. Tomlinson (Eds.), *Piaget, Vygotsky and beyond*. (pp. 21-35). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Birjandi, P., Estaji, M., & Deyhim, T. (2013). The impact of dynamic assessment on reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness of reading strategy use in Iranian high school learners. *Iranian Journal of Language Testing*, 3(2).
- Birjandi, P., & Ebadi, S. (2012). Microgenesis in dynamic assessment of learners' socio-cognitive development via web 2.0. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 34-39.
- Birjandi, P., & Malmir, A. (2009). The effect of task-based approach on the Iranian advanced EFL learners' Narrative vs. Expository writing. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 1(2), 1-26.
- Birjandi, P., & Sarem, S. (2012). Dynamic assessment: An evaluation of the current trends in language testing and assessment. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(4), 747-753.
- Burns, S. (1991). Comparison of two types of dynamic assessment with young children. *The International Journal of Dynamic Assessment and Instruction*, 2, 29-42.
- Campione, J. C. (1996). Assisted assessment: A taxonomy of approaches and outline of strengths and weaknesses. In H. Daniels (Ed.), *An Introduction to Vygotsky*, (pp.219-250). London: Routledge.
- Coughlan, P., & Duff, P. (1994). Same task, different activity: analysis of a SLA task from an activity theory perspective. In *Dynamic Assessment: A Vygotskian Approach to Understanding and Promoting L2 Development*. M. E. Poehner. The Pennsylvania State University: Springer.
- De Lisi, R., & Golbeck, S. L. (1999). Implications of Piagetian theory for peer learning. In A. O'Donnell & A. King (Eds.), *Cognitive perspectives on peer learning*. (pp. 3-37). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching task*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y., & Rynders, J. E. (1988). Don't Accept Me as I Am. In *Dynamic Assessment: A Vygotskian Approach to Understanding and Promoting L2 Development*. M. E. Poehner. The Pennsylvania State University: Springer.
- Hassasskhah, J., & Haghparsat, M. (2012). A comparative study of the impact of DA models on the writing ability and attitude of Iranian EFL learners. *The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 5, 38-51.
- Haywood, H.C., & Tzuriel, D. (Eds.) (1992). *Interactive assessment*. New York: Springer.
- Haywood, H.C., & Tzuriel, D. (2002). Applications and challenges in dynamic assessment. *Peabody Journal of education*.
- Kester, E. S., & Pena, E. D. (2001). Outcomes of dynamic assessment with culturally and linguistically diverse students: A comparison three teaching method within a test-teach-test framework. *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology*, 2, 42-49.
- Kozulin, A., & Garb, E. (2002). Dynamic assessment of EFL text comprehension of at-risk students. *School Psychology International*, 23, 112-127.
- Lantolf, J.P., & Poehner, M. E. (2004). Dynamic assessment: bringing the past into the future. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1, 49-74.
- Lantolf, J.P. (2009). Dynamic assessment: The dialectic integration of instruction and assessment. *Lang. Teach.* 42:3, 355-368. Cambridge University.
- Lidz, C. (Ed.). (1987). *Dynamic assessment*. New York: Guilford Press.

- Lidz, C., & Elliott, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Dynamic assessment: Prevailing models and applications*. Oxford: Elsevier Science.
- Lightbown, P. M. (1998). The importance of timing in focus on form. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition*. (pp. 177-196). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M., & Robinson, P. (1998). Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition*. (pp. 15-41). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Missiuna, C., & Samuels, M. (1989). Dynamic assessment of preschool children with special needs: Comparison of mediation and instruction. *Remedial and Special Education*, 10(2), 53-62. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/074193258901000210>.
- Newman, D., Griffin, P., & Cole, M. (1989). The Construction Zone: Working for cognitive change in School. In *Dynamic Assessment: A Vygotskian Approach to Understanding and Promoting L2 Development*. M. E. Poehner. The Pennsylvania State University: Springer.
- Pishghadam, R., Barabadi, E., & kamrood, A. (2011). The differing effect of computerized dynamic assessment of L2 reading comprehension on high and low achievers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2 (6), 1353-1358.
- Poehner, M.E. (2008). *Dynamic assessment: A Vygotskian approach to understanding and promoting L2 development*. The Pennsylvania State University: Springer.
- Shokouhi, S. (2011). *The comparative effect of using two assessment methods on speaking ability of EFL learners* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from Azad Islamic University central branch. Tehran.
- Shrestha, P., & Coffin, C. (2012). Dynamic assessment, tutor mediation and academic writing development. *Assessing Writing*, 17(1), 55-70.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2002). Dynamic Testing. The nature and measurement of learning potential. In *Dynamic Assessment: A Vygotskian Approach to Understanding and Promoting L2 Development*. M. E. Poehner. The Pennsylvania State University: Springer.
- Van Lier, I. (2006). Action-Based Teaching, Autonomy and Identity. In *A comparative study of the impact of DA models on the writing ability and attitude of Iranian EFL learners*. *The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 5, (pp.38-51).
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSE OF BELONGING TO SCHOOL AND EDUCATIONAL JOY WITH ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY IN MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF AHVAZ

Hakim Sahaghi

Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran

Dr. Sirous Alipour Birgani

Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran

Ali Mohammadi

Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran

Arash Jelodari

Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran

ABSTRACT

The aim of current research was to determine the relationship between sense of belonging to school and educational joy with academic self-efficacy. The research is of correlation and predicting type. Statistical population included male high school students of Ahvaz, Iran from whom 180 people were selected using multi stage randomized sampling method. Data were collected using Sakiz's Sense of Belonging to School (2007), Educational Joy Subscale of Pekrun's Progress Emotions Questionnaire (2002) and Patrrick, Hix, and Ryan's (1997) Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, and were analyzed by coefficient correlation and regression analysis methods. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between sense of belonging to school and educational joy with academic self-efficacy. Also, the results obtained from regression analysis in simultaneously entry showed that predicting variables could explain 37% of academic self-efficacy. Furthermore, all of predicting variables play a significant role in predicting academic self-efficacy. Given low level of some students' interest and motivation to course and school and also the high prevalence of learning disabilities and school leaving, the findings of this research could be used by mental health professionals and counsellors in therapeutic institutions and counselling centers.

KEYWORDS: sense of belonging to school, educational joy, academic self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Self-efficacy is a motivational factor which plays a critical role in academic involvement and academic achievements of students (Linenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). Academic self-efficacy is a construct referring to the role of individuals' self-effectiveness beliefs in their abilities, and that more they believe in their abilities, the better their abilities in learning activities is (Boroumand & Sheykhi Fini, 2011). Students with same knowledge, skills, and strategies show notable

differences in occupation, academic performance, and progression in academic tasks. A key motivation for these differences is self-efficacy beliefs. By obtaining some useful information, individuals develop opinions about their abilities for learning. Over time, these opinions become solidified and lead children to perceive themselves as able or less able individuals (Paris & Newman, 1990). Self-efficacy beliefs positively impact on students' use of self-regulate learning strategies, select and occupy career, resistance in difficult situations of task, academic motivation, and academic achievement (Sakiz, 2007). Beliefs, abilities and learning, previous experiences, attitudes, attributions, education style, and social background can affect on students' perceived self-efficacy (Schunk, 1990). Self-efficacy beliefs impact on behavioral (strength, effort, adaptive help seeking), cognitive (use of strategy), metacognitive (awareness of one own cognitions), and motivational engagement in academic tasks (Linenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). When an engagement is done, learning and success that increase self-efficacy and, in turn, engagement, is followed. The results of previous researches show that individuals' beliefs affect on their learning abilities in their approach to new challenges. The students with high self-efficacy specify challenging goals for themselves and become firmly committed to those goals (Bandura, 1997). Perceived self-efficacy has effect on goal set behavior, effort and strength (Zimmerman, Bandura, Martinez-Pons, 1993), stimulate the use of learning strategies (Zimmerman, 2000b), determines the possibility of taking advantage of master opportunities, and impacts on selecting the learning environments (Zimmerman, 1989). Self-efficacy beliefs adjust learning behavior and affect on future expectations and academic achievement (Zimmerman, 2000a).

Sense of belonging to school is one of the factors relating to academic self-efficacy. Sense of belonging to school is a psychological need that leads to positive psychological outcomes (Anderman, 2003). In other words, sense of belonging to school refers to the extent which students feel integration with other peers in school (Gueto, Guerrero, Sugimaru, & Zevallos, 2010). Researches showed that children with low sense of belonging to school led to feeling of estrangement, weak achievement and finally dropout. In contrast, high sense of belongingness leads to high motivation and scores (Juvonen, 2006). Academic emotion is one other constructs that seem to be related to academic self-efficacy. Academic emotions, as other more generic emotions, can be defined as temporal events in certain situation and specified time (Pekrun, 2006). The joy following learning, exhaustion due to class trainings and failures and angers due to difficult tasks are examples of academic emotions. Studies have shown that emotions such as joy, hope, pride, relief, anger, anxiety, shame, frustration, and boredom are significantly related to motivation, use of cognitive resources, learning strategies, self-regulation and academic achievement (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Pekrun (2006) examined the role of variable "teacher" in students' academic emotions and showed that positive reinforcement of teachers has a positive relationship with academic joy and negative relationship with academic anxiety, but academic pressure from teachers has reverse consequence. The relationship between emotions and teacher supporting of competence was significant. The relationship between academic joy and teacher's characteristics (close relationships) is confirmed. Students who perceived their math teachers as supportive, experienced higher academic joy; so, the relationship between teacher affective support with academic joy was positive and significant and with academic frustration was negative and significant (Sakiz, 2007). In several related studies, Goodenow examined the relationship between adolescents' sense of belonging and expectations, values, motivation, effort

and progress. In her first study, Goodenow (1993A) examined the relationship between the sense of membership to the school, the expectation of success, worth. The results showed that the sense of membership to the school was positively, significantly related to expectations of future achievements and academic value but was not statistically significantly related to academic effort or behavior. Goodenow mentioned that the relationship between academic effort and academic achievement may be mediated by motivation. In other research, Goodenow (1993b) examined the relationship between sense of belonging-support, academic motivation, academic effort and achievement in adolescents. Students responded to Motivation environments Inventory Questionnaire of their particular area (expectation of success and educational value), sense of belonging, and personal support in four domains (math, social studies, English and Science), that sense of belonging and class support appeared as the most powerful and highest predictor of adolescents' educational values and expectations of success. Students' perceptions of teachers in terms of teachers' interest, support and respect for student, was the strongest factor associated with the efforts and progress of the students. Other research, Lang, Wong, Fraser (2005) found that teacher's friendly and perceived behaviors, such as listening with interest, being considerate, and sympathy, caused to increase the academic joy of chemistry students. These studies show that, regardless of cultural, developmental, educational, or gender differences, there is a positive relationship between teachers' affective attitudes and students' academic enjoy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. is there a significant relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy?
2. is there a significant relationship between academic effort and academic self-efficacy?
3. is there a significant multiple relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic efforts with academic self-efficacy?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In this study, we sought to examine the following hypotheses:

1. There is a significant relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy.
2. There is a significant relationship between academic effort and academic self-efficacy.
3. There is a significant multiple relationship between sense of belonging to school and academic efforts with academic self-efficacy.

METHODOLOGY

The statistical sample and population

Current study is correlational and predicting. The statistical population of this research consisted of all first high school year male students of high schools of Ahvaz, Iran in academic year of 2014-15. The sampling method of current research was multistage random sampling method; in which, initially two areas among all schools of Ahvaz were selected, from each of which, two schools chose (totally 4 schools); and, then, in next stage, sample groups were randomly simple

selected in proportion to all existing first high school year students of that school; all of students of selected classrooms were used in the sample. Totally, 180 students of high schools of Ahvaz were sampled. In this study, research ethics were completely followed so that participants were ensured about confidentiality of information and they filled questionnaires with full consent and anonymously in a quiet environment.

Research tools

In this research, following questionnaires were used to collecting information:

sense of belonging to school scale

In present research, Sakiz's (2007) perceived sense of belongingness scale was used to measure students' perceived sense of belongingness. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. The sense of belonging to school scale consisted of 8 items (e.g. I am treated as respectful as others in English class) and the evidences of its reliability and validity are reviewed and confirmed. Sakiz (2007), using Cronbach' alpha, obtained .88 for reliability coefficient of sense of belongingness subscale from sense of belongingness scale. Also, he examined the validity of this subscale using confirmatory factorial analysis and the obtained results showed that the structure of this subscale has an acceptable fitness with data. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 71%.

Pekrun's Academic joy Scale

In present research, Sakiz's (2007) academic enjoy scale was used to measure students' academic joy. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. The academic enjoy scale consisted of 6 items (e.g. I enjoy of taking part in English class) and the evidences of its reliability and validity are reviewed and confirmed. Sakiz (2007), using Cronbach' alpha, obtained .83 for reliability coefficient of academic enjoy subscale from academic enjoy scale. Also, he examined the validity of this subscale using confirmatory factorial analysis and the obtained results showed that the structure of this subscale has an acceptable fitness with data. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 88% .

Patrick's Academic Self-Efficacy

This scale is designed by Patrick, Hix, & Ryan (1997); it included 5 items reflecting students' perceptions about their competency in performing class tasks. This scale is a self-report scale which its items are of likert type (1 = fully disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = fully agree) and has made based on existing different tools. Migley et.al. (2000) reported .78 for the reliability of this scale using Cronbach's alpha. Hashemi Sheykh Shobani (2001), using Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown split-half methods, reported .65 and .59, respectively, for reliability. Validity of this construct has been proven in many studies. In another study by Haji Yakhchali (2012), Cronbach's alpha and split-half method were used to examine the reliability of this scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient and split-half for academic self-efficacy scale obtained .73 and .66, respectively, that indicates desirable and acceptable reliability of this test. Also, confirmatory factorial analysis was used to examine the validity of this subscale and the obtained results showed that all of items of academic self-efficacy scale have acceptable factorial loads

bigger than .30 and have positive and significant load on their related factor in level of $p < .0001$. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha for this research was 73%.

Methods of data analysis

The descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the obtained data. Mean, standard deviation, the largest and smallest scores were used in level of descriptive statistics, and correlation coefficient and regression analysis in simultaneously entry way have been used in level of inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table (1) shows the descriptive indices related to the participants' achieved scores in research variable:

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation, smallest and largest scores achieved by participants in research

Index Variable	Mean	Std. Dv.	Largest score	Smallest score
Sense of belonging to school	7.30	1.81	10	2
Academic joy	6.23	2.16	10	2
Academic self-efficacy	7.67	1.70	10	2

Simple correlation coefficients between sense of belonging to school and academic joy are presented table 2.

Table 2: Simple correlation coefficients of research variables

Predicting variable	Criterion variable		
	R	P	N
Sense of belonging to school	.52	.001	180
Academic joy	.43	.001	180

As it can be seen in table (2), there is a positive significant correlation between sense of belonging to school and academic self-efficacy ($p = .001$; $r = .52$). Also, there is a positive significant correlation between academic joy and academic self-efficacy ($p = .001$; $r = .43$).

In order to exploratory analyses, regression analysis in simultaneously entry way was used, in which academic self-efficacy as criterion variable, and sense of belonging to school and academic joy as predicting variables entered into the formula. The results of regression analysis is shown in table 3.

Table 3: The results regression analysis of sense of belonging and academic joy with academic self-efficacy (Enter method)

Predicting variables	Multiple relationship (MR)	The coefficient of determination (RS)	F ratio P possibility	Regression coefficient (β) and (B)		
				1	2	3
1- sense of belonging	.531	.29	F = 39.22 P < .001	B = .411 B = .385 t = 6.26 P < .001	-	-
2-academic joy	.615	.371	F = 21.73 P < .001	B = .315 B = .295 t = 4.07 P < .001	B = .194 B = .153 t = 2.50 P < .001	-

As it can be seen in table (3), based on results of multiple regression analysis and with simultaneously entry, multiple correlation coefficient for the linear combination of sense of belonging and academic joy with academic self-efficacy was $RM = .61$ and coefficient of determination was $SR = .371$ that are significant at level of $p < .001$. With regard to the results of table 3 and obtained coefficient of correlation, it is cleared that about 38 percent of variance of the variable of students' academic self-efficacy could be explained by the variables of sense of belonging to school and academic joy. Therefore, Given the importance and impact of academic joy and feeling of belonging to school on students' self-efficacy, it is recommended that ministry of education improves the background of students' sense of self-efficacy and attachment to school with regard to their interests and longings, revision of some certain theoretical and boring lessons, turning into motivational strategies through inclusion of functional and practical lessons, enrichment of educational settings and applying appropriate patterns of education.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this research was to examine the relationship of sense of belonging to school and academic joy with self-efficacy beliefs. In general, the results of correlation analysis shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between sense of belongingness and academic self-efficacy, and also between academic joy and academic self-efficacy. The results obtained of testing this hypothesis are consistent with the results of Sakiz (2007), Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martin-Pons (1992). Students who enjoy the feeling of belonging to the school and had more education, higher education in the classroom demonstrated efficacy. is a high-risk behaviors among students. In line with our expectations in a positive sense with fun educational, academic self-efficacy was directly related. Sense of belonging is more conducive to experience positive emotions while its failure to experience negative emotions were derived from research findings Bamysr and Leary (1995) were aligned. That is, students having higher sense of belonging to school and academic joy, expressed higher academic self-efficacy in class. Bond et. al. (2007) in their research named "social belongingness and belonging to school as predictors of academic performance and mental health," concluded that belonging to school is a supportive factor in positive academic outputs and reducing high risk behaviors among students. According to many researches have been done in this area, increasing the sense of belonging to school have positive relationship between and effects on students' motivation and self-efficacy, thereby, leads to their

academic achievements. Consistent with our expectations, sense of belongingness was positively, significantly related to academic joy, and directly with academic self-efficacy. Students who expressed higher sense of belongingness in class, experienced more academic joy, less frustration, and more academic self-efficacy in classes. Higher sense of belongingness would lead to experiencing positive emotions, while its nonexistence would lead to experiencing negative emotions, that these findings were consistent with Baumister and Leary's (1995) researches.

Academic joy is an active positive emotion that is experienced when engaging in a joyful, pleasant, satisfying task (Pekrun, 1992). Positive academic emotions may have positive effects on students' academic achievement by increased mediating of motivation and flexible learning actions (Pekrun et. al., 2002). For example, experiencing hope, joy, or proud can lead to increased academic self-efficacy, motivation and more engagement in tasks, while experiencing anxiety, sadness, frustration, shame, or anger can lead to worse motivation that could, in turn, lead to less engagement and more avoidance (Pekrun, 1992). In learning settings, lack of joy and interest to tasks would lead to feeling of boredom along with feeling of despair and separation of activities (Hamilton, 1983).

Limitations of the study

Among the limitations of the present study was that the study was conducted on male high school students. Therefore, generalization to female students or lower levels is not possible. In this study, questionnaires were exclusively used. Because of this reason, there may be a bias in obtained information. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to other cities and cultures.

REFERENCES

- Boroumand, R., & sheykhi Fini, A. A. (2011). Predicting academic performance of math lesson through motivational beliefs (self-efficacy, internal valuing, and test anxiety). *Educational Psychological Studies of Hormozgan University*, 6 (10), 19-34.
- Haji yakhchali, A. (2001). Simple and multiple relationship of goal-directed expertisism and its relationship with its selected consequences in first high school year male students of Ahvaz. MA thesis of educational psychology, faculty of education and psychology, Shahid chamran University.
- Hashemi Sheykh Shobani, E. (2001). Relationship of some important Variable related to academic self-disabling and its relationship with its selected consequences in first high school year male students of Ahvaz. MA thesis of educational psychology, faculty of education and psychology, Shahid chamran University.
- Anderman, L. H. (2003). Academic and social perception as predictors of change in middle school student sense of school belonging. *Journal of Experimantal Education*, 72(1), 5-22.
- Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W.H. Freeman & Company.
- Baumeister, R.F. & Leary, M.R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117, 497–529.

- Bond, L., Butler, H., Thomas, L., Carlin, J., Glover, S., Bows, G., & Patton, G. (2007). Social and School Connectedness in Early Secondary School as Predictors of Late Teenage Substance Use, Mental Health, and Academic Outcomes, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 40 (4), 10-18
- Goodenow, C. (1993a). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools*, 30, 79-90.
- Goodenow, C. (1993b). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: Relationships to motivation and achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 13, 21-43.
- Gueto, S., Guerrero, G., Sugimaru, C., & Zevallos, A. M. (2010). Sense of belonging and transition to high school in Peru. *International journal of Educational Development*, 30, 277-287.
- Hamilton, J. A. (1983). Development of interest and enjoyment in adolescence. Part II. Boredom and Psychopathology. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 12(5), 363-372.
- Juvonen, J. (2006). Sense of belonging, social bonds, and school functioning. In P. Alexander, & P. Winn (Eds.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology*, Second ed. Macmillan, New York, p. 655-674
- Lang, Q. C., Wong, A., F. L., & Fraser, B. J. (2005). Teacher-student interaction and gifted students' attitudes toward chemistry in laboratory classrooms in Singapore. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 40(1), 18-28.
- Linenbrink, E. A., & Pintrich, P. R. (2003). The role of self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement and learning in the classroom. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 19, 119-137.
- Midgley, C., Maehr, M. L., Hruda, L., Anderman, E. M., Anderman, L., Freeman, K. E., Gheen, M., Kaplan, A., Kumar, R., Middleton, M. J., Nelson, J., Roeser, R., & Urdan, T. (2000). *Manual for the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS)*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan
- Paris, S. G., & Newman, R. S. (1990). Developmental aspects of self-regulated learning, *Educational Psychologists*, 25(1), 87-102.
- Pekrun, R. (2006). The control-value theory of achievement emotions: Assumptions, corollaries, and implications for educational research and practice. *Educational Psychology Review*, 18, 315-341.
- Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., Titz, W., & Perry, R. P. (2002). Academic emotions in students' self-regulated learning and achievement: A program of qualitative and quantitative research. *Educational Psychologist*, 37(2), 91-106.
- Sakiz, G. (2007). Does teacher affective support matter? *An investigation of the relationship among perceived teacher affective support, sense of belonging, academic emotions, academic self-efficacy beliefs, and academic effort in middle school mathematics classroom*. A dissertation presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctor philosophy in the graduate school of the Ohio state University.
- Schunk, D. H. (1990). Goal setting and self-efficacy during self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychologists*, 25(1), 71-86.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (1989). Models of self-regulated learning and academic achievement: In B.J. Zimmerman & D. Schunk (Eds.), *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theory, research and practice* (pp.1-25). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000a). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 82-91.

- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000b). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P.R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation*, (pp. 13- 39). San Diego, CA: Academic Press
- Zimmerman, B. J., Bandura, A., & Martinez-Pons, M. (1992). Self-motivation for academic attainment: The role of self-efficacy beliefs and personal goal setting, *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(3), 663-676.

A CLOSE LOOK AT LESSON PLAN, LANGUAGE AND POWER IN EFL CLASSROOM

Ahmad R. Beigi Rizi¹

(PhD Candidate, University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran)
arbeigi@fgn.ui.ac.ir

Dr. Azizollah Dabaghi

(Assistant Professor, University of Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran)
azizollahd@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

The social language forms of English as foreign language (EFL) teachers help them dominate their students through the application of lesson plans in a classroom context. The present review paper attempts to examine the classroom lesson plan, language and power in teaching English in a foreign language classroom by reviewing the application of a lesson plan in an EFL class, language, power and lesson plan and presenting some evidence for techniques of power in pedagogical interaction. It studies language and power across the application of a lesson plan in the EFL classroom context, the paper concludes that how the lesson plan of a foreign language teacher shapes the classroom discourse and power and how language teachers in turn have the capacity to create and impose discourses. The article concludes that the lesson plan and teacher's talk play a crucial role in the exercise of power through the language of classroom teacher and both language teachers and mentors can benefit from the role of the lesson plan in the classroom context and finally recommends the future generation of digital classroom lesson plans.

KEYWORDS: Critical Discourse Analysis, Lesson plan, language and power, TEFL, mentoring software

INTRODUCTION

Within the different cultural contexts of modern society the concept of power and its manipulation and persuasive form is omnipresent. Power has also been studied in the educational context by many authors who have evidenced its importance not only within a particular community but also in any place in which interaction occurs (Ramos, 2004). Power from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective is a principal condition of educational context; it is not static but dynamic and is generated as a natural effect of human beings' interactions and circulates among participants (Orellana, 1996; Wodak & Meyer, 2001; Fairclough, 2003; Ramos, 2004)

¹ Correspondence: Ahmad Reza Beigi Rizi, Email: arbeigi@fgn.ui.ac.ir

According to Fairclough (1989) “different approaches to the study of language have been developed such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence, conversation analysis and discourse analysis” (p. 6). He claims that that “these approaches have failed to give appropriate consideration to the social aspects of language” (Fairclough 1989, p. 13); therefore, he proposes critical language study (CLS) as an alternative orientation to language study. While making some use of all of the aforementioned approaches, the proposed approach attempts to go beyond them and provides a synthesis of necessary theoretical concepts and analytical framework for doing critical analyses (Fairclough 1989, p. 14). This approach focuses on social interactions analyzing linguistic elements to show the hidden agendas and effects they bring about (Fairclough 1989, p. 40). Critical discourse analysts focus on “relations between discourse, power, dominance and social inequality” (van Dijk, 1993, p.249) and how discourse (re)produces and maintains these relations of dominance and inequality. Because of their concern with the analysis of the “often opaque relationships” between discourse practices and wider social and cultural structures, CDA practitioners take an “explicit socio-political stance” (van Dijk, 1993, p.252). In this respect, CDA is different from the other main, and more descriptive, approach to institutional discourse, conversation analysis (CA).

What is the role of language in CDA in relation to power? One way to answer this question is to show how the power is exercised in the society. According to Fairclough (1989) power in any society is exercised by means of two instruments: coercion and consent (p. 33). He contends that *ideology* is the primary means of manufacturing consent which is presented through the channel of language (Fairclough 1989, p. 17).

In an EFL classroom, language is a means of interaction for teaching, learning, classroom management, creating motivation and etc. According to Schiffirin (1994) such complicated interactions are signaled, constructed, and delineated not only by one’s linguistic structure and communicative style but also by subtle and elaborate features of social identity, affect, and implied meanings that reflect both broad social features like role relationships and more narrow social meanings like interpersonal significance (Cited in Ball 2005, p. 64). These features of language, teachers application of lesson plans, classroom discourse and the teachers and students perceptions grow together to form the phenomenon of interactional power in the EFL classroom environment.

APPLICATION OF A LESSON PLAN IN AN EFL CLASS

Many researchers such as James (1992) and Knop (1982) have offered the importance of lesson plans for planning foreign language lessons. On the other hand many foreign language programs of language institutes, colleges and universities are designed to help students achieve certain goals. Typically, these goals include listening comprehension (and, sometimes viewing the comprehension in listening), speaking and writing ability, understanding the culture(s), the perspectives of different cultures, the history or literary traditions of the people who speak the language (Rifkin, 2003, p.169).

Any language program has definite features, for example according to Swaffar, Arens, and Byrnes (1991) as typical teaching strategies, students should be provided with opportunities to use the language to express personalized meanings and to listen, view, and read authentic texts; the students are also required to study grammar outside of class so that communicative activities could be emphasized during the class time (Rifkin, 2003, p.169).

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages has recommend ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), Proficiency Guidelines National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006), (refer to Appendix A) for all levels of instructions because they offer an appropriate framework for the organization of the foreign language curriculum. The language teaching field needs the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as a series of descriptors identifying degrees of success in communication in each of the four language skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

There is plenty of evidence from foreign language curricula, lesson plans, students' textbooks and the literature Pasternak and Bailey (2004), Nakata (2010). This shows that teaching English language proficiency is planned and organized to suggest that English language proficiency is an important aspect of EFL teaching plans and teacher proficiency. Pasternak and Bailey offer a convincing look at "language teacher proficiency". They believe There are varying degrees of language teacher proficiency and whether or not a teacher is proficient depends on how we define the multifaceted construct of proficiency (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004, p. 163). According to Omaggio-Hadley (2000) teachers need to spend a lot of attention to both the development of students' receptive and productive skills. For the productive skills of speaking and writing, Omaggio-Hadley also has suggested the teachers to provide instruction that balances the development of students' speaking or writing fluency and the development of accuracy of not only grammar, but also syntax, pronunciation and intonation, lexicon, etc. (Rifkin, 2003, p.170). While planning and organizing a lesson plan, foreign language teachers should focus on both accuracy-focused activities and fluency-focused activities Richards (2002, p. 13). According to Oxford (1999) "if only accuracy-focused activities are practiced some students may drive away from language studies and if too many fluency-focused activities are applied students may fail to develop an understanding of the grammar and syntax of the target language and the lack of mastery of syntax and grammar may eventually slow down their desire to reach higher levels of language proficiency and some students develop this type of anxiety into permanent anxiety" (pp. 58-67). Therefor a lesson plan needs to shape a balance of accuracy-and fluency-focused activities. National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006) which provide standards for foreign language learning in this century recommend some proficiency guidelines that offer foreign language teachers a framework of functions or task hierarchies that can be used to construct a curriculum, leading learners from task to task as they improve their skills at using the target language to communicate. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (National Standards, 2006) provide teachers with direction as to what the content of courses might be. (See Appendix A)

According to Fox and Diaz-Greenberg (2006) the national standards represented an important modification in the understanding of the teaching and learning dynamic this is reflected in the

adaptation of the national standards, which have shifted from an emphasis on teaching to a focus on learning. This way, students become more important actors—as primary clients, consumers, and learners.

As Conrad (2011) explained the most important factor in what a student learns is what the student does, not what the teacher does. Therefore, [his] approach to teaching is to give primary attention to the activities the students can engage in that will best help them achieve the course goals and outcomes, rather than what [he] as the teacher will do. [His] focus is on choosing what reading, what homework assignments, and what projects will present them with opportunities to learn. (p.1)

The national standards present five broad areas known as “Five Cs” for foreign language learning: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Each “C” which is supposed to be a standard area has a few sub goals that are content-oriented (see Appendix A). The standards provide foreign language teachers approximately at many levels of instruction with direction as to the types of content they can use to fill their curricula. For example, according to the standards for foreign language learning available on line at: (http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf) for the first “C” or communication the first standard is that: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

This standard focuses on interpersonal communication, that is, direct oral or written communication between individuals who are in personal contact. In most modern languages, students can quite quickly learn a number of phrases that will permit them to interact with each other. In the course of their study, they will grow in their ability to converse in a culturally appropriate manner. So for example with this standard at:

Grade 4: Students ask and answer questions about such things as family, school events, and celebrations in person or via letters, e-mail, or audio and video tapes.

Grade 8: Students exchange information about personal events, memorable experiences, and other school subjects with peers and/or members of the target cultures.

Grade 12: Students exchange, support, and discuss their opinions and individual perspectives with peers and / or speakers of the target language on a variety of topics dealing with contemporary and historical issues.

Guidelines for language teaching create conditions for successful language teaching and learning that is why creating a lesson plan help language teachers to visualize the different steps of language teaching.

LANGUAGE, POWER AND LESSON PLAN

Teaching according to Haynes (2010) is considered to be a three-step activity. The first step consists of planning and preparation activities – required before teaching a class; the second activities consist of classroom management, teaching and learning in the classroom; and the third

activities consist of assessment, with associated activities such as recording and reporting, and evaluation that take place after the lesson (p.1). The metaphor of teaching as a three-step activity does, however, have some disadvantages. It encourages one to think that the third step – assessment, evaluation and review – is the end of the process and it discourages us to think about the growing critical awareness of language (Haynes 2010, p.1).

According to Fairclough (1989) the following reasons can help us to infer that it is essential to focus on critical language study (CLS) in the development of a lesson plan in an EFL class:

1. Fairclough (1989) cares about how CLS might contribute to the emancipation of those who are dominated and oppressed in our society. (p.233)
 - In developing a lesson plan teachers need to know how CLS might contribute to the emancipation of students who are dominated and oppressed in an EFL classroom.
2. He argued that *critical language awareness*, based upon CLS, should be a significant objective of language education, and there are *some suggestions about methods for developing it*. The main reason for this choice of focus is its current relevance, given the major changes in educational policy and practice which are being implemented or planned. (p.233)
 - Language awareness, based upon critical language study (CLS), should be a one of the objective of lesson planning, and we need to research the suggestions about methods for developing it. The main reason for this choice of focus is its current relevance, given the major changes in educational policy and practice which are being implemented or planned.
3. He also said that one of his purposes in writing ... was to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation. (p.233)
 - This article helps increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of students by teachers, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.
4. He supports the fact that from the perspective of CLS, there is nothing to object to in the idea that the development of children's language capabilities requires that they and their teachers have some 'model' of language, but the view of language and discourse is radically different from the instrumental conception (task-oriented language teaching). And since CLS ascribes richer and weightier social significance to language, it has a correspondingly wider view of language education. (p.237)
 - Since the development of children's language capabilities requires that they and their teachers have some 'model' of language, from the perspective of CLS the development of the lesson plans should be focused on.
5. Fairclough (1989) has recommended the following terms of references for a 'model' of language
 - 1) A model of the English language, whether spoken or written which would (i) serve as the basis of how teachers are trained to understand how the English language works; (ii) inform professional discussion of all aspects of English teaching. (p.237)

- 2) The principles which should guide teachers on how far and in what ways the model should be made explicit to pupils, to make them conscious of how language is used in a range of contexts. (p.237)
 - 3) What, in general terms, pupils need to know about how the English language works and in consequence what they should have been taught and be expected to understand on this score at age 7, 11 and 16. (p.238)
6. He also agreed that education, by contrast, is not just passing things on (though it is partly that); it is developing the child's critical consciousness of her environment and her critical self-consciousness, and her capacity to contribute to the shaping and reshaping of her social world. (p.238, 239)
7. He also concludes that 'language awareness' should be an element in the school, curriculum though the content of existing language awareness programmes is generally by no means critical! (p.239)
8. He recommends us how children should be taught about language and suggests a four-part cycle: (p.242)
 - (i) Reflection on experience: children are asked to reflect upon their own discourse and their experience of social constraints upon it, and to share their reflections with the class.
 - (ii) Systematizing experience: the teacher shows the children how to express these reflections in a systematic form, giving them the status of 'knowledge'.
 - (iii) Explanation: this knowledge becomes an object of further collective reflection and analysis by the class, and social explanations are sought (level 2 of language awareness above).
 - (iv) Developing practice: the awareness resulting from (i)-(iii) is used to develop the child's capacity for purposeful discourse. (p.242)
9. An example by Fairclough (1989) is that:

“One focus might be children's experience of writing, with the aim of extending their capacity to use written language into domains which the majority of people are conventionally excluded from, such as the writing of history. There is nothing novel about this exercise; it is the sort of thing that many English teachers do. But what they do not generally do is systematically tie it to the development of critical awareness in the way I am suggesting.” (p.243)
10. In terms of the cycle, Fairclough (1989) believes that the teacher might proceed with the exercise as follows: (p.243)
 - (i) Reflection on experience: ask the children to think about and describe the purposes for which they use writing as opposed to speech, what they think writing 'is for', purposes for which writing is used by others but not by them, and their perceptions of which uses of writing have most social prestige (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).
 - (ii) Systematizing experience: present a systematic account of differences of function between speech and writing, the social prestige of various uses of writing, and the distribution of access to prestigious uses (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).
 - (iii) Explanation: use (i) and (ii) as the basis for class reflection on the social reasons to access to prestigious uses of writing being restricted; focusing upon history, and social

constraints on who writes history, as well as its subject matter, the language in which it is written, and so forth (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).

(iv) Developing practice: set up a history-writing project for the children, in which they are encouraged to stretch or break conventions for history writing by: (a) writing a history of a grouping, such as women or children in their local community, whose history is not normally written; (b) wanting in a language, such as one of the minority languages or a non-standard variety of English, which is not normally used for such purposes; (c) being serious historians themselves, by writing for a real purpose rather than just as an exercise - they might be encouraged, for example, to place copies of their histories in a local library (Fairclough, 1989, p.243).

Finally To sum up, Fairclough (1989) has suggested on the basis of his two guiding principles the development of children's language capabilities should proceed through bringing together their existing abilities and experiences, their growing critical awareness of language, and their growing capacity to engage in purposeful discourse. (Fairclough, 1989, p.244)

EVIDENCE FOR TECHNIQUES OF POWER IN PEDAGOGICAL INTERACTION

In classroom communication the teachers control the students through the discourse they construct. One can simply examine language and power in a TEFL setting, showing how classroom communication is shaped by discourse and how teachers in turn have the capacity to create and impose discourse. In this section an example of teacher-student talk is examined through the teacher's lesson plan to show some forms that "discourse as social control" takes within the context of the classroom. Table 1 is a lesson plan of the fifth session of a twenty - session advanced foreign language class of an EFL teacher, each session lasts for one hour and thirty minutes.

Table 1: The lesson plan of the fifth session of Advanced Part One Class

Advanced Part One		
Time(min)	Items	Pages
2	Warm Up	
10	Review & oral evaluation	
5	Spotlight On Testing Part 2	3
5	Classroom Resource Activities	
12	Classroom Work Book	7
23	Classroom Text Book	11, 12
10	Fluency	
10	Teacher's Recourse Activities	
10	Video	
1	Assignments for the next session	
2	Warm Down	

Note: The lesson plan of the fifth session of a twenty - session advanced foreign language class of an EFL teacher, (Retrieved with permission from Payampersa Language Institute, Zarrinshahr, Isfahan, Iran, www.payampersa.ir, Class ID: 4980).

The lesson plan (**Table 1**) shows the tendency of the *teacher* or *the mentors of the institution* in teaching and controlling the language teaching in the EFL class. The items of exercises are chosen and written in the order the teacher or the institution has preferred.

The following selected observed discourse is based on the recorded film and the present lesson plan of the teacher in table 1.

Table 2: An extracted classroom interaction between the teacher and the students

... after the two-minute warm up

- (1) **Teacher:** the previous session we practiced how to talk about “things we have in common” & “things we have which are different. Any questions? O.K, Let review and practice on some sample sentences. Please repeat after me: “Juan’s been to Brazil, and so have I.”
- (2) All Students repeat.
- (3) **Teacher:** He tried snowboarding, but I haven’t.
- (4) All Students repeat. ...
- (5) **Teacher:** ... Now. We’re going to er review the previous session exercises we were doing last session on “things we have in common” & “things we have which are different”. Ok let’s have a dialogue with our partners by using the expressions on page nine exercise 3 and talk about things we have in common & things we have which are different from each other.
- (6) **Sina:** Which one should we talk about first “things in common” or “things different”?
- (7) **Teacher:** It really doesn’t matter which one. ... Yes, Saddi can I help you?
- (8) **Saddi:** Can we first practice the sentences on “Synonyms in context” in exercise 2, and then review your exercise 1.
- (9) **Teacher:** It is a wonderful idea, but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first because it is part of the lesson plan.
- (10) **Saddi:** Yes, thank you. (*Saddi agrees with the teacher*)
- (11) **Teacher:** Ok. Let’s start.
(... Students start pair work ... and the teacher walks among the students and gives feedback to the students.)

Note: (Retrieved with permission from the recorded film from Payampersa Language Institute, Zarinshahr, Isfahan, Iran, www.payampersa.ir, Date: February 3, 2015, Time: 20:00 to 21:30)

DISCUSSION

The lesson plan (**Table 1**) shows the tendency of the teacher or the mentors of the institution in teaching and controlling the language teaching in the EFL class. The items of exercises are chosen and written in the order the teacher or the institution has preferred. The teacher has the lesson plan before the class starts and the students of the class are not aware of the teacher’s lesson plan which is a constraint on the students. By these features the teacher practices power and teaches English as foreign language in the classroom. In this sample lesson plan the time spent on warm up or warm down have been considered to be short which is a controlling feature. According to Thomas et al. (2004) “Language has a key role in transforming power into right and obedience into duty. Some scholars would go further and say that language is the arena where the concepts of right (both in the sense of entitlement and in the sense of what is morally acceptable) and duty are created, and thus language actually creates power, as well as being a site where power is performed.” (p.10). In this lesson plan the time allowed to be spent on warm up or warm down is short to control the classroom talk so that more time is spent on the application of

language for other items in teaching English as foreign language. The lesson plan controls the amount of classroom interaction between the EFL teacher and the students. So the *time, the order and the kind of lesson plan items* are all the controlling features of the classroom interactions and of course the connection between language use and unequal relations of power particularly in EFL classroom. A lesson plan shows how the conventions for teaching and learning among the institutions, teachers and the students represent common sense assumptions which treat authority and hierarchy as natural. The teacher knows about teaching and learning but the students don't. The teacher is in a position to determine how a learning and teaching should be dealt with but the students aren't. It is right and natural that the institutions and the teachers should make the educational decisions and control the course of teaching and learning and the students should obey and cooperate. A well-organized lesson plan can make teaching English more powerful and control the forms of language that are used. The proponents of learner-centered pedagogy believe that teachers and learners should share power and that learners should have more control over their educational process (Nunan, 1988). The proponents of other pedagogies may have other beliefs, whatever they are the lesson plan plays an important role in the use of language in the classroom and control of power.

In this discourse sequence (**Table 2**) which is based on the present lesson plan of the teacher in table 1, the teacher's or the mentor's tendency in operating the class has been presented. The teacher tries to attempt to establish some continuity between the last session's work and the task he wishes the students to engage in, (turn (1)). Prior to engaging the students in the task, the teacher checks their understanding and their ability in producing the correct structures of the task by eliciting from them what he thinks are the main features they should bear in mind, by providing feedback (turns (2), (4), (9)). In turn (9) the teacher refrains from providing direct answer himself, because in this way he can both check the students' knowledge and help present this knowledge as something owned by the students as well as himself. By the way, learners should get involved with new knowledge if they want to consolidate their own understanding. And this is achieved through trying to use this knowledge on their own. According to Mercer (1995), "in order to be successful in the process of creating knowledge in classrooms, themes must emerge and continue, teachers should offer, accept and revisit explanations and understanding must be consolidated" (p. 68). In sequence 1, the teacher tries to make students focus, review and produce structures such as "and so have I", "but I haven't", "neither do I", "nor am I".

One reason is that according to Richards (2002) it is now accepted that models for oral interaction cannot be based simply on the intuitions or applied linguists and textbook writers should be informed by the findings of conversation analysis and corpus analysis of real speech and the frequency of fixed utterances or conversational routines in spoken language has been revealed to be important. (p.17)

In his lesson plan (Table 1), the teacher tries to control the students by asking them to focus, review and produce the intended structures by classroom pair work. Moreover, there are some features that, not only show the teacher's control over the students, but also enact this very control. For example, in turns (8), (9) the teacher controls the student very politely and does not

let the student change the direction of teaching and the teacher's tendency by saying "It is a wonderful idea, but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first because it is part of the lesson plan." This way the teacher places constraints on what the student should do. Here the exercise of power is polite, direct and intentional. The student is persuaded and accepts the constraint because he was encouraged by the sentence "It is a wonderful idea" and then the student is persuaded by "but this exercise is very important and should be practiced first" and the teacher probably stops the student(s) from changing the direction of language teaching by saying "because it is part of the lesson plan" and the students follow the teacher's tendency and the lesson plan. In this sequence a technique of power is applied in which language is given a central role. According to Foucault (1983) these "techniques of power" are pervasive in the classroom. This sentence according to Fairclough (1989) is a kind of "discourse which involves the more or less self-conscious application of social scientific knowledge for purposes of bureaucratic control" (p.213).

CONCLUSION

This article has outlined why the topics of the lesson plans, language and power might be worth studying in the context of EFL classroom and why we are assuming that the three topics are related. This review article has tried to show that at some ways the lesson plans, language and power are related. The study of language in the context of EFL classroom is worthwhile because it is such an important part of all our language teaching. The classroom discourse which is created by teachers by planning and applying the lesson plans in the classroom helps teachers to dominate students scientifically, educationally and more socially accepted.

Lesson plan and *teacher's talk* seem to play a crucial role in the exercise of power through the language of classroom teacher. Thus classroom discourse of the teacher which has risen from the application of preplanned lesson plan may directly and coercively enact power, through the teacher's directive discourse, and through the applicable laws and regulations of lesson plans, or the pre planned instructions by the teacher or the mentor of the institution via language teachers. Power may also be manifested more indirectly in discourse, as representation in the form of an expression, description, or legitimation of powerful actors or their actions and ideologies. Power may also be manifested more indirectly in the teacher's discourse and the application of the lesson plan because the *time*, the *order* and the *kind of lesson plan items* are all the controlling features of the classroom interactions and of course the connection between language use and unequal relations of power particularly in EFL classroom. The time, the order and the kind of lesson plan items forces the language teacher to produce special expressions or descriptions in the classroom. The presence of the lesson plan also legitimates the teacher's activity and discourse in the classroom. The teacher's knowledge, lesson plan and his authority seems to have made the teacher, the powerful actor of his classroom actions and ideologies or the mentor's ideologies and the mentor's expected classroom actions and discourse via the classroom teacher.

Another implication is that language teachers and the EFL mentors can learn a great deal about how EFL classroom discourse is structured, how it functions, and what the most widespread, but

sometimes invisible, assumptions about different lesson plans, groups of students and teachers in the classrooms are.

Language teachers can also find this knowledge valuable because it contributes to their understanding of themselves and their relationships with students, their lesson plans and the institution. Knowledge about the lesson plans, language and power may enable language teachers to make choices in their language use which make them feel better about themselves. Language teachers can also find knowledge about the areas discussed in this article valuable because it can be used to challenge what they perceive as unfairness in the classroom.

The next implication is that the mentors and language trainers can show and teach the importance of the socially accepted language forms of EFL language teachers through the application of lesson plans in a classroom context by using the critical discourse analysis of language that the lesson plans can give to pre service, in service and advanced teachers. For example if the language teachers are younger than the language learners or as old the learners the correct and socially accepted domination of the learners by the teachers would be useful to control and teach the students.

Language teachers in universities, schools, language institutes and other educational institutions use their lesson plans and language with a variety of aims and goals especially for the educational ones. A typical example of one of these goals is to lead the students' learning tasks and activities along guidelines specified by a curriculum or a teacher's or the institution lesson plan, and to construct a version of educational knowledge, i.e., a metalanguage, which is believed to be important for the negotiation of each of the educational topics and subjects taught in the classroom context.

For further research, it is recommended to create a mentoring computer software and place the digital lesson plans and the controlling educational materials on the monitors and show and apply the lesson plans in the classroom context and research the manipulation of power through the application of more tangible lesson plans for the language learners. In this case the mentors can develop the lesson plans and more advanced and detailed new plans can be prepared and applied in the classroom and new directive discourse can be taught to the language teachers by closely looking at the digital lesson plans, language and power in EFL classrooms.

REFERENCES

- Ball, M. J. (Ed.) (2005). *Clinical Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Conrad Phillip T. (2011). Teaching Statement. Prepared for review for promotion to LSOE-08/11/2011, Teaching Philosophy. Available online at: http://www.cs.ucsb.edu/~pconrad/review2011/pdf/Conrad_LSOECase_TeachingStatement_0811.pdf
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Foucault, M. (1983). *The subject and power*. In H. L. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow (Eds.), Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics (2nd ed., pp. 208-226). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fox, R., & Diaz-Greenberg, R. (2006). Culture, multiculturalism, and foreign/world language standards in U.S. teacher preparation programs: Toward a discourse of dissonance. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(3), 401-422. doi:10.1080/02619760600795270
- Haynes A. (2010). *The Complete Guide to Lesson Planning and Preparation*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- James, C. (1992). What Tas need to know to teach according to the new paradigm. In J. Walz (Ed.), Development and supervision of teaching assistants in foreign languages (pp. 135-1521), *AAUSC Series Issues in Language Program Direction*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Knop, C. (1982). Overview, prime, drill, check: an approach to guiding student teachers in lesson-planning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 15, 91-94.
- Nakata Y. (2010). Improving the Classroom Language Proficiency of Non-native Teachers of English: What and How?, *RELJ Journal* 41(1), pp. 76-90. DOI: 10.1177/0033688210362617
- National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006). *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century*. Lawrence, KS: Allen Press, Inc. pp. 36-38.
- Nunan, D. (1988). *The learner-centered curriculum: A study in second language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2000). *Teaching language in context*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Orellana, M. (1996). Negotiating power through language in classroom meetings. *Linguistics and Education*, pp. 335-365.
- Oxford, R. (1999). *Anxiety and Language Learner: New Insights*. In J. Arnold, Affect in Language Learning (pp. 58-67). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pasternak M., & Bailey KM. (2004). *Preparing Nonnative and Native English-speaking Teachers: Issues of Professionalism and Proficiency*. In Kamhi-Stein LD (ed.) Learning and Teaching from Experience: Perspectives on Nonnative English-speaking Professionals. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 155-75.
- Ramos, B. (2004). *Power Relation in the EFL class through oral interaction* (Master's thesis). Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá.
- Richards JC. (2002). 30 Years of tefl/ TesL: A personal Reflection; *SEAMEO Regional Language Center*, Singapor
- Rifkin B. (2003). Guidelines for Foreign Language Lesson Planning. *Foreign Language Annals*. VOL. 36, NO. 2
- Swaffar, J., Arens, K., & Bymes, H. (1991). *Reading for meaning: An integrated approach to language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Thomas L., Wareing S., Singh I., Peccsei J., Thornborrow J., Jones J. (2004). *Language, Society and Power An introduction*. 2nd Edition, Routledge Publication,
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993) *Elite Discourse and Racism*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.

APPENDIX A

The “Five Cs” of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning*

Goal 1: Communication

Standard 1.1- Interpersonal Communication: Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feeling and emotion, and exchange opinions.

Standard 1.2 – Interpretive Communication: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

Standard 1.3 – Presentational Communication: Students present information, concepts and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Goal 2: Cultures

Standard 2.1 – Practices and Perspective: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

Standard 2.2 – Products and Perspectives: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Goal 3: Connections

Standard 3.1 – Knowledge of Other Disciplines: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Standard 3.2 – Distinctive Viewpoints: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

Goal 4: Comparisons

Standard 4.1 – Nature of Language: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

Standard 4.2 – Culture: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Goal 5: Community

Standard 5.1 – Beyond the School Setting: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

Standard 5.2 – Life-long Learners: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Notes: National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (2006). Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century. Lawrence, KS: Allen Press, Inc. pp. 36-38.

National Standards for Foreign Language Education: <http://www.actfl.org/node/192>, Standards for Foreign Language Learning, Preparing for the 21st Century http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf

THE ROLE OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA) IN TRANSLATIONS OF THE BOOK: AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY, FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES; ON THE BASIS OF FAIRCLOUGH'S MODEL

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran

*Head of the English Department for M.A Studies, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran
Branch, Tehran, Iran
Baradaranabdollah@yahoo.com*

Dr. Masoud seid Motahari

*Associate Professor, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch,
lauenglishdepartment@outlook.com*

Nasir Manafzadegan

*Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
Nasir.manaf814@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The receptor language and culture entail obligatory features that shape the possible interpretations of the translation, as well as extending the meaning of the translation in directions other than those inherent in the source text. Adopting Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with particular emphasis on the framework of Fairclough (1989), the present investigation was an attempt to shed light on the relationship between language and ideology involved in translation in general, and more specifically, to uncover the underlying ideological assumptions invisible in texts, both source text (ST) and (TT), and consequently ascertain whether or not translators' ideologies are imposed in their translations. The corpus consisted of the full text of the source text and two different Persian translations of the book: An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives by Abbott and Pamela. In this investigation, a detailed contrastive, comparative study at the micro-level included explanation of lexical items and grammatical choices conducted to examine, describe and subsequently interpret the patterns at the macro level in English source text and its Persian translated versions. From the finding of the study we realize just how important it is to be conscious of the ideology that underlies a translation. It is essential to know what the translator has added, what he has left out, the words he has chosen, and how he has placed them. Because behind every one of his selections there is a voluntary act that reveals his history and socio-political milieu that surrounds him, in other words, his own culture.

KEYWORDS: CDA, Ideology, Translation Studies, Feminism, cultural turn, Discourse

INTRODUCTION

“Translation study is classified as the new academic discipline related to the study of the theory in addition to phenomena of translation. By its nature it was multilingual and also interdisciplinary, surrounding languages, linguistics, communication studies, philosophy and numerous types of cultural studies.” (Munday , 2001,p.1). “How must we know when a translation can be good? This straightforward question lied in the middle of all concerns along with translation criticism. But not only this, in wanting to assess the grade of a translation one additionally addresses the heart of virtually any theory of translation, I. e., the question with the nature of translation or maybe, more specially, the nature with the relationship concerning a supply text and its translation text.” (House , 2001,p. 243).

“The study of translation in charged political contexts illustrated the relationship between discourse and power, and showed that, as a site where discourses meet and compete, translation negotiates power relations. But the working of power is not simply “top down” a matter of inexorable repression and constraint: instead, translation, like other cultural activities, can be mobilized for counter discourses and subversion, or for any number of mediating positions in between.” (Gentzler&Tymoczko, 2002, p.xiv) Thus, the main aim of CDA within TS is to disclose the underlying and often implicit ideological and power relations in spoken and written discourse. Fairclough and Wodak (1997,p.258) described the aim of CDA as to make the “ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them” more visible. Within CDA, this was often done on such basis as discourse in one language and one culture. With regards to translation, however, “textual functions, ideological contexts, and root relations involving power employ both for the source text message and culture also to the target text and also culture” (Schäffner, 2004, p.16).

In TS, certain aspects of CDA have been applied to analyze the ideological motivations behind translators’ text linguistic choices in the TT and the translator’s role in the interpretation process of the intended meaning of the ST and the production of a new TT. The main purpose of this research was to employ Norman Fairclough’s model (1989) as a framework for CDA in the analysis of TTs in translation of one single sociology book titled “*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*” written by Pamela Abbott& Claire Wallace in English. Finally, the present research mainly attempted to learn the main ideological assumptions veiled inside the text messaging, equally source text (ST) and target text (TT), therefore to make sure whether the translators’ ideologies were added to their particular translations; in other words, to recognize where translators according to their own ideological concepts used various techniques from what the author used inside the text.

“Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) also mediated among linguistic structures as evident in text and the social, political, and historical contexts of text production and reception.” (Schäffner, 2004, p.22). This research studied the textual or discursive manifestations of power structures and ideologies and their specific linguistic realizations at lexical and grammatical levels on the basis of Fairclough’s model. This research tried to answer the following questions:

LITERATURE REVIEW

The field of critical discourse analysis

“Critical discourse analysis provided theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains.” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, P.71). critical discourse analysis was viewed as integrating (a) analysis of text, (b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption and distribution, and (c) sociocultural analysis of the discursive event (be it an interview, a scientific paper, or a conversation) (Fairclough, 1995, P.23).

Critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough

Fairclough (1995a, p.135) applied the concept of discourse in three different ways. “1) discourse described language use as social practice. 2) discourse was understood as the kind of language used within a specific field, such as political or scientific discourse. 3) discourse was used as a count noun (a discourse, the discourse, the discourses, discourses) referring to a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective. For example, a feminist discourse, a neoliberal discourse, a Marxist discourse, a consumer discourse.” (As cited in Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, PP.77-78). His model was based on the assumption that language was an irreducible part of social life. The dialectic relation between language and social reality was realized through social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse) and social structures (languages) (Fairclough, 2003, P.24).

In his research, Fairclough attempted to uncover ideological and power patterns in texts. Fairclough provided a tripartite framework for the analysis of text and discourse: 1) the linguistic description of the formal properties of the text; 2) the interpretation of the relationship between the discursive processes/interaction and the text, where text was the end product of a process of text production and as a resource in the process of text interpretation and lastly, 3) the explanation of the relationship between discourse and social and cultural reality.

Description, interpretation, explanation

“Description was the first stage of the CDA, which included the analysis of the texture of texts” (Fairclough, 2003, P.158). “Formal textual elements related to the social world according to three types of value: experiential, relational and expressive. The experiential value was concerned with the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world (content, knowledge and beliefs). Relational value reflected the social relationships, which were enacted via text in discourse. Expressive value showed the producer’s evaluation of the reality (attitude towards subjects and social identities)”. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 112). Interpretation deals with the understanding of meaning embedded in texts. The level of interpretation was concerned with participant’s text production and text interpretation (understanding). According to Gee (1999, p.17) “was the knowledge of language plus action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools and places of events that are recognizable to people as a particular type of identity that may engage in a particular type of activity. The explanation stage in CDA saw discourse as a part of processes of social struggle and power relations. It showed how discourses were determined by social structures and what reproductive effects discourses have on those structures.

Political discourse analysis: topics and methods

Political discourse analysis was concerned with the analysis of political discourse. Political discourse has been described as “a complex form of human activity” (Chilton & Schäffner, 1997, p.207). Political situations and processes can be linked to discourse types and levels of discourse organization by way of four strategic functions as an intermediate level. She proposed the following four functions: “(i) coercion; (ii) resistance, opposition and protest; (iii) dissimulation; (iv) legitimization and delegitimization.” (Schäffner, 2004, p.3).

Translation and CDA

Main characteristics of the field

The first business of the translator was to translate. A text may therefore be pulled in five different directions, as followed: “(1) the individual style or idiolect of the SL author. When should it be (a) preserved, (b) normalised (2) the conventional grammatical and lexical usage for this type of text, depending on the topic and the situation. (3) Content items referring specifically to the SL, or third language (i.e. not SL or TL) cultures. (4) The typical format of a text in a book, periodical, newspaper, etc., as influenced by tradition at the time. (5) The views and prejudices of the translator, which may be personal and subjective, or may be social and cultural, involving the translator's 'group loyalty factor', which may reflect the national, political, ethnic, religious, social class, sex, etc. assumptions of the translator” (Newmark, 1998, p.5).

Translation, ideology and power

Ideology, for Fairclough, was ‘meaning in the service of power’ (Fairclough, 1995b, p.14). More precisely, he understood ideologies as constructions of meaning that contribute to the production, reproduction and transformation of relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992b, p.87). “In the 1950s and 1960s, practicing translators began consciously to calibrate their translation techniques to achieve effects they wished to produce in their audiences, whether those effects were religious faith, consumption of products, or literary success. In short translators began to realize how translated texts could manipulate readers to achieve desired.” (Gentzler & Tymoczko, 2002).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) To what extent do the translators change the ideological position of Abbott and Wallace in the translations of the book: “*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*” with recourse to Fairclough’s model for CDA?
- 2) Which translation strategies produce which results and which effects?
- 3) Which particular sociocultural and ideological constraints influence the translation policy in general and the target text production in particular?

METHODOLOGY

Corpus of the study

Identifying regularities in the behavior of several translators at the same time in the same culture can help to establish which particular general concept of translation prevailed in a particular community at a particular time. An empirical and historical perspective also allows to study the

dominant ideology in the translations of the book "*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*" in two different period of time. one of them in 1997 (in the Second decade of Islamic Republic) and the other in 2001 (in the Third decade of Islamic Republic) with considering the knowledge of people about the feminist perspectives.

The data for this research are the translations of the book "*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*" and also 'pretexts', e.g. translator's prefaces, footnotes, the whole discourse on translation. This research has thus paved the way to developing a history of translation and a sociology of translation in the second and third decades of Islamic Republic. The researcher believed that the selected book provides for the analysis and comparison of an original and its translation on three different levels: the ideology of translators, the ideology of authors of the book and "translation equivalence". "Equivalence" is the fundamental criterion of translation quality.

In seeking the above-mentioned objectives, an illustrative corpus of the two full-text Persian translations of one single politically sensitive book titled "*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*" written by Pamela Abbott and Claire Wallacel in English had been determined. Thus, the material employed in this kind of research had been separated into three groups:

- 1) Source Text: Abbott, P & Wallacel, C. (1997). *An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*. LONDAN, Routledge.
- 2) Trget text translator: KHorasani, M & Ahmadi, H. (در امدی بر جامعه شناسی نگرشهای) (1376). Tehran: Donyayeh Madar Publication.
- 3) Trget text translator: Najm Aragi, M (جامعه شناسی زنان) (1380): Tehran: Ney Publication.

Theoretical framework

This research in Fairclough's (1989) model framework is concerned with the dominant ideology in translation with trying to find out what happens in the mind of translators. The CDA framework described in this thesis was based on three stages of analysis defined by Norman Fairclough (1989), i.e. description (text-linguistic analysis), interpretation (assigning pragmatic values to textual features) and explanation (the social and situational context in terms of power and ideological struggle).

Procedure

The researcher read some chapters of the selected book randomly and compared it with the available translations in the second and third decades of the Islamic Republic of Iran to see how the ideologically loaded lexemes were rendered in Persian language considering the socio-cultural and ideological nuances of the time. The researcher use Fairclough's model as the basis for the analyzing the ideological effects of the translators in the two translations of the book "*An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*". The analytical model involves 97 sentences for analyzing the vocabulary and 50 sentences for analyzing the grammar that surveyed at the micro and macro levels.

Collecting the data

Data collection of the present research starts by presenting examples of authentic translations of the book *"An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives."* In the second and third decades of Islamic Republic, commenting on them from the point of view of TS. These examples political effects caused by specific translation solutions; the processes by which information is transferred via translation to another culture; and the structure and function of equally valid texts in their respective cultures. After a brief survey of the discipline of Translation Studies, chosen parts in the first and the second translation has been critically studied to determine the frequency of translation strategies, The translators may have used strategies to make the text correspond to the genre conventions that apply in the target culture, or to compensate for different background knowledge or sensibilities of the new addressees.

Be that as it may, the more or less subtle differences between the English and the Persian language text reflect different ideological phenomena, both texts thus serving as windows onto ideologies in the two political cultures. These differences based on CDA rules, however, was presented in tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research in interpreting the translator's intention and procedures, the researcher was here not criticising them but attempting to understand why he had used these procedures. In considering the ideology of translated texts, the researcher did not take the points successively; He grouped them selectively under general heads: on the basis of Fairclough; s(1989) at the micro level he studied experiential, relational and expressive values and at the macro level surveyed interpretation and explanation.

Micro level analysis

Description: text analysis

Fairclough (1989) explained three values with regard to studying vocabulary and grammar at the micro level. The three values of analysis were experiential, relational and expressive. This part of the paper starts by presenting examples of authentic translations of selected book, commenting on them from the point of view of TS. These examples show the method of researcher in data analysis. Table 1 below shows the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in Experiential values of vocabulary analysis. Fairclough's (1989) gives four major cases for experiential values of vocabulary analysis: synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy and overwording.

As Table 1 shows that in TT2 Najm Aragi in the third decades of Islamic translated all 97 items of the ST into overwording (23 items); hyponymy (31 items); synonymy (31 items) and antonymy (3 items), and in comparison with TT1 in the second decades of Islamic Republic as it has been shown in table 1 KHorasani and Ahmadi translated all 97 items of the ST into overwording(26 items); synonymy (70 items) the frequency of the data revealed that in the third decades of Islamic Republic changing of writer's ideology of the selected book are far more than second decade. In fact, unlike the other approaches the researcher had examined, in the third decade of Islamic Republic feminism was an overtly political approach and can attack other

approaches for their false assumptions about women. It also seems, on the whole, ideologies of femininity and women's assigned role in the society all play key roles in translation of feminist works in the first decades of Islamic Republic.

Table 1: Experiential values of vocabulary analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Overwording	26	26/80	23	23/71
2	Hyponymy	-----	-----	31	31/95
3	Synonymy	70	72/16	31	31/95
4	Antonymy	-----	-----	3	3/09

Table 2: Experiential values of grammar analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Positive sentence	30	60	34	68
2	Negative sentence	20	40	16	32
3	Passive sentence	5	10	15	30
4	Active sentence	45	90	35	70

Tables 3 and 4 below show the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in relational values of vocabulary and grammar analysis; Relational values of vocabulary analysis included Three items: formality, informality and euphemistic expression. and Relational values of vocabulary included three modes: Declarative, Imperative, Question.

Table 3: Relational values of vocabulary analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Formality	58	57/79	57	58/76
2	Informality	21	21/64	13	13/40
3	Euphemistic	18	18/55	25	25/77

Table 4: Relational values of grammar analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Declarative Mode	46	92	42	84
2	Imperative Mode	4	8	8	16
3	Question Mode	-----	-----	-----	-----

Tables 5 and 6 below show the frequency and percentage of each discursive strategy in Expressive values of vocabulary and grammar analysis.

Table 5: Expressive values of vocabulary analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	Logical connectors	22	44	30	60

Table 6: Expressive values of grammar analysis

NO	Translation strategy	TT1		TT2	
		frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
1	ideologically Contrastive Classification Scheme	-----	-----	26	26/80

Macro level analysis

Translator judgments

At this level of investigation, the researcher concentrates on other research that deals with cultural difference and with the interface between the source culture and the foreign. linking ideology dominant discourse to translation strategies.

At the beginning of the book that had been rendered by Najm Aragi there was the preface of the translator about the book of "An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives" and its authors. the analyses of this preface show that the Iranian feminist translators are very open about flaunting their manipulation of texts. Najm Aragi as the translator of the selected book of this research in the third decades of Islamic Republic is also explicit in stating that the aim of her book on feminism and translation is to cast the widest net around issues of feminism in translation and, through feminism, to move translation studies closer to a cultural studies framework. Najm Aragi in particular highlights the power relations in the translation of the colonized peoples and takes translation studies to task for its Western philosophical and ideological bias before the revolution.

The other translation of the same original book "An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives" was translated by Khorasani and Ahmadi in the second decade of Islamic Republic when Islamic revolutionary movement was dominant in translating the works especially the feminism books. The strategies that had been used in the translation show that among of this

translations some of the words often accompanied by justificatory footnotes. All of these footnotes in this study, looks at the language of the TT and sees cultural implications in the choices made, in this case, the researcher has examined a footnotes that has been translated in the second decades of Islamic Republic. It is also clear from this brief analysis of these footnotes that a whole range of interacting factors are at work. These include the perhaps inevitable dislocation of the source culture, the translation of the feminist works in Iran and the location of the patronage of feminism within Iran in the second decade.

Translators strategies

At macro level, the following examples were presented by researcher to show his method in analysis of translator's strategies.

Table7: Translator's strategies in the stage of Description

	Source Text	Target Text1	Target Text2
Translation strategies	-----	synonymy	antonymy
Description	The working class is made up of service personnel and manual workers e.g. waitresses , cooks, car mechanics, bricklayers, dustmen and so on.	طبقه کارگزار کارکنان خدماتی و کارگران یدی تشکیل می شود. پیشخدمت های زن، آشپزها، تعمیر کاران اتومبیل، بنا ها و رفتگران از آن جمله اند.	طبقه گارگر از کارکنان خدمات و کارگران یدی مثلاً " پیشخدمت ، آشپز، مکانیک اتومبیل، بنا، رفتگرو غیره تشکیل می شود

On the basis of the table 7, the word "waitress" in the ST is translated as "پیش خدمت زن" in TT1 and "پیش خدمت" in TT2. The word "waitress" means a woman whose job is to bring the food to customers at their tables in a restaurant. All societies have a division of labour based on sex work that is seen as women's work and work that is seen as men's work; labour is gendered. However, the nature of the work that is done by men or women varies from society to society and has changed historically in Iran. The word "پیش خدمت زن" deleted in TT2 and had been replaced by the word "پیش خدمت". The analysis of the table 7 showed that the word "پیش خدمت" in the third decade of the Islamic Republic is incompatible with the meaning of the word waitress. Antonymous translation of the word "waitress" in TT2 showed that the property of this word conform to the social system in which it exists. In Iran working in restaurant are frequently undertaken by men either alone or alongside their wives. thus, Najm Aragi by using the dominant social system of that period as the yardstick which working in restaurant are frequently undertaken by men so, she translated the word "waitress" in the TT2 AS "پیش خدمت". It was also clear that such fluidity of meaning was on the base of cultural model, that gender conferred certain essential feminine and masculine traits is constructivist feminism, which asked women (and men) to consider what it meant to be a woman to consider how much of what society had often deemed to be inherently female traits are in fact culturally and socially constructed.

Table 8: Translator's strategies in the stage of explanation

Source text1	Target text1	Target text2
Women often find it difficult to participate in after-meeting drink sessions at the pub , where important business is discussed.	زنان غالبا شرکت در نشست های پس از جلسات را، که با پذیرایی همراه اند و در آن ها مسائل مهم مورد بحث قرار می گیرند، دشوار می یابند.	شرکت در گپ های دوستانه پس از خاتمه ی این جلسات که به بحث و جدل درباره ی مسائل مهم و جدی می گذرد نیز برای زنان اسان نیست.

As stated in table no 8, the word "pub" in the ST refers to a public house, informally known as a "pub", is an establishment licensed to serve alcoholic drinks for consumption on the premises in countries and regions of British influence. this word that is unlawful and religiously prohibited in Islam the translators deleted the meaning of the word in TT1(in the second decade of Islamic Republic)and TT2(in the third decade of Islamic republic).The deletion of the meaning of the word "pub" showed that First: this word was ethical corruption and violated the criteria of press law for publication.Second: One of the pillars of the revolution was to resist against the cultural imperialism of the West and ensure cultural independence through "construction of an indigenous and authentic Islamic model of modernity and progress in Iran.thus TT1 and TT2 was translated on the base of Islamic model by the translators of the second and third decades of the Islamic Republic. Third, however, both translators in TT1 andTT2 operate in contexts which are shaped by social aims and ideologies, which is particularly obvious in the field of politics.

CONCLUSION

This research showed that Persian translators seek to emphasize their identity and ideological stance in the translation project. One of these, Najm Aragi, a translator of feminist works, is openly assertive about the manipulation this involves: The feminist translator, affirming her critical difference, her delight in interminable re-reading and re-writing, and shows the signs of her manipulation of the ST in her translation. The more or less subtle differences between the English and the Persian text reflect different ideological phenomena, both texts thus serving as windows on to ideologies in the two political cultures.

This research showed that CDA is a helpful tool in the translation process of political texts. The CDA integration in translation was a very new field within TS and had not been researched extensively.In the production of the TT; the translators in some sentences adopt a neutral stance and reproduce the text with no ideological implications in the TL. And also in some sentences as discussed in table 8, the translators embed their ideological stance in the choice of certain linguistic and grammatical patterns, which then created a different meaning in the TL and which created the target reader's assumptions of the TT, not allowing the target reader to access the original ST meaning.

In this research the CDA framework applied to TS in three ways: a) as an auxiliary tool for critical analysis of the ST prior to the translation process, b) for the analysis of the translator's

role in the creation of power and ideological struggle in the TT and c) for the analysis of the translator's choices in the recreation of the power and ideological struggle in the TT.

The results of the TT analysis showed that The views and prejudices of the both translators, were personal , subjective, social , cultural, involving the translator's group loyalty factor, which reflected the national, political, ethnic, religious, social class, sex, etc. assumptions of the translator in the second and third decade of Islamic Republic. Admittedly, the examples that the researcher discussed in the present research were extreme cases. Not all translations show differences to their source text in such a drastic way, but the researcher chose them deliberately to raise our awareness to the variety of factors that are involved in translation.

Limitations of the study

A limitation that the researcher confronted was that there were just two translations of the same book by two different translators, one by Manizheh Najm Araghi and the other by Maryam KHorasani and Hamid Ahmadi .

REFERENCES

- Abbott, P., & Wallace, C. (1997). *An Introduction to Sociology, Feminist perspectives*. London: Routledge .
- Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London • Thousand Oaks • New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. London and New York: Longman
- Fairclough, N. (1995b). *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Fairclough, N. (1992b). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing Discourse. Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London and New York.: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical Discourse analysis. In: *Teun van Dijk (ed.). Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction. vol. 2: Discourse as Social Interaction.*, 258-284.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. UK: Longman.
- Gee, J. P. (1999). *Gee, J. P. (1999) Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. London: Routledge.
- Gentzler, E., & Tymoczko, M. (2002). *Translation and Power*. USA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- House, J. (2001). Translation Quality Assessment: Linguistic Description versus Social Evaluation. *Meta*, XLVI, 243.
- Jørgensen & Phillips. (2001). Translation Quality Assessment: Linguistic Description versus Social Evaluation. *Meta*, XLVI, 256.
- Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Munday, J. (2001). *Introducing Translation Studies Theories and application*. London and New York: Routledge.

Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. prentice-hall international.

Schäffner, C. (2004). Political Discourse Analysis from the Point of View of Translation Studies.
Journal of Language and Politics, 3(1), 117-150.

فهرست منابع فارسی:

- درآمدی بر جامعه شناسی، نگرش های فمینیستی، ترجمه مریم خراسانی و حمید احمدی. چ اول، تهران، دنیای مادر 1376.
- جامعه شناسی زنان، ترجمه منیژه نجم عراقی، چ پنجم، تهران، نی، 1380.

The Authors

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran is the Assistant Professor of TEFL and the head of the English Department for M.A studies at IAU CTB. As for his professional background, he has taught many courses in teaching language at the graduate level. He has published several papers in national and international journals and presented in numerous seminars

Dr. Masoud Seid Motahari, Associate Professor, at IAU CTB.

Nasir Manafzadegan

M.A. graduated in translation studies from IAU CTB.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF STUDENT TEAMS-ACHIEVEMENT DIVISIONS (STAD) TO TEACHING ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS TO INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

Andisheh Saniei

*Assistant Professor, ELT Department, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages,
Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran
Email: saniei@riau.ac.ir*

Farzaneh Najafi Ghadikolaei

*MA Student in TEFL, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad
University, Roudehen, Iran
Email: farzanehnajafi@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of Student Teams- Achievement Divisions (STAD) as a cooperative learning (CL) technique in enhancing Iranian EFL (English as a foreign language) learners' knowledge of collocations. Sixty-four intermediate learners in two intact groups were selected as the participants of this study. They were proved homogeneous after administering the Preliminary English Test (PET) and then were assigned as an experimental and a control group. Each group took a researcher-made, validated pretest of collocations at the outset of the study whose reliability was estimated as 0.83 through Cronbach alpha. The experimental group received collocation instruction according to STAD procedures while the control group was exposed to an individualistic instruction. The content of the instruction was in accordance with the content of learners' course book, followed by a set of researcher-made collocation tasks performed by both study groups after receiving the instruction. At the end of the eight-session treatment, the same researcher-made pretest was administered as the post-test and the students' performance was analyzed through an independent samples t-test. The results of data analysis showed that STAD is a significantly effective cooperative technique in bringing about improved collocation performance. In fact, the finding of this study is hoped to help language teachers to find an appropriate way through which CL can be implemented in one of its most effective techniques, namely STAD.

KEYWORDS: STAD, Cooperative language learning, English collocations, Intermediate learners

INTRODUCTION

The issue of learner-centered activities in the classroom has been regarded as an indispensable matter of concern for quite a while for those responsible for guaranteeing the best for instructive frameworks. Cooperative learning techniques, developed on the basis of learner-centered methodology, give learners chances to take more active parts in their own particular learning. In

this learning method, small groups of students work together to achieve a common goal. In fact, cooperative learning is a successful teaching technique in which small teams, encompassing students with different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to jointly improve their understanding of a subject (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

There are different ways through which group work or cooperative learning can be applied by classroom teachers. Student teams-achievement divisions (STAD) is one of the techniques developed by Slavin (1987) in which students are assigned to four- or five-member learning teams that are heterogeneous in terms of proficiency level, sex, and ethnicity. This technique is based on fostering students' motivation for learning by focusing on cooperation between the members of different teams. In other words, it is focused on team cooperation and does not include individual competition (Slavin, 1987). However, most research on STAD is limited to fields other than language and a limited number of studies have dealt with language macroskills. In fact, very few studies have focused on the effectiveness of STAD for teaching language components, such as grammar, vocabulary, and collocation in particular.

Collocation is perceived as a significant component of language use and communication and can be discriminators of native speakers from non-native speakers (Koya, 2006; Nation, 2001; Wouden, 1997). Studies have shown that L2 learners are not confident in the use of collocations (Burgschmidt & Perkins, 1985, as cited in Howarth, 1998) and that the collocation challenge is more critical than general vocabulary problems (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993). In order to help learners cope with challenges in learning difficult aspects of language, including collocations, researchers have turned attention to the effect of learner-learner interaction since 1980s.

Research results have revealed that cooperative tasks are more likely to create better language learning opportunities and specifically more vocabulary learning opportunities compared to individual tasks (Storch, 2005; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009). Similarly, the existing studies show that interaction, either between learners (Adams, 2007) or between a learner and a teacher (Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994; Gass & Alvarez Torres, 2005) has the potential to enhance vocabulary learning. Accordingly, learners should be provided with numerous opportunities to engage in interactive activities rather than passive learning. STAD is believed to pave the way towards reaching this objective.

Seeking for an appropriate learner-centered and cooperative methodology at one hand and considering the complexity of collocation learning, on the other hand, were assumed as the major problems based on which the present study was conducted. In a nutshell, this study is believed to get a more critical look to the viability of STAD, a cooperative teaching technique, or the conventional individualized methodology in improving Iranian EFL learners' collocation learning.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To achieve the purpose of this study the following research questions were proposed:

Does STAD have any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The above research questions led to the statement of the following null hypothesis:

STAD does not have any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants of this study were sixty-four Iranian intermediate EFL learners studying in Simin Language Institute in Iran. They were in two separate classes, encompassing both male and female learners, ranging in age from sixteen to twenty one. One class was assigned as control group, and the other one as experimental group, each including thirty-two subjects. The students in the experimental group were further divided into eight STAD groups based on their performance on a general language proficiency test, namely PET (Preliminary English Test). Accordingly, each STAD group consisted of four members: (a) one learner with a high PET score, (b) another with a low PET score, and (c) the two others with average PET scores. The test was also used to confirm the homogeneity of experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in different stages of the current research were: (a) a language proficiency test (PET), (b) a researcher-made pre/post-test, and (c) seventy collocations to be used in treatment followed by researcher-made collocation tasks.

The Preliminary English Test (PET)

The Preliminary English Test (PET) is a test of language proficiency by University of Cambridge ESOL Examination which covers all four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The speaking section which contained four parts was excluded in the present study for practicality purposes, namely the ease of administration and ease of scoring.

The Pre/Post-test

The pre-test and post-test were the same in the present study and developed by the researcher based on the collocations students learned during the treatment. The test had four parts, including 40 items on the whole measuring the students' knowledge of both lexical and grammatical collocations. For obtaining the content validity of the test, the researcher got the help of an experienced EFL teacher majored in TEFL and two professors with ten years experience in TEFL. The reliability of the test was also determined as 0.83 through Cronbach Alpha in a pilot study. The learners in both study groups took the pretest before receiving the treatment. After eight sessions of learning collocations they took the posttest, and the results underwent data analysis to find out whether STAD had any significant effect on learners' collocation learning or not.

Collocation Tasks

A total number of seventy English collocations were used for the instruction. Some of them were selected from the learners' textbook, New Interchange Two, and some others from Oxford Collocations Dictionary. All seventy collocations were taught to both control and experimental groups in eight sessions. Each collocation was proposed with an example, and the examples were mostly taken from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Longman Exams Coach, Oxford Collocations Dictionary, Oxford Advanced Dictionary, and Oxford Students Dictionary.

A researcher-made task was also used to evaluate students' collocation learning at the end of each session. Accordingly, eight tasks were used for the purpose of this study. The content of each task was based on the collocations students learned in each session, and each task was made up of three parts, namely part A (review), part B (reception and production), and part C (production) to be used in eight sessions. The reliability of each task was computed through KR-21 formula in a pilot study. The tasks were given to both control and experimental groups at the end of each session to evaluate their achievement.

Procedure of the Study

STAD is one of the techniques of cooperative learning in which students are divided into groups of 4-5 members. Based on this technique, the teacher presents the lesson and then gives the students in each group a test based on the content of the instruction. The average of the students' score in each group is the score of STAD group. Accordingly, the STAD groups will be classified to Good Team, Great Team, and Super Team with respect to their scores achieved at the end of each session (Slavin, 1994). This way of grouping is believed to motivate the members of each group to get high scores in order to be introduced as the Super Team. In other words, students can be encouraged to participate more actively and to be responsible for their own learning through helping their teammates (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). To apply this technique in the present study, the following steps were taken:

A test of language proficiency (PET) was administered at the outset of the study to find out if the participants were homogeneous or not. The analysis of the data revealed that the control and experimental groups were homogeneous in terms of their language proficiency.

The students took a researcher-made pre-test of English collocations in the second session. The test was aimed at determining the participants' knowledge of English collocations before receiving the treatment. The experimental group was divided into eight groups/ teams of four members based on their performance on the PET so that each group encompassed one student with a high PET score, one with a low PET score, and two students with average scores in PET test. After grouping the participants the researcher explained the procedures of STAD to the students in the experimental group.

Eight to nine collocations were taught to both control and experimental groups in each treatment session; therefore, seventy collocations were taught on the whole. After teaching the collocations, students in both groups were assigned to do the related tasks. Tasks were given to students at the end of each session to evaluate their achievement. They were performed collaboratively in

experimental group so that each team member was involved in a joint activity whose result was attributed to individual members' activities. This was believed to motivate each student to try his/her best to perform the task (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1998). The teacher collected the completed tasks and corrected them for the following session. Accordingly, at the beginning of the following session, the teacher announced the rank-ordered STAD teams based on their scores on the task as Good, Great, and Super Teams.

Each participant in the control group did the task individually. In other words, each student was responsible for his/her own learning, and there was no team cooperation in control group. After eight sessions of treatment, the post-test was given to both study groups. The students took the post-test individually in both control and experimental groups. The results of the test underwent data analysis to determine if there would be any significant difference between the control and experimental groups in terms of collocation learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To prove the homogeneity of study groups in terms of their knowledge of English collocations, a pretest was administered at the outset of the study. The descriptive statistics of participants' scores in the two experimental and control groups on the pretest were computed and presented in Table 1. The table shows that the mean and standard deviation of the experimental ($M = 26.78$, $SD = 2.48$) and control ($M = 26.63$, $SD = 2.75$) groups are not far from each other on the pretest.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Two Group's Scores on the Pre-test

Source	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	Experimental	32	26.78	2.48
Pre-test	Control	32	26.63	2.75

The results of independent samples t-test for comparing the two groups' mean scores on the pretest are provided in Table 2 below. The table shows that the equality of variances was proved because p value of Levene's Test (.42) was more than .05.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test to Compare Two Groups' Scores on the Pre-test of Collocation

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
	F	$Sig.$	t	Df	$Sig. (2-tailed)$	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	.646	.425	.238	62	.813	.156

In other words, test results as appeared in Table 4.6 failed to find any statistically significant difference in means between the two groups on the pre-test ($t_{(62)} = .238$, $p = .81$, $p > .05$) since the t -observed (.238) was lower than the t critical (2.00), and p value (.81) was larger than the selected significant level for this study, .05. Therefore, the two groups were proved homogeneous in terms of knowledge of English collocations at the beginning of the study and before receiving any instruction.

Investigating the Research Question

To answer the research question of this study that asks whether or not STAD has any significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations, the descriptive statistics of participants' scores in the two experimental and control groups on the post-test were computed and presented in Table 3. As the results reveal, the students in the experimental group ($M = 37.03$, $SD = 2.08$) outperformed those in the control group ($M = 34.16$, $SD = 2.98$) on the post-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Two Group's Scores on the Post-test

Source	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-test	Experimental	32	37.03	2.08
Post-test	Control	32	34.16	2.98

Further, independent samples t-test was used to compare the two groups' mean scores on the posttest. The results are provided in Table 4. As the table shows, the p value (.002) in Levene's Test was less than .05, indicating that the variances were not equal. Therefore, the data in Row "Equal variance not assumed" was analyzed to test the hypothesis.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test to Compare Two Groups' Scores on the Post-test of Collocation

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
F	$Sig.$		t	df	$Sig. (2-tailed)$	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	10.107	.002	4.466	62	.000	2.87
Equal variance not assumed			4.466	55.45	.000	2.87

Table 4 shows that independent samples t-test detected a statistically significant difference in mean scores between the two experimental and control groups ($t_{(55.48)} = 4.46$, $p = .000$, $p < .05$). This means that the t value (4.46) was greater than the t critical (2.00), and the p value (.000) was higher than the selected significant level for this study (.05); consequently, the first null hypothesis as "STAD has no significant effect on promoting Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations" was rejected, and it could be claimed that STAD affects Iranian learners' knowledge of English collocations.

The results of quantitative data analyses showed that STAD had a serious impact on the collocation performance of the participants when their pretest and posttest scores were compared. In other words, the experimental group participants' collocation achievement was improved after receiving the treatment. The obtained results are consistent with the results obtained from other

studies investigating the effectiveness of the cooperative teaching techniques including STAD (Alijanian, 2012; Durukan, 2011; Mohseny & Jamour, 2012; Nazir Khan & Inamullah, 2011; Razavi, Nakhle, & Naghavi, 2012). All of the above researchers have found that the cooperative teaching techniques in relation to the language learning of the learners were more effective than the traditional, individualized techniques.

Such a result can be accounted by the positive interdependence and the individual accountability principles of the cooperative teaching. The fact is that the group members worked collaboratively to enhance the performance of their own and others. They achieved intersubjectivity because they agreed on the way to accomplish the task at hand and cooperated with each other to meet the purpose. This success can be also attributed to the group autonomy achieved by the cooperation of the members, as well. The idea is that in the experimental group, members of each group were encouraged to complete the tasks autonomously which means that learners in CL were active learners who were learning on their own (Pritchard, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The results of statistical analyses indicated that STAD participants are more successful in comparison with the control group participants in improving their collocation performance. Perhaps one major justification for coming to this conclusion is the fact that learners in cooperative groups including STAD get peer motivation and assistance from their more skilled friends. They may see that their commitments are expected and appreciated for the whole group. Their peers are accessible to help them when they need a specific response to an inquiry or answer for a problem. When a partner produces an inappropriate response, the more capable learners in the group can clarify the reasons why that answer is not satisfactory, and this clarification can lead to cooperation among group partners which can advance deeper learning of materials through clarification, elaboration, or mental interpretation which takes place throughout this collaboration.

The contrast between STAD and individualistic instruction in the present study is identified with the fact that STAD was focused around cooperative learning with the positive communication among peers in the group while the control group was focused around conventional learning with the absence of communication among peers which may explain the distinction in the significance of these two pedagogical techniques. Group rewards as one of the focal ideas of STAD cooperative learning technique can have a powerful impact on learners' achievements, especially collocation performance which is a challenging task. Consequently, the advantage of STAD can likewise be seen from a behavioral learning theory perspective which is based on the assumption that learners would persevere with tasks that give a prize, and learners would neglect working on those assignments that have no reward or retribution (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998).

Perhaps another conceivable reason that learners in the STAD group were more successful than those in the control group is that individual learning and practice in conventional teaching lacks interpersonal feedback in the practice. Besides, the learning circumstances might cooperatively

empower learners to process data more profoundly than the individuals who are learning the information on their own.

Implications of the study

The undertaking of the present study was an effort to localize the suggested practice of CL techniques on the Iranian EFL learners to seek scientifically the superiority of the STAD strategy in their collocation performance. The obtained results can be considered as illuminating guidelines first and for most for language teachers, the main decision makers in the classroom. In fact, the findings help teachers to select the best ways the techniques of CL can be implemented for the learners.

Furthermore, this study suggests that teachers need to carefully monitor levels of learners and patterns of interaction within the groups in their classrooms and make sure that all students have an equal chance of sharing their ideas and views in the group. The STAD technique minimizes listening time, and makes students responsible for their own learning. Given that each group needs its members to perform well in order for the whole group to succeed, this technique maximizes interaction and establishes an atmosphere of cooperation and respect for other students. Taking these into consideration, teachers need to let the students think through and discover the effective ways of cooperating and delivering the task content to the peers.

Moreover, what is of significant importance in this process is for materials developers to take into account the cooperative principles according to which learners can interact with each other much freely. In other words, materials developers should consider the importance of having interactive and cooperative techniques when designing materials for foreign language students.

Suggestions for further study

The present research focused on general analyses of the effectiveness of STAD with regard to Iranian EFL learners' collocation learning. Future studies can focus on the investigation of a number of teaching methods alongside the cooperative methods. Also, future researchers can examine other types of cooperative teaching methods in addition to STAD such as Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), Group Investigation (GI), and Jigsaw Procedure. Moreover, the present research focused on the collocation learning via STAD technique. Further studies can be done to investigate the contribution of STAD to teaching other strings of words, such as idioms, or proverbs.

REFERENCES

- Adams, R. (2007). Do second language learners benefit from interacting with each other? In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition* (pp. 29–51). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alijanian, E. (2012). The effect of student teams achievement division technique on English achievement of Iranian EFL learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(9), 1971-1975.

- Bahns, J., & Eldaw, M. (1993). Should we teach EFL students collocations? *System*, 1(1), 101-114.
- Durukan, E. (2011). Effects of cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique on reading-writing skills. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 6(1), 102-109.
- Ellis, R., Tanaka, Y., & Yamazaki, A. (1994). Classroom interaction, comprehension, and L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 44, 449-491.
- Gass, S., & Alvarez Torres, M.J. (2005). Attention when? An investigation of the ordering effect of input and interaction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27, 1-31.
- Howarth, P. (1998). Phraseology and second language proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 15 (1), 24-44.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1994). Positive Interdependence: Key to effective cooperation. In R. Hertz- Lazarowitz N. Miller, (Eds.). *Interaction in cooperative learning: The theoretical anatomy of group learning*. (pp. 174-199). Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1999). Making cooperative learning work. *Theory into Practice*, 38 (2), 67-73.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Holubec, E. (1998). *Cooperation in the classroom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K.A. (1998). Cooperative learning returns to college. *Change*, 30(4), 26-35.
- Koya, T. (2006). What is the reality of collocation use by native speakers of English? *Dialogue*, 5, 1-18.
- Mohseny, A., & Jamour, F. (2012). The impact of student team achievement division on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners. *ELT Voices-India*, 2(6), 105-129.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nazir Khan, G., & Inamullah, H. M. (2011). Effect of student's team achievement division (STAD) on academic achievement of students. *Asian Social Science*, 7(12), 211-215.
- Pritchard, A. (2009). *Ways of learning – Learning theories and learning styles in the classroom* (2nd). London and New York, Routledge.
- Razavi, S. A., Nakhle, M., & Naghavi, M. (2012). The effect of cooperative learning strategy of student teams achievement divisions (STAD) on developing oral communication skills of Iranian EFL learners. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 8(5), 114-129.
- Slavin, R. E. (1987). Cooperative learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 50, 315-342.
- Slavin, R.E. (1994). Student teams-achievement divisions. In S. Sharan (Ed.), *Handbook of cooperative learning* (pp.3-19). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14, 153-173.
- Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2009). Pair versus individual writing: Effects on fluency, complexity and accuracy. *Language Testing*, 26, 445-466.
- Wouden, T.V. (1997). *Negative contexts: Collection, polarity, and multiple negation*. New York: Routledge.

THE PERSPECTIVE TOWARD INTERPRETING OF TABARSI'S MAJMA-OL-BAIAN

Soheila Safdari

Researcher in Arabic Language Teaching, Tabriz, Iran

Email: Dr.Sana.Taherzadeh77@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Interpreting the Quran was started from the starting years after the death of Prophet Mohammed and until now different interpreters have been writing and interpreting. One of these interpreters is "Majm-Ol-Baian" interpreter which Sheikh Tabarsi wrote it in 6th AH. Tabarsi utilized the seven sciences of Quran's sciences for writing "Majma-Ol-Baian". Tabarsi utilized the poem evidences for explaining the concepts of phrases and meaning of words, mentioning the reasons of different readings, spelling the words and phrases, describing the rhetoric points and proving the perspectives and theories in different last fields. The methodology which was used through the present article is to interpret the Sheikh in Majma-Ol-Baian is "Conceptual and literal". The result of the administered studying indicated Sheikh Tabarsi states from Quran's sciences in seven techniques in the starting points of interpretation and then enters the interpretation discussion of each chapter. The research's conclusion stated that different reasons, vowels of words and sentences and theories were used in different fields by using the poem evidences for writing "Mama-Ol-Baian."

KEYTERMS: Quran, Interpretation, Tabarsi, Majma-Ol-Baian, Poem Evidences

INTRODUCTION

One of the important Islamic sciences which is complete than the other sciences is interpreting science of Quran and God's statement, and different complete attempts have been done for discussing about comprehending it and is counted as the example of higher education (Eslami, 1995). But interpreting books are the writings of Islamic scientists are more than expected and worthwhile interpretation "Majma-Ol-Baian" is the masterpiece and the selected work of Abu Ali Fazl Ebne Hasan Tabarsi one of the ten selected works of Quran's interpretations. Undoubtedly, Quran was descended in Arabic language in Saudi Arabia Island the environment where there were different and famous theologians and preachers and poets. Therefore, the phrases and statements which are come in Quran have been reflected in the poems of informed and Islamic poets, so for people who want to understand Quran and know what the words and phrase mean, they can understand the meaning of them by referring to poems of those poets; therefore, Sheikh Tabarsi mentioned the poems of some poets for making familiar the words and phrases and this work closes the reader to understand the different dimensions of understanding the meaning of words, and on the other hand it shows us that how Tabarsi understood the Arabic literature (Eftekhari, 1999).

Amin Ol Eslam or Amin Oddin Abu Ali Fazl Ebn Tabarsi was born in 469 of Ghadr in Mashhad. He set off Najaf for continuing his studying and in the last period of his life came back to

Sabzvar and he passed away in 548 of Ghadr in 80th. The important and famous quotation is that he passed away in Sabzvar and then his body was taken to Mashhad and entombed around the shrine of Imam Reza, but some others believe that he has been entombed in Sabzvar (Afandi, 1994).

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The importance of poem evidences near the interpreters

Academic authors use hedges to reduce and minimize the potential threat new claims make on other researchers by soliciting acceptance and challenging their own work (Aboulalaei, 2013).

Hedges can show not only a speaker's uncertainty but a variety of social meanings. It has been detected that hedge never state uncertainty, impression, warmth, or any other social function in the abstract. They do so, only as they become mobilized in the concrete arenas of everyday talk, as forms of situated practice (Dixon & Foster, 1996).

According to Holmes (1984 and 1990 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013), boosters are seem to play a crucial role in producing and creating conversational solidarity. Hedges and boosters draw attention to the fact that expressions do not just commitment ideas, but also the author's attitude to them and to readers (Halliday, 1978 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013).

According to Aboulalaei (2013), range of studies have shown the pragmatic importance of hedging as a resource for stating uncertainty, skepticism and deference in academic contexts and texts, but researcher still known little about how it functions in specific academic domains. And boosters emphasize the power and force of propositions and show commitment to expressions, so asserting the author's conviction and restricting the negotiating space available with colleagues, effecting interpersonal solidarity and membership of a disciplinary in-group. Boosters allow authors to negotiate the status of their information, aiding to establish its perceived truth by presenting it as consensually given (Aboulalaei, 2013).

As Hyland found (1998a), hedges and boosters are response to the potential negotiability of claims and an indication of the author's acknowledgement of disciplinary norm of special argument. They work to stabilize and balance objective information, subjective evaluation and interpersonal negotiation, and this can be an important and powerful persuasive factor in gaining acceptance for claims.

Hedges are used by academic authors to show and express underlying attitudes and strength of commitment or claim which means that hedges can be used to avoid opposition to a proposition (Hyland, 1998b, 1996 as cited in Aboulalaei, 2013).

One of the important functions of hedges is to contribute to a relationship by altering and changing readers to the author's perspective and view towards both propositional information and to the readers themselves (Hyland, 1998 as cited in Isabel, 2001).

As Isabel mentioned (2001), the important reason for paying attention to text linguistic cues or devices is that use of a meta-language in the analysis of the language itself may facilitate access to the propositional content and construct meaning. Finally, Science students tend to prefer an approach to textual analysis that draws upon concrete points taught, if possible in an explicit, rational and objective way. And hedging devices are a common strategy for mitigating and modulating academic discourse.

According to Isabel (2001), hedges can be used to state the writer's attitude(s) to both proposition (i.e. content) and readers (i.e. peers). The term "hedge" is utilized by Hyland (2000:87-88): "Hedge?...?like possible, might and perhaps?...? represent explicit qualification of the writer's commitment. This may be to show uncertainty, and indicate that information is presented as an opinion rather than accredited fact, or it may be to convey deference, modesty or respect for colleagues' views"

According to Moreno and Suárez (2008), the following example is a positive critical act which the single italicized and underlined text contains evaluative material on the meta-discourseal plane: "Reader of ELT *may* be especially *interested* in the long chapter centered on the Ruskin-Whistler controversy". In above example the modal verb *may* is used to soften slightly the power and force of proposition stated and expressed by the author by adding the extra meaning of tentativeness. The meaning of the expression becomes something like: "it is possible but not guaranteed that reader of ELT will be interested in the aspect of the book commented upon." But the important factor here is that without this modal item, a hedging plane or devices, the prediction would have been expressed in very categorical terms [Readers of ELT will be especially interested in...], showing the author's strong belief in it. In above example the model item *may* can also be put or situated on the meta-discourseal plan since the epistemic meaning added by it affects, or modifies, the meaning of the entire proposition without adding or annexing any new propositional content to the text (Aboulalaei, 2013).

context, hedges and boosters

Holmes (1990) has examined a number of linguistic forms widely recognized as potential 'hedges' in Lakoff's sense (i.e. attenuators or mitigations of the strength of a speech act) and the conclusion has been consistent: linguistic forms are complex and the functions they state cannot be specified in a social and textual vacuum.

As Hyland (1998b) states, hedges and boosters can be found together in stretches of discourse where authors look for creating different rhetorical effects. Authors must socially mediate their arguments, discussions, shaping their evidence, observations, data, and flashes of insight into their community. In so doing, they are contemporary negotiating a harmonious relationship with their readers, framing their arguments in conformity with disciplinary expectations concerning appropriate author involvement and interpersonal conduct. Hedges are one of the most studied parts of their audience-oriented aspect of claim design.

According to Hyland (1998b), the special ways that authors conceptualize problems, generate inquiry, approach their objects of study, and persuade their colleagues are likely to influence the ways they employ hedges and boosters in their discourse.

Hyland (1998b) concluded that, the results show and suggest a general division between Philosophy, Marketing, Linguistics and Sociology on one hand, and Physics and Engineering on the other, with Biology occupying the middle ground, and this distinction is illustrated by the fact that over 70% of all hedges occurred in the humanities social science papers and they were over twice as frequent in Philosophy, Marketing and Linguistics, as in Physics and Engineering. And the most frequent hedges are **may**, **would** and **possible** and the most frequent boosters are **will**, **show** and **the fact that**. Of course epistemic verbs such as **suggest**, **indicate**, **assume** and **seem** are also heavily used as hedges.

According to Nash (1990 as cited in Hyland, 1998a), authors present their work and articles in various ways partly because they have different sorts of work to present, but also since they are presenting it to people with various ways of seeing and explaining the world. In other words, since academic or article writing is a form of knowledge-making, differences in the types of problems studied and ways of addressing them should aid account for disciplinary variation.

Isabel believed that(2001),in recent years research has also been concerned with the study of the use and utilizing of hedges and boosters in different academic genres, disciplines such as research articles (Hyland, 1999, 1998; Aboulalaei, 2013); scientific letters (Hyland, 2000, chap.6: 1999) and book reviews (Hyland,2000, chap. 3).

According to Isabel (2001), the results obtained indicate that hedging plans in English articles are almost double those in Portuguese articles. The structure of discourse of English articles may partly dictate the utilizing of hedges. English tends to use and utilize more hedge than Portuguese. Moreover, although the article genres need a relative uniformity, it appears that language conventions can change between writers with different cultural background.

As Hyland explained (2000 as cited in Isabel, 2001), in academic English, hedging devices mark the author's attitude to both proposition (i.e. content) and audience and are therefore an important and pervasive part in academic discourse. However, L2 learners seem to have some difficulty assessing qualification and certainty in the author's commitments to a claim and sometimes fail to notice hedges. So it is expected that by becoming familiar and getting acquainted with hedging, as a relevant discourse convention in academic writing, reading of academic texts and articles might be facilitated.

Orta, Miiñ, Sanz and Duenas (2006) concluded that, disciplinary affiliation appears to be an important determinant in the use of interpersonal meta-discourse strategies, in Research Articles from the four examined disciplines; Business, Applied Linguistics, Urology and Food Technology. Finally, the exploration and description of meta-discourse from the point of view of genres in contrast seems to hint in the following direction: the similar meta-discourse features may have conventional and institutionalized uses that change from genre to genre; that is, there

are important differences, in terms of frequency and function, in the way competent members of a certain disciplinary community use metadiscoursal plans and devices. Such fundamental differences both distinguish the genres and help to explain and describe the differences in meta-discourse use.

It was manifested that hedges and boosters were almost equally used in the Introduction and Conclusion parts of the research articles sampled, and most of the scholars have explored frequency and functions of hedging according to genre and various rhetorical sections of scientific papers (Maurie, 2008).

According to Maurie (2008), Psychology writers appear to be detached while mass communication authors seem more committed. The important problem here is that the topics of Research Articles apparently influenced the commitment and detachment of the authors. Research Articles are direct for researchers to propose new ideas which are likely to support or contradict findings of other scholars; so, authors employ cautious language as the acceptance of their research contributions depend largely on how these are presented to the academic community. Utilizing cautious language means mitigating the strength of a proposal by developing and increasing or decreasing its illocutionary power via hedging and boosting devices (Vassileva, 2001 as cited in Mojica, 2005 in Maurie, 2008) which serve three main rhetorical functions: 1) threat reducing strategies... to point distance and to avoid absolute expressions; 2) strategies to accurately reflect the certainty of knowledge ; and 3) politeness strategies... between authors and readers (salvager-Mayer, 1997, p.106 as cited in Maurie,2008).

According to Flowerdrew (2001 quoted in MagaliPaquetd, 2008), there are three areas of difficulty in learner academic writing, (i.e. collocational patterning, pragmatic appropriacy and discourse features). Collocational patterning has to do with academic learners and university students' lack of familiarity with the typical lexico-grammatical environment of words “(e.g. **we have performed a survey. A questionnaire has been conveyed to the public**).” Pragmatic appropriacy concerns the author's attitude and view to his/her message, as realized via modal verbs, modal adjuncts, boosters, hedges, etc. Discourse features or parts are lexical and structural items in context.

As Vázquez and Giner (2008) discussed, there has been a growing interest lately in hedging and the motivation for its use and employing in academic/scientific writing. The interest is concentrated on that hedges are really employed in scientific discourse, which is thought to be above all rational and neutral. This is connected with the fact that scientific discourse obeys the some mechanisms as ordinary everyday communications do, although it wants to hide this, more or less successfully, by employing a code of its own.

Various disciplines accept and deal with different data and hence, show different amounts of boosters in their discourse (Vázquez & Giner, 2009). In writing academic articles, there are two important factors that affect the writing; that is, to write article writers should attend them, since these factors help them to express their meaning with certainty or doubt. Sometimes it is easy for

readers to analyze and explain the grant writers' referential behavior, since the genre and genre system help readers to find writers' attitudes and beliefs (Feng, 2009).

According to Isabel (2009), becoming familiar with hedging as a writing convention of academic English may facilitate reading or writing academic texts. The most commonly used and utilized hedges in academic discourse are modal verbs (**may/might, can/could, would, should**), lexical verbs (**suggest, indicate, appear, believe**) and adverbs (**possibly, probably, likely**) (Ewa, 2010).

According to Amiryousefi and EslamiRasekh (2010), one of the important factors, which affect the use and distribution of meta-discourse marker, is genre. And texts can be grouped into one genre or another based on their key linguistic or rhetorical dimensions. Meta-discourse is one such part. Texts can be analyzed and grouped based on various kinds of interactions they produce with their readers, and various kinds of persuasion sought by authors or speakers. Genre is defined as communicative events or phenomena specified by a series of communicative purposes and feature recognized by the members of community (Swale, 1990 as cited in Amiryousefi & Eslami Rasekh, 2010).

According to Maurie (2008), commitment and detachment in one's claims are linguistically revealed in the use of hedging and boosting plans and devices. The authors' tendency to utilize strong language to show commitment imply the need for the inclusion of lessons on hedging and boosting in research writing topics and subjects as well as the need for students to be more exposed to the conventions of research writing.

According to Aboulalaei (2013), academic writing is created by paying special attention to the specific constraints or conventions of different disciplines. These constraints condition the resources used by academic writers in their different disciplines. Scholar's work is reflected in academic discourse through a selection of linguistic elements; and this selection is made by following the conventions or rules of a particular discourse community. These conventions might ensure academic writers that their work will actually be recognized by readers and accepted by their colleagues in that discourse community. As Vartalla (2001; 248) states, "different disciplines may not be altogether uniform when it comes to frequency, forms, and variety of hedges". In this way, hedges and boosters in Medicine may not present the same occurrence as in Linguistics or Chemistry.

Quran was descended in Saudi Arabia when the able poets and eloquent had been grown up. Using the strange and unfamiliar statements was common among them. Even though they discussed and disputed with each other, and it was possible that some referees were executed for analyzing the poems. Using these statements and words and strange interpretation was strange. Undoubtedly, whatever the poet closed to the urban ethic, using the strange and unfamiliar interpretation was less in his poems, but since the Arabs liked the poem, the way was not closed for desert poets and they went with full-haversack of poems to Okaz Bazaar and sold their reserve. In this situation and through the period of time Quran shined its bright lights on the island of Saudi Arabia.

People who like the great and pretty speeches were attracted by these speeches, and on the other hand while Quran was descended in Arabic, but there are some words and phrases which are non-Ghoreish. In Quran, we can see that there are some words which are not common Ghoreishian words (Like: ZAMHARIR, and.. which was taken from TEI Tribe) (Tabatabaei, 1992), and this caused that the great difference was happened among the tribes in understanding a verse, and each one had the different interpretation about the used word and because of this the interpretations' styles which were divided to two parts were created; the first one was Mecca Interpretation style with leading of Abdollah Ebn Abbas and the other one was Iraq and Basra Interpretation with leading of Abdollah Ebn Masud (Kariman, 1996) .

The interpretation work was being increased because of Muslims' interesting to Quran. It was natural that by passing the time from Prophet Mohammed's message and companions and followers, these differences were increased. Therefore, the interpreters attended to Arabic poems for claiming the correctness of their interpretation and put it as their firm rope to prove their claim and interpretations like Alkeshaf Zomokhsery and Majma Ol Baian Tabarsi and Jame ol Javame are counted like them.

As we saw, mentioning the poem evidences are so important for people to access the correctness of verses, and this issue was not limited to Quran just. By passing the time, the Arabic scholars entered this to Arabic Grammar which Seibuieh started it by writing the valuable book in the names of Alketab, and then stating the grammar without considering the poem evidence was abolished, and the Arabic Grammar was changed to poem, which Alfihe Ebn Malel is the great evidence for this. People like Ebn Aghil and Jamal eddin Ebn Hesham Ansari and Siuti and others who were the professor of Arabic Grammar wrote books in explaining poems and knew it suitable and because of that people who surrounded the Arabic poems and recorded them in their mind impacted more on Arabic Literature (Kariman, 1996).

Reason of Compilation

In introduction of Majma-Ol-Baian Fi Tafsir Al Quran (corrected and suspension by Seied Hashem Rasuli Mahallati), the story of heart attack of Sheikh Tabarsi was mentioned by Mohsem Hoseini Ameli in Mostadarak Ol Vasael and Mostanbet Ol Masael written by Haj Mirza Hosein Noori Tabarsi died in 1320 Nuclear Calendar. (Haj Mirza Hoseini quoted the story from interpretation book of Kabir Monhej Al Sadeghin fi Elza Al Mokhalefin compiled by Molla Fath Allah Kashani). The story is that: Sheikh Tabarsi fainted and after washing out him and entombed him, suddenly among the grave his heart started to palpitate and understood that he was alive, in that time he avow that if he would be alive he would write the interpretation of the great book, in that time a robber stole the shroud of Sheikh. The Sheikh got him and told him: "bring me a cloth and take this shroud." After that, the Sheikh started to write the interpretation (Kariman, 1966).

METHODOLOGY

The interpreting methods of Sheikh Tabarsi in Majma Ol Baian

Sheikh Tabarsi states from Quran's sciences in seven techniques in the starting points of interpretation and then enters the interpretation discussion of each chapter, and the titles of seven-title techniques are as follow:

First technique: the number of Quran chapters and profits of knowing it, their narrators in cities

Second technique: the names of famous readers and their narrators in cities

Third technique: stating the meaning of interpretation and gloss

Forth technique: stating the names of Quran and their meanings

Fifth technique: stating the summary of Quran's sciences

Sixth technique: news in Quran's wisdom and its fans

Seventh technique: in stating what is totem for Quran's reader

Style and method of interpreting of Sheikh in Majma-Ol-Baian is "Conceptual and literal."

The order of studying

- Discussing about each chapter's Mecca and Medina
- The number of verses of chapters and the existed differences
- The names of chapters and their appellations
- Stating the chapters' scholarship which was mentioned by Obaia Ebn Kaeb from Prophet Mohammed
- Stating the reading differences by mentioning the reason of accepting the famous quotation
- Discussing the words and substances of verses and their derivation mean and flections
- Justifying the vowels of words and sentences and their compounds
- Stating the reasons and reasons of descending
- Writing the meaning, verdicts and verses' gloss

All these discussions have been come in the name of Algharaea, Alhojat, Allogat, Alearab and Almaena, and sometimes for interpreting the verse of Quran from other verse was used and the corroborant states its perspective. About verses of verdicts which are about 500 verses, Sheilh states the statements of other Islamic religious, and then he states the Shi's idea and in that time he states his perspective as the judgment. His perspectives show his skillful in jurisprudence.

The characteristics of works and scientific personality of Tabarsi

A: Free thinking and looking up

The Sheikh is free thinking and looking up, and the situation helped him to access the scientists and huge awareness. These people try to get any information and analyze the pros and cons.

B: Research sincerity, fairness in writing

Sincerity in research, fairness in research, mindedness in quotes sayings and designing the others' ideas by attention to different perspectives are the other summit in scientific and research life of Tabarsi.

CONCLUSION

According to findings of Tabarsi, it can be added that Tabari has also given the above interpretation and that according to Tabari the verse is intended for the group of Jews and Christians who are living at the time of the Mahdi. The author then mentions a tradition in favor of this view and says that Ali ibn Ibrahim reports in his tafsir from Shahr ibn Hushab who reports from Hajjaj ibn Yusuf 1 who said: "This verse surprises me. When I order the death of Jews and Christians and when their throats are being slit, I wait for them to say something but I never hear anything from them on this subject before their death. Their lips do not even move." I said: "May God guide the Amir, the meaning of the verse is not this." He asked: "What is the meaning then?" I said: "Isa ibn Maryam will descend to the earth before the Day of Judgment and will pray behind the Mahdi." 2 He said: "From which source do you state that?" I said: "Imam Baqir related this to me". Some asked to Shahr: "What was your purpose in saying this to him?" He said: "I wanted to irritate him". Tabarsi used the seven sciences of Quran in writing "Majma-Ol-Baian". Tabarsi used the different reasons, vowels of words and sentences and theories in different fields by using the poem evidences for writing "Mama-Ol-Baian."

REFERENCES

- Aboulalaei, M.H. (2013). Exploring the Differences Between Iranian Women and Men Academic Article Writings According to Mood and Modality Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research 18 (5), 668-674.
- Afandi Esfahani, M.A. (1994). Riaz-Ol-Olama and Hiaz-Al-Fozala, by attempting Mahmud.
- Amiryousefi, M., & Eslami Rasekh, A. (2010). *Metadiscourse: Definitions, Issues and Its Implications for English Teachers*. Isfahan University Of Technology, Isfahan, Iran.
- Eftekhari, S.A. (2009). Specialist Research Articles on Medicine. *English boosting and hedging adverbs in English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2), 177-200.
- Eslami Panah Yazdi, M. (2005). *Literal Interpretation of Quran*, Tehran, Center of Scientific Publications of Azad University.
- Ewa, Donesch-Jezo, (2010). *Teaching academic discourse writing in ESP courses for medical students and professionals*. Institute of Foreign Languages, Jagiellonian University, Krakow 31-010, Poland.
- Feng, H., (2009). *The Discourses and Tales of Hong Kong Scholars Seeking Research Grant: A Study in Professional Expertise*. City University of Hong Kong.
- Gilquin, G., & Paquot, M. (2008). *Too Chatty: Learner Academic Writing and Register Variation*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Holmes, J. (1990). Hedges and Boosters in Women's and Men's Speech. *Language & Communication*, 10 (3), 185-203.
- Hyland, K. (1998a). Boosting, Hedging and the Negotiation of Academic Knowledge. *Text*, 18(3), 349-382.
- Hyland, K. (1998b). *Hedging in Scientific Research Articles* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins. ix+307.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to Students: Metadiscourse in Introductory course books. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18, 3-26.

- Isabel, M. (2001). *Teaching academic reading: some initial findings from a session on hedging*. The University of Edinburgh.
- Dixon, J. A., & Foster, D. H. (1997). Gender & Hedging: From Sex Differences to Situated Practice. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 26 (1).
- Kariman, H. (1996). *Tabarsi and Majma-Ol-Baian*. Tehran University Pub.
- Maurie, L. (2008). *Hedging in College Research Papers: Implications for Language Instruction*. Far Eastern University, Manila, Philippine.
- Tabatabaei, S.M. H. (1992). *Collection of treatises*, Tehran: Bureau of Islamic culture.
- VarttalaTeppo (2001). "Remarks on the communicative functions of hedging in popular scientific and specialist research articles on medicine". *English for Specific Purposes* 18: 248.
- Vázquez, I., & Giner, D. (2008). *Beyond Mood & Modality: Epistemic Modality Markers as Hedges in Research Articles. A Cross-Disciplinary Study*. University of Zaragoza/ San Jorge's University.
- Vázquez Orta, I., Lafuente Millán, E., Lorés. Sanz, R., & Mur Dueñas, P. (2006). *How to explore academic writing from meta-discourse as an integrated framework of interpersonal meaning: three perspectives of analysis*. Universidad de Zaragoza (Spin).

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATIONAL GOAL ORIENTATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG IRANIAN STUDENTS

Ali Taghinezhad

College of Literature and Humanities, Shiraz University, Iran

E-mail: taghinezhad1@gmail.com

Mahboobeh Azadikhah

Department General of Fars Province Education, Iran

E-mail: mamazadi1@gmail.com

Ali Nabizadeh

Department General of Fars Province Education, Iran

E-mail: alinabizadeh1391@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Recent studies about achievement motivation mostly focus on individuals' goals in academic situations which might affect educational behaviors and students' academic achievement outcomes. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between motivational goal orientations and academic achievement of high school students of Shiraz, Iran. In total, 835 high school students of Shiraz participated in this study. The participants filled in the Inventory of School Motivation. The Grade Point Average (GPA), mathematics and English final exam scores of the students were gathered. The data were analyzed through Pearson correlation coefficient. The analysis of the data indicated that the GPA had a positive meaningful relationship with competition, effort and social concern goals and it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. The score of mathematics and English had a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal and it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. Different motivational goals orientation can have significant effects on students' academic achievement outcomes. The implication of this study is that it helps the officials of the education systems and families to be more cognizant of the students' goal orientations in their schooling and to pave the way for students to achieve their goal and improve their educational performance.

KEYWORDS: Motivational goals orientation, Academic achievement, Student's motivation

INTRODUCTION

Trainers, teachers and parents consider motivation as the key to successful educational performance (Watkins, McInerney & Lee, 2002). One of the most important areas of research in educational researches is the effect of students' motivation on educational outcomes. Motivation can be conceptualized as the student's energy and drive to get involved in learning (Criss, 2011),

and it also plays a big role in the interest of students in school, education and enjoyment of it (Martin, 2003; Ali & McInerney, 2006). Motivation is also one of the psychological bases of students' achievement (Ali & McInerney, 2006; Nolson, O'Mara, McInerney & Dowson, 2006) and it leads students' goals orientation (McInerney, McInerney & Dowson, 2005; King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011; Maehr & Zushu, 2009). Recent theories in achievement motivation mostly focus on individuals' goals in academic situations which might affect educational behaviors, cognitive processes and achievement (McInerney, Maehr & Dowson, 2004; McInerney, 2004; McInerney & Dowson 2003; King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011). One of these theories is Maehr's Personal Investment Theory. From its inception, personal investment theory was developed to be a cross-culturally relevant model of students' achievement goals. In this model, four types of goals are proposed to be important in understanding student motivation in school: mastery goals, social goals, performance goals, and extrinsic goals. Each of these goals, in turn, is comprised of two facets (King, Ganotice & Watkins, 2011) (See Table 1). Different motivational goals can have significant effects on students' achievement outcomes (Elliot & Church, 1999; McInerney, 2008; Pintrich, 2000; King, Gatonic & Watkins, 2011).

Table 1: Four types of achievement goals in personal investment theory

Achievement goal	Facet	Definition	Sample items
1.Mastery goals	Task involvement	interest in the task	"The more interesting the schoolwork the harder I try."
	Effort	willingness to expend effort for schoolwork	"I always try hard to understand something new in my schoolwork."
2.Performance goals	Competition	competitiveness in learning	"I like to compete with others in school"
	Social power	seeking status through group leadership	"I like being in charge of a group."
3.Social goals	Affiliation		
	Concern	belonging to a group when doing schoolwork	"I can do my best work at school when I work with others."
4.Extrinsic goals	Token	concern for other students	"I like helping other students with their School work."
	Praise	seeking tangible rewards for schoolwork	"Getting a reward for my good schoolwork is important to me."
		seeking social recognition for schoolwork	"I work best when I am praised in school."

Studies showed that achievement goals are related to outcomes such as self-esteem, general well-being, socio-emotional functioning, learning strategies (Wolters, 2004), self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 2000), grades (Elliot & Murayama, 2008), emotions in school (Pekrun et al. 2006, 2009), self-related beliefs (Pajares, Brinter & Valinte, 2000), and other valued educational outcomes (Elliot, 2005).

Ali and McInerney (2003) found that a positive relationship exists between effort goals, GPA and achievement in English but there is a negative relationship between task, effort and GPA.

Similarly, social power goal is a strong negative predictor of English and mathematics scores. Also receiving rewards was a strong positive predictor of GPA in some groups.

Sulimon and McInerney (2003), found that for Lebanese students and non-Lebanese students living in Australia, task and effort goal is a strong predictor of science and English achievement but social power, competition, social concern, praise and token goals in both groups are not predictors of students' academic achievement.

Most of the recent studies in western countries about motivation are concerned with motivational goals but a few studies have been carried out in Iran about this subject. Regarding the role of students' motivational goal orientations in academic achievement and considering the fact that one of the most significant problems of Iranian students is lack of motivation (Sobhaninejad & Abedi, 2006), the investigation of the relationship between motivational goals and academic achievement in Iran seems necessary.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any meaningful relationship between students' goal orientations and academic achievement?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In total, 835 students of Shiraz high schools participated in this study consisting of 420 males and 415 females. Among them, 260 students (31.2%) were in the first grade, 274 students (32.8%) were in the second grade, and 301 students (36%) were in the third grade of high school.

Instruments

The Inventory of School Motivation (McInerney & Sinclair, 1991, 1992; McInerney et al., 1997; McInerney, Yeung, & McInerney, 2001) was devised as an exploratory instrument through which a range of motivation salient constructs drawn from Maehr's Personal Investment (Maehr, 1984; Maehr & Braskamp, 1986) model could be identified in educational settings across a large number of different groups. There is a lot of empirical evidence drawn from both exploratory and confirmatory factor analytic studies for the validity and reliability of scales drawn from the ISM (see, for example, McInerney et al., 1997, 2003). Inventory questions are related to the perceived behavioral goals, with each having two elements:

Task (Mastery): Task involvement (e.g., "I like to see that I am improving in my schoolwork") and Effort (e.g., "When I am improving in my schoolwork I try even harder").

Ego (Performance): Competition (e.g., "I like to compete with others at school") and Social Power (e.g., "I work hard at school to be put in charge of a group").

Social solidarity: Affiliation (e.g., "I prefer to work with other people at school rather than

work alone”) and Social concern (e.g., “I like to help other students do well at school”).

Extrinsic: Praise (e.g., “I want to be praised for my good schoolwork”) and Token rewards (e.g., “I work best in class when I get some kind of rewards”).

The students responded to each item on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The Persian version of the Inventory of School Motivation was used in this study. Azadikhah, (2012), calculated the Cronbach’s Alpha as follows: Task = 0.70, Effort = 0.72, Competition = 0.82, social power = 0.85, social concern = 0.78, praise = 0.84, token rewards = 0.85, the reliability of the ISM was $\alpha = 0.93$. In order to examine the academic achievement variable, we gathered the GPA, English and mathematics final exam scores of the students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

99.76 percent of the students (848 students) answered the questionnaire. The average age of the students was 17, and most of the students were between 16 and 18 years old. As it can be seen in Table 1, in all scales the mean is higher than the median. The range of the mean is between 3.29 (Social power) and 4.42 (Task). The range of the standard deviation is between 0.60 and 0.96. Also the range of the correlations of the instrument subscales is between 0.23 and 0.61.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation between the ISM scales

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Task	4/42	0/60	1	0/47	0/36	0/23	0/34	0/38	0/28
2. Effort	3/90	0/79		1	0/42	0/27	0/49	0/28	0/26
3. Competition	4/04	0/82			1	0/31	0/35	0/38	0/33
4. Social power	3/29	0/96				1	0/30	0/50	0/45
5. Social concern	3/82	0/81					1	0/34	0/27
6. Praise	3/97	0/86						1	0/61
7. Token	3/51	0/94							1

All correlations are meaningful at $p < 0.05$ level

The findings indicated that a meaningful difference existed between girls and boys in “Social concern” ($p < 0.01$, $t = -3.69$), “Praise” ($p < 0.01$, $t = -4.97$), “Task” ($p < 0.01$, $t = -6.34$) and “Effort” ($p < 0.05$, $t = -3.09$) scales. The average of these scores was higher in girls than boys, while there was no significant difference between boys and girls in “Competition”, “Social power” and “Token” scales.

Pearson correlation between the Inventory scales, the students’ GPA and their final exam scores in mathematics and English was calculated to investigate the relationship between motivational goals orientation and academic achievement. The results showed that there was a positive meaningful relationship between the students’ GPA, effort ($r = 0.20$, $p < 0.05$), social concern ($r = 0.08$, $p < 0.01$), and competition goals ($r = 0.13$, $p < 0.01$) and there was a negative meaningful relationship between the students’ GPA, social power ($r = 0.09$, $p < 0.01$), and token goals ($r = 0.09$, $p < 0.01$). Other results indicate that mathematics score has a positive relationship with effort goal

($r=0.16$, $p<0.05$) and there is a negative meaningful relationship between mathematics score and social power goal ($r=0.12$, $p<0.05$). Also this study showed that English score has a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal ($r=0.13$, $p<0.05$), and it has a negative meaningful relationship with social power ($r=0.12$, $p<0.05$) and token goals ($r=0.11$, $p<0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 3: Pearson correlation between motivational goals and academic achievement

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Task	4/42	0/60	1									
2 . Effort	3/90	0/79	0/52**	1								
3.Social Concerns	3/82	0/81	0/36**	0/50**	1							
4 . Competition	4/04	0/82	0/40**	0/45**	0/36**	1						
5.Praise	3/97	0/86	0/40**	0/30**	0/35**	0/41**	1					
6 . Social Power	3/29	0/96	0/24**	0/29**	0/28**	0/32**	0/49**	1				
7.Token	3/51	0/94	0/28**	0/27**	0/25**	0/33**	0/60**	0/45**	1			
8 . English Language	15/00	4/09	0/00	0/13**	0/00	0/05	0/06	0/09**	0/11**	1		
9 . Mathematics	15/19	4/22	0/01	0/16**	0/04	0/05	0/03	0/12**	0/10**	0/66**	1	
10 .GPA	16/41	2/55	0/06	0/20**	0/08*	0/13**	0/03	0/09*	0/09*	0/73**	0/78**	1

** $P<0/01$ * $p<0/05$

CONCLUSION

Given the importance of students' motivational goals in academic achievement, this study was conducted to bridge the existing gap in the discovery of possible relationships between students' motivational goals and academic achievement criteria. The students of first, second and third grades of Shiraz high schools completed the Inventory of School Motivation. The academic achievement criteria, the students' English language and mathematics final exam grades and also their GPA were taken into consideration. The total score of the students on ISM indicated that they were relatively motivated (McInerney, 2008; McInerney, Yeung & McInerney, 2001). Task goal was the highest valued motivational variable which was in line with the result of the study conducted by Ali and McInerney (2005) and McInerney (2008). The results of this study indicated that the students' GPA had a positive meaningful relationship with effort, competition and social concern goals, but it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. The results of this study were consistent with those of Yousefi, Ghasemi and Firouznia (2009) and with those of Amrai, Elahi Motlagh, Azizi Zolani and Parhoun (2011). Also mathematics score had a positive meaningful relationship with effort goal while it had a negative meaningful relationship with social power and token goals. Other findings of this study indicate that there is a positive meaningful relationship between English score and effort goal but there is a negative meaningful relationship between English score, social power and token goals. This finding was consistent with that of Ali and McInerney (2005), Ali and McInerney (2006) and Sulimon and McInerney (2003), McInerney, Yeung & McInerney, 2001. In interpreting these results, we can say that one of the characteristics of motivated students is that they make a lot of efforts to do their tasks, learn new subject matters, and solve difficult problems. It is obvious that their efforts will finally lead to getting a good grade from their teachers and therefore the GPA

can be considered a yardstick for students' efforts in school. Findings of this study indicated that effort as a criterion for motivation has positive relationship with students' GPA. Although this relationship is weak, it is theoretically in line with the relationship between effort and GPA. The positive relationship between social concern and GPA was as predicted theoretically. Motivated students are not only worried about their achievement but they also feel satisfied when their friends are successful in doing their tasks. The findings showed that this motivation feature has positive relationship with the students' GPA. Being ranked the first in class and having a sense of superiority over others is among the features of the competition dimension of motivation. It is assumed that those who have a high score in this dimension, their GPA is an indicator of their achievement. In this respect, the findings were in line with the theoretical orientation of this study. A possible explanation of why the relationship between these two dimensions and the GPA is weak is that the GPA is not a solid criterion for assessing students' effort. In some courses, some scoring standards might not be met on the part of the teacher and the students might get good grades without making any effort. Since the GPA is determined based on teacher-made tests, non-standardness of these tests and the difference between scoring criteria in different courses (e.g. English and mathematics) might be a reason for the weakness of these relationships. Anyhow, these relationships were in line with those of the studies done by Ali and McInerney (2005), Ali and McInerney (2006), and Suliman and McInerney (2003). Since there was a high correlation between competition and the students' GPA, we can say that if competition is in line with students' literacy, they should be encouraged but if they are indulged in one-dimensional aspect and surpass other students by gaining better grades, it is an alarm for education authorities and other sections of the society. We can also say that students who spend their time on side issues are weaker than others because they would like to assume leadership and superiority to others which should be replaced by cooperation and friendliness. The comparison between two groups of male and female students indicated that girls have more motivation than boys in "Effort", "Social concern" and "Task" subscales. The possible reason for this issue is the greater accountability of girls and their future responsibility like maternal duties. The limitation of this study was that the students' final exam scores were used as academic achievement criteria. These tests are not standardized and therefore their validity and reliability might not be appropriate. Also these tests are highly dependent on the test evaluator's opinion and the scores might reflect the evaluator's emotional aspect of scoring. Since this study was limited to students of high school, generalization about other grades should be made with caution. According to the mentioned limitation, we suggest that researchers use the scores of the standardized tests in their future studies as academic achievement criteria.

REFERENCES

- Ali, J., & McInerney, D. M. (2005). An analysis of the predictive validity of the inventory of school motivation (ISM). *The Australian Association for Research in Education, Melbourne, Australia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/ali05403.pdf>.
- Ali, J., & McInerney, D. M. (2006). *Developing a standardized measure of student motivation for use in diverse cultural settings: An overview of research*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Learning Competency ICLC, Seoul, Korea.

- Ali, J., & McInerney, D. M. (2004). *Multidimensional assessment of school motivation*. Paper presented at the 3rd SELF Research Conference, Berlin, Germany.
- Ali, J., & McInerney, D. M. (2005). *Testing the invariance of a motivation model across seven cultural groups*. Paper presented at the AARE 2005 International Educational Conference, Sydney, Australia.
- Amrai, K., Elahi Motlagh, Sh., & Azizi Zalani, H., (2011). The relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement students. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 399-402.
- Azadikhah, M (2012). *The validation of the inventory of school motivation*. Unpublished MA thesis. Semnan University.
- Criss, E. (2011). Dance all night: motivation in education, *Music Educators Journal*. 61-66.
- Dowson, M., & McInerney, D. M. (2003). What do students say about their motivational goals? Towards a more complex and dynamic perspective on student motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 28, 91–113.
- Dowson, M., & McInerney, D. M. (2004). The development and validation of the Goal Orientation and Learning Strategies Survey (GOALS-S). *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 64, 290–310.
- Elliot, A. J. (2005). A conceptual history of the achievement goal structure. In A. J. Elliot & C. S. Dweck (Eds.), *Handbook of competence and motivation* (pp. 52–72). New York: The Guilford.
- Elliot, A. J., & Church, M. A. (1997). A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 218–232.
- Elliot, A. J., & Murayama, K. (2008). On the measurement of achievement goals: Critique, illustration, and application. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100, 613–628.
- King, R. B., Ganotice, F. A., & Watkins, D. A. (2011). Cross-cultural validation of the inventory of school motivation (ISM) in the Asian setting: Hong Kong and the Philippines. *Child Ind Res*. DOI 10.1007/s12187-011-9117-3.
- Maehr, M. (1984). Meaning and motivation: Toward a theory of personal investment. In R. Ames & C. Ames (Eds.), *Research on motivation in education: Student motivation*, 1, 115–207.
- Maehr, M. L., & Zusho, A. (2009). Achievement goal theory: The past, present, and future. In K. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 77–104). New York: Routledge.
- Maehr, M. L., & Braskamp, L. A. (1986). The motivation factor: A theory of personal investment. Lexington, MA: Lexington.
- Maehr, M. L., & Zusho, A. (2009). Achievement goal theory: The past, present, and future. In K. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 77–104). New York: Routledge.
- Martin, A. J. (2003). Boys and motivation. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 30, 43-65.
- McInerney, D. M., & Sinclair, K. E. (1992). Dimensions of school motivation. A cross-cultural validation study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 23, 389-406.
- McInerney, D. M. (1992). Cross-cultural insights into school motivation and decision making. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 13, 53-74.
- McInerney, D. M. (1994a, July). *Goal theory and indigenous minority school motivation: Relevance and application*. Paper presented at the 23rd International Congress of Applied Psychology, Madrid, Spain. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 388 738).

- McInerney, D. M. (1994b). Psychometric perspectives on school motivation and culture. In E. Thomas (Ed.), *International perspectives on culture and schooling* (pp. 327-353). London: Institute of Education, London University.
- McInerney, D. M. (1995). Goal theory and indigenous minority school motivation: Relevance and application. In P. R. Pintrich & M. L. Maehr (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement*, 9, 153-181. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- McInerney, D. M. (2008). Personal investment, culture and learning: Insights into school achievement across Anglo, Aboriginal, Asian and Lebanese students in Australia. *International Journal of Psychology*, 43, 870-879.
- McInerney, D. M., Roche, L.A. McInerney, V., & Marsh, H.W. (1997). Cultural perspectives on school motivation, *American educational research journal*. 34 (1), 207-236.
- McInerney, D. M., & Ali, J. (2005, April). *Multidimensional and Hierarchical Assessment of School Motivation: Cross-cultural Validation*. Paper presented at the AERA annual meeting, Montreal, CA.
- McInerney, D. M., & Sinclair, K. E. (1991). Cross cultural model testing: Inventory of school motivation. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 51, 123-133.
- McInerney, D. M., & Swisher, K. (1995). Exploring Navajo motivation in school settings. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 33, 28-51.
- McInerney, D. M., Maehr, M., & Dowson, M. (2004). Motivation and culture. *Encyclopedia of applied psychology*, 2, 631-639.
- McInerney, D. M., Marsh, H. W., & Yeung, A. S. (2003). Toward a hierarchical model of school motivation. *Journal of applied measurement*, 4, 335-357
- McInerney, D. M., Roche, L. A., McInerney, V., & Marsh, H. W. (1997). Cultural perspectives on school motivation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 207-236.
- McInerney, D. M., Yeung, S. Y., & McInerney, V. (2001). Cross cultural validation of the inventory of school motivation (ISM). *Journal of Applied Psychological Measurement*, 2, 134-152.
- Marsh, M., Baumert, J., Richards, G. E., & Trautwen, U. (Eds.), *Self-Concept, Motivation and Identity: Where to from here?* (ISBN 1 74108 073 8). SELF Research Centre, University of Western Sydney.
- Nelson, G. F., O'Mara, A.J., McInerney, D. M., Dowson, M. (2006). Motivation in cross-cultural settings: A Papua New Guinea psychometric study. *International Education Journal*, 7(4), 400-409.
- Pajares, F., Britner, S. L., & Valiante, G. (2000). Relation between achievement goals and self-beliefs of middle school students in writing and science. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 406-422.
- Pekrun, R., Elliot, A. J., & Maier, M. A. (2006). Achievement goals and discrete achievement emotions: A theoretical model and prospective test. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98, 583-597.
- Pekrun, R., Elliot, A. J., & Maier, M. A. (2009). Achievement goals and achievement emotions: Testing a model of their joint relations with academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1, 115-135.

- Pekrun, R., Frenzel, A., Goetz, T., & Perry, R. P. (2007). The control–value theory of achievement emotions: An integrative approach to emotions in education. In P. A. Schutz & R. Pekrun (Eds.), *Emotions in education*, 13-36. San Diego, CA: Elsevier.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2000). Multiple goal, multiple pathways: The role of goal orientation in learning and achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 26, 265–280.
- Sobhaninejad, M; Abedi, A. (2006). The relationship between self-regulated learning strategies, academic achievement motivation of high school students of and their academic performance in mathematics. *Research Quarterly*, Tabriz University. Vol. 1
- Suliman, R., Mcinerney, D. M.(2003). Motivational goals and school achievement: Lebanese-background students in South Western Sydney. *Australian journal of education*. Retrieved from www.aare.edu.au/03pap/sul03797.pdf
- Watkins, D. A., McInerney, D. M., & Lee, C. (2002). Assessing the school motivation of Hong Kong students. *Psychologia*, 45, 145–154.
- Wolters, C. A. (2004). Advancing achievement goal theory: Using goal structures and goal orientations to predict students' motivation, cognition, and achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(2), 236–250.
- Yousefi, A., Ghasemi, Gh., Firouznia, S. (2009) The relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement of students in Esfahan University of Medical Sciences. *Iranian Journal of Medical Education*, 9(1), 79-84.

REFLECTIVE TEACHING AND USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AMONG EFL INSTRUCTORS

Nikoo Bagheri

*Department of Foreign Languages, Fars Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Fars, Iran*

Department of Foreign Languages, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran

Dr. Seyyed Jamal Abdolrahimzadeh

*Department of Foreign Languages, Fars Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Fars, Iran*

Department of Foreign Languages, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the relationship between the use of technology and reflective teaching within the Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Use of educational technology in this research was defined as employing means such as email, the Internet, blog, electronic databases, electronic journal, Learning Management System, and podcast to do class activities. An analytic survey method was used and the data were gathered through a questionnaire. A total sample of 100 participants including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at English departments in Azad University branches in Shiraz, Iran and some surrounding towns as well as 50 teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute were selected through purposive sampling. Pearson correlation coefficient and t-test techniques were used for data analysis. The findings showed that there was a significant relationship between use of educational technology and reflection on teaching among English instructors in both educational contexts. This means that according to what they have reported, the more they used educational technology in teaching, the more reflection on teaching would be the results. Furthermore, the findings revealed that gender did not significantly influence use of educational technology and reflective teaching. The results of the present study indicated that reflection and educational technology are two complementary factors to facilitate teacher's practices and increase their professional progression as well.

KEYWORDS: reflection, reflective teaching, educational technology, gender difference

INTRODUCTION

Within the field of education over the last few decades, a gradual but marked shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on traditional teaching and greater stress on reflection and reflective teaching. In a word, language teaching has progressively moved towards reflective teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Prabhu, 1990). According to the definition given by Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, "reflective teaching is an approach to teaching and to teacher education which is based on the assumptions that teachers can improve

their understanding of teaching and the quality of their own teaching by reflecting critically on their own practices. In teacher education programs, activities which seek to develop a reflective approach to teaching aim to develop the skills of considering the teaching process thoughtfully, analytically and objectively, as a way of improving classroom practices” (p. 451). In the same vein, reflective teaching involves teachers’ learning how to subject their beliefs to critical analysis and taking responsibility for their actions. That is why providing teachers with opportunities to use conscious reflection is crucial (Farrell, 2001).

Reflective teaching is a series of actions of cautious attentions in education which assist teachers to resolve the problems of teaching that they encounter in the class. In addition, with receptive view point in teaching, instructors will enhance their teaching abilities as well as self-efficacy (Dewey, 1933). With a reflective approach, teachers and instructors of English as a second or foreign language are given opportunities to think about what they are doing, ponder on their past experience and current experience they are involved in their classroom practice to make connections between theory and practice, decide about necessary changes to improve attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices in order to bring about a match between teaching procedures, activities, and techniques and their student’s learning styles and needs. In a nutshell, teachers can play the role core educational decision-makers (Pacheco, 2005). Using reflection as an integral part of teacher's practice is one method of professional development in education (Calderhead & Gates, 1993). According to Dewey (1964) reflection is a vital tool for teaching because it allows us understand where our status are when we perform as a teacher. It changes actions that are only appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action. Reflective practice on teaching assists practitioners to enhance professional progression (Killon & Todman, 1991).

On the other hand, technology has been an increasingly attractive concept within the field of education for the past decades. Instructional technology is supposed to support and promote the teaching-learning environment or even bring about some ground for promotional modifications in educational practices (Dwad, 1992; Pop & Golub, 2002; Sells, 2011). Moreover, technological tools such as computer mediated communication (CMC) enhancing thinking critically, developing collaboration and reflective practice in learning and teaching context as well (Arnold & Ducate, 2006; Kessler & Bikowski, 2010; Miceli, Murray & Kennedy, 2010; Tang & Lam, 2014; Waltonen-Moore, Stuart, Newton, Oswald, & Varonis, 2006). Thus, the development of instructional technologies contributing to richer options facilitates reflective teaching and learning (Bosch & Cardinale, 1993). In spite of the bulk of research findings revealing the merits of teachers and instructors’ wide-spread use of technology, it has not become deeply integrated into typical curriculums yet.

While reflection on teaching is an absolute precondition for instructors to enhance effectiveness of his or her teaching (Dewey, 1916) it is of high significance for them when deciding to infuse technology into their teaching. Instructors should consider technology as an indispensable part of instructional delivery. Thus, is it so crucial for instructors to know how effectively integrate technology in relation to teaching and learning context, i.e. they should be able to evaluate the appropriateness of any technological tools to understand whether they are compatible with their lesson plan and learning results, and allowing them to promote the evaluation of instruction, aims

of lessons, reflection on teaching to support effective teaching practices (Bosch & Cardinale, 1993).

RELATED LITERATURE

The basic idea of reflective teaching originated from John Dewey (1933) who made a difference between 'routine action' and 'reflective action'. Dewey argued that routine action is focused on convention, custom, and authority and circumstances, while reflective action involves pliability, self-valuation analysis and social awareness. He asserted that: "...quality educators and education cannot be derived from the imitation of techniques that have worked in the past, but rather teachers should be trained in analyzing and defining principles behind the techniques. In short, it is theorized that the more teacher reflectivity, the better the quality of teaching" (p. 89).

Furthermore, Shon (1987) claimed that reflective teaching involves looking at what you perform in the classroom, deliberating on why you do it, and pondering about whether it is effective, i.e., self-appraisal and self-monitoring process. Wood and Stevens (1988) have emphasized that through selecting a systematic and critical approach, reflective teaching involves teacher in examining, analyzing, assessing, modifying and enhancing their practice. In light of this, Zeichner and Liston (1996) claimed that reflective teaching causes teachers to pay attention to the educational and cultural conditions of their teaching as well as school modifications and be responsible for their professional growth. Additionally, it engaged teachers in analyzing, planning, trying to resolve the difficulty of classroom, schools, and questioning regarding beliefs and values in their teaching context.

Reflective teachers build possible connections between the requirements and learners' particular actions. Teachers undertake a rational reflection's process, examination and explanation to enhance their teaching, which in turns, in several ways indicated the learning processes which was anticipated from students. A reflective instructor converts perceptions into active change, and considered what s/he performs from diverse aspects to the extent possible as well as finding new solutions through self-appraisal as outlined by Jonassen (1999). Richards (1990) sees reflection as a key component of teacher development. He indicated that self-inquiry and critical thinking can help teachers move from a level where they may be guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine, to a level where their actions are guided by reflection and critical thinking.

In recent years, educational technology has gained a noticeable place in the revolution of education, offering more choices for both learners and teachers and also cause pliability in the context of teaching and learning. Tomei (2002) defined educational technology as "the application of behavioral and physical sciences concepts and other knowledge to the solution of problems". Through applying technology pedagogical, educational occasions enhanced which cause to empower instructor to have sufficient time for arrangement, planning of teaching and so meet the requirements of the students. Moreover he stated that teacher's use of technology in the context of the teaching leads to involvement of learner's utilization of technology and also it assists students to attend to the relationship between what the instructor is teaching and the technology being employed. So, the perception of learners regarding learning is increased, which

in turn, result in making them ready for technology based- society (Majed, 1996). In a study, Yang (2009) investigated the application of blogs as a reflective device in the instruction processes of English as Foreign Language (EFL) student teachers, who wanted to learn to teach English for future development in Taiwan. The findings of the study revealed that participants regarded technology a beneficial tool for reflecting and contacting, talking with each other. The study also pointed out positive remarks regarding the application of blogs as a means to offer and enhance critical reflection of EFL teachers.

In another study, Insuasty and Zambrano castillo (2010) sought to explore how student teachers' using journal keeping and blog group discussions could enable them to become more reflective practitioners. The findings of the study indicated that student teachers increased their understanding regarding what reflective teaching said implicitly and most of their journal entries mainly emphasized on assessing teaching, identifying and solving difficulties, demonstrated reflective origins as well. In another research by Sardegna and Dugartysreenova (2014) the researchers sought to determine pre-service foreign language teachers' (N=425) attitudes about the importance and helpfulness of utilizing technology-increased activities (discussion forums, blogs, wikis, e-portfolios, videotape recordings) in a method course, and their comprehension regarding how these activities improved their learning. Participants had an idea that the technology-oriented activities offered enhanced occasions to have a more rich and different. Interactions, peer feedback, reflection and promoted a deeper understanding as well as greater realization of the value of technology-enhanced practices.

Hajizaedeh (2011) examined the effect of blog on reflective practice of male and female Iranian college students. Forty students kept voluntary blogs in their free time throughout a semester participated in the study. The students usually wrote about everyday activities, but they also used their blogs to write their reflections about their language learning. The findings suggest that blogs could be one tool for teachers to use in order to encourage students to reflect on their learning.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Reflective teaching and technology are two important issues in educational environments in general and EFL contexts in particular. Reflection in general and "Reflective Pedagogy" in particular are the missing elements of Iranian academic realm. Iranian academic realm entails both university and institute contexts. Both contexts assist learners to develop English professionally as a foreign language. There have been few research on these issues in a variety of EFL contexts, and also have received little attention in two Iranian sub context. Furthermore, most studies conducted on technology in language teaching in Iran, have concentrated on the use of instructional technology to enhance learning quality and strengthening related variables as well as student's reflective thinking and reflective learning. Given the above options, it seemed necessary to conduct such as study in Iran which assists instructors how to applying reflective teaching and using educational technology to enhance efficiency of their teaching practices and promote reflection on teaching as well.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Could instructors' reflective teaching be related to their educational technology use in Iranian EFL sub-contexts?
- 2) Is gender related to instructors' reflective teaching and technology use?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of in this study consisted of 100 male and female EFL instructors including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at the department of English in Azad University branches in Shiraz and some surrounding towns and 50 EFL teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute. The instructors were arranged based on their rank in the university, namely professor, associated professor, assistant professor and lecturer. Purposive sampling was used in this survey.

Instruments

The necessary data for this study gathered by means of questionnaire on reflective teaching and use of educational technology. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher with respect to the requirements of answering the stated research question. As it was mentioned before, the researcher worked on data to be collected with questionnaire among instructors at the variety of Azad University branches and teachers at the Iran Language Institute. The questionnaire considered of 44 questions and consisted of two parts. The first one is related to personal attitudes, and the second is allocated to questions centering upon the application of reflective teaching, educational technology, and considering both issues. A five-point Likert type scale has been designed. The five options "never", "seldom", "sometimes", "frequently" and "quite frequently" was designed to scale the participants' responses in a multiple-choice test format. Each response has its point ranging from 1= never to 5= quite frequently (see the questionnaire in the appendix).

Procedures

data collection procedures

100 EFL instructors including 50 EFL instructors teaching English at the department of English in Azad University branches in Shiraz and some surrounding towns and 50 EFL teachers teaching English in advanced levels in Iran Language Institute took part in this survey during the academic year of 2013 within 4 months. Participation was voluntary and no remuneration was suggested. The data were collected from the questionnaire and utilized for SPSS. Before, the above mentioned questionnaire was given to each teacher, they were asked to fill out the questionnaires in all honesty and meticulously since their careful completion would definitely contribute to obtaining real data which is crucial for more accurate findings and the information would be kept confidential. Respondents answered the questions in two parts: In part A they filled up their demographic details such as gender, current level of study, program of study. In part B respondents indicated their reflective teaching and use of technology.

Data analysis procedures

To analyze the data the statistical package for the social science (SPSS) Version 16 were utilized. Also, researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive part frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were utilized to indicate the demographic details. In the inferential statistics to determine the differences between use of technology and reflective teaching based on gender in these two sub context an independent sample t-test was run. To determine the correlation between instructors reflective teaching and use of technology the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following the main objective of the study, the first research question was set out to explore whether there was any relationship between instructors' use of technology and their reflective teaching in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole, and in each context separately. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to examine this relationship. The results are tabulated in tables below.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole

Independent Dependent		Technology
Reflective teaching	Correlation	0.906
	sig	0.000

As indicated by the results presented in table 1, the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.906, which is highly significant. The findings show that there are positive and direct significant relationships between technology and reflective teaching. Therefore, in both teaching sub context as a whole, the more the EFL instructors used technology, the more reflective teaching will be and vice versa.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in institute context

Independent Dependent		Technology
Reflective teaching	Correlation	0.878
	sig	0.000

Given the data in the table 2, the results of Person Correlation Coefficient is also positively and highly significant as well. Results indicate that technology is significantly and positively correlated to reflective teaching, i.e. considering institute context, increasing in using technology contributing to enhancing reflective teaching and reversely.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between reflective teaching and technology in university context

Independent Dependent		Technology
Reflective teaching	Correlation	0.928
	sig	0.000

Table 3 indicates that the relationship between technology and reflective teaching was again positive and highly significant. This revealed that in the context of the university, EFL instructors who used more technology achieved higher level of reflective teaching and vice versa.

The second research question was referred to investigate whether gender had any effect on technology and reflective teaching use respectively. First in the context of the university and in that of institute on the whole, and then individually in per of them. Using an independent sample t-test intended to determine whether the two variables are influenced by gender. The findings are depicted in the following tables.

Table 4: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	57	3.45	0.54	0.95	0.343
Female	43	3.34	0.52		

The results displayed in the above table indicate that on the whole, in spite of the fact that the mean scores of male group were slightly more than the female ones. This showed a relatively more technology use by male group. However, analysis of an independent t-test revealed that these results were not statically significant (as shown in table 4).

Table 5: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in institute context

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	21	3.27	0.65	-0.64	0.522
Female	29	3.37	0.39		

Regarding the findings given in table 5, although the mean score of the male group, compared to that of female, was found more, i.e., the use of technology by male group was partly more than the female ones in institute context. Yet, this partial difference was insignificance as well.

Table 6: Difference of educational technology use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in university context

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	36	3.55	0.43	1.53	0.132
Female	14	3.29	0.73		

The data presented in table 6, considering the mean scores of both female and male groups, despite that of male group were higher than that of female, That is, in compassion by female the males' application of technology was slightly higher. However, Findings reveal no significant difference between male and female groups regarding using technology in the context of university.

Table 7: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in the two Iranian teaching sub contexts on the whole

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	57	3.55	0.51	1.28	0.203
Female	43	3.41	0.59		

Despite the fact that the mean score of the male group was relatively more in compassion with female one, the independent samples t-test results in Table 7 illustrates no significant difference between the two groups of instructors regarding the use of reflective teaching in their class management.

Table 8: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in institute context

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	21	3.46	0.59	0.56	0.572
Female	29	3.37	0.44		

Table 8 shows that even though the mean score of the female group was little more than the female one, there are non-statistically significance differences between the mean scores of the both groups as regards using reflective teaching in institute context.

Table 9: Difference of reflective teaching use by EFL university professors and institute teachers based on the gender in university context

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig
Male	36	3.60	0.45	0.67	0.505
Female	14	3.48	0.82		

As above table demonstrates, comparing the mean scores of the male group with that of the female one showed that male instructors had more tendencies towards reflective teaching. However, the observed difference between the gender groups was not significant.

Discussion

The present study aimed at broadening our understanding of the implication of reflection and reflective teaching practices and the efficiency of educational technology and addresses the question of whether the Iranian EFL instructor's use of educational technology tools could lead to enhance and facilitate reflective teaching practices. Reflection and reflective teaching considered as important and significant factors in teaching context in both public and private university. Educational technology can also significantly affect teaching and teacher's effective practice

inside classroom. Based on the findings of the present research on one hand reflective teaching assist instructors to make connection between theory and practice and also enhancing the efficiency of teaching practices, on the other hand applying educational technology also boost the effectiveness of teaching practices. In addition through applying educational technology teachers can reflect on their teaching and if necessary make any modification on the instruction or strategies of teaching. The present findings are in line with the previous research which showed that university teachers considered technology- increased such as activates useful for binding theory and practice, improving thinking critically, and enhancing professional development activities and for promoting reflective practice as well (Sardegna and Dugartysreenova, 2014; Yang, 2009). Broadly speaking, since education moves progressively towards the promotion of efficacy of teaching, use of educational technology was a necessity in the context of teaching in general and reflective teaching in particular. Iranian EFL instructors appreciate the status of technology along with other aspects of teaching. Reflection is also crucial in teaching therefore this new methods of teaching is developed increasingly as well in Iranian academic realm.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL instructors' use of educational technology and reflective teaching. The results indicated that there is a high and positive correlation between these two variables. It is self-evident that technology played an important role in teaching and reflective teaching as well. The application of educational technology assist teacher to increase the productiveness of teaching practices and instructional strategies. While technology is of high significance in the context of teaching, the need for reflection is also have significant role to promote the effectiveness of teaching. In light of this technology can significantly benefit teachers to reflect on their teaching and analyze, examine their instruction, methods, lesson plan, and students to make rational decision and also make any necessary changes in the context of teaching.

Limitations of the study

The present research has some limitations preventing it to propose completely developed as goes with other similar studies.

1. The researcher could not check if the reflective participants pursue the reflection principles knowingly or just by their insights, because the reflectivity status of the teacher was showed by a questionnaire .In other words the researcher could not conduct interviews for data collection triangulation purposes due to non-availability of the participants.
2. As the teachers did not cooperate in collecting research data through questionnaire, the researcher spent much more time for about four months in gathering research data.

REFERENCES

- Arnold, N., & Ducate, L. (2006). Future foreign language teachers' social and cognitive collaboration in an online environment. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10(1), 42–66.
- Bosch, K.A., & Cardinale, L. (1993). Preservice teacher' perceptions of computer use during a field experience. *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education*, 10(1), 23-27.

- Calderhead, J., & Gates, P. (1993). *Conceptualizing Reflection in Teacher Development*. London: Falmer Press.
- Daud, N. M. (1992). Issues in CALL implementation and its implication on teacher training. *CALICO Journal*, 10(1), 69-78.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education. An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: Free Press.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think. A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: DC Heath & Co.
- Dewey, J. (1964). *John Dewey on education*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2001). Tailoring reflection to individual needs. A TESOL case study' In *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 27(1), 45-64.
- Hajizadeh, R. (2011). A weblog as a Tool for Reflection for English Language Learners. *Journal of Educational Media*, 28 (2), 225-233.
- Insuasty, E. A., and Zambrano Castillo, L.C. (2010). Exploring Reflective Teaching through Informed Journal Keeping and Blog Group Discussion in the Teaching Practicum, *Journal of Teacher Education*, 12 (2), 87-105.
- Jonassen, D. (1999). Designing constructivist learning environments. In C. M. Reigeluth (Ed.), *Instructional-design theories and models, Volume II: A new paradigm of instructional theory*, (pp. 215-239). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kessler, G., & Bikowski, D. (2010). Developing collaborative autonomous learning abilities in computer mediated language learning: Attention to meaning among students in wikispace. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23 (4), 41-58.
- Killon, J., & Todman, G. (1991). A process of personal theory building. *Educational Leadership*, 48(6), 14-17.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2001). Toward a Postmethod pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(4), 537- 558.
- Majed, A. (1996). Student teachers' use of instructional media and its implications. *International Journal of Instructional Media*, 23(1), 59-78
- Martin, Jr., Ralph, E., Wood George, H., & Stevens Edward, W. (1988). *An Introduction to Teaching a Question of Commitment USA*: Allyn and Bacon.
- Miceli, T., Murray, S. V., & Kennedy, C. (2010). Using an L2 blog to enhance learners' participation and sense of community. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23(1), 321-341.
- Pacheco, A. Q. (2005). Reflective teaching and its impact on foreign language teaching. *Numero Extraordinario*, 5(1), 1-19.
- Pope, C., & Golub, J. (2000). Preparing tomorrow's English language art teachers today: Principles and Practices for infusing Technology. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, 1(1), 89-97.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1990). There is No Best Method-Why? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(2), 161- 176.
- Richards, J. (1990). Beyond training: Approaches to teacher education in language teaching. *Language Teacher*, 14(2), 3-8.
- Richards, Jack. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. London: Pearson Education.
- Sardegna, V. G., and Dugartsyrenova, V.A. (2014). Pre-Service Foreign Language Teacher Perspectives on Learning with Technology, *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(1), 147-167.

- Schon, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Seels, B. (2011). From Dale to Delivery Systems: The Problem of Media Selection Theory. In G. Anglin (Ed.). *Instructional Technology, Past, Present and Future (3rd Ed.)* (pp. 55-68). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.
- Tang, E., & Lam, C. (2014). Building an effective online learning community (OLC) in blog-based teaching portfolios. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 20, (5), 79–85.
- Tomei, L.A. (2002). *The technology façade: Overcoming barriers to effective instructional technology*. San Francisco: Allyn & Bacon.
- Waltonen, M.S., Stuart, D., Newton, E., Oswald, R., & Varonis, E. (2006). From virtual strangers to a cohesive online learning community: The evolution of online group development in a professional development course. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 14(2) 287–311.
- Wood, E., & Stevens, D. (1988). The reflective practitioner in higher education: The nature and characteristics of reflective practice among teacher education faculty. *National Forum of Teacher Education Journal-Electronic*, 16(3), 1-16.
- Yang, S.-H. (2009). Using Blogs to Enhance Critical Reflection and Community of Practice. *Educational Technology & Society*, 12 (2), 11–21.
- Zeichner, k. M., & Liston, D. P. (1996). *Reflective teaching: An introduction*. Mahwah, N. j: L. Erlbaum.

THE COMPARATIVE EFFECT OF TWO SCAFFOLDING STRATEGIES ON INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

Shahrzad Haghparsat

*Department of English Language, Science & Research, Shahr-e-Qods Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Tehran, Iran
shahrzadhaqparast@yahoo.com*

Dr.Behdokht Mall-Amiri

*Assistant professor
Islamic Azad University of Central Tehran Branch
b_m_amiri@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to seek the impact of scaffolding on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners. To fulfill this purpose, 60 language learners studying English at Parto institute, in Tehran, Iran were considered as the participants. Participants including males and females between 20 to 50 years old were divided into four classes and each two classes formed one of the experimental groups. After assuring of the homogeneity of students through a pre-piloted Preliminary English Test (PET) in terms of their English proficiency in general and reading comprehension in particular, scaffolding strategy (question answering) was applied for one group and scaffolding strategy (question generating) was used for the other group. After running the classes, a pre-piloted reading section of another PET test was administered to both experimental groups as the posttest. The data analysis showed there was not any significant difference between the effect of the two scaffolding strategies (question generating and question answering) on reading comprehension of EFL learners. Results of this study have implications for language learners, helps the learners' autonomy and independence in learning and keeps students on task, and for language teachers, guide students to have more collaboration, discussion, group work, get learners engaged in learning by both initiating & sustaining their interest.

KEYWORDS: Scaffolding, Reading, Reading Comprehension, Question Answering, Question Generating

INTRODUCTION

According to Farhady (2005), "Reading is one of the most useful and necessary skills for daily life. People usually read because they want to obtain information about a specific subject" (p. 1). Farhady further maintains that there are various purposes for reading such as getting facts, exchanging ideas, enjoying leisure time, or expressing feelings. Therefore, most people obtain

new information or ideas through the process of reading. " Given the importance of reading in our daily lives, there is little wonder why assisting English language learners in understanding reading comprehension texts has always been a major preoccupation for reading researchers and teachers" (Baleghizadeh, 2011, p.1669).

According to Alexandar (1996), instruction can be effective in providing learners with a repertoire of strategies that promote comprehension monitoring and foster comprehension. For students to become motivated strategic strategy users, they need "systematically orchestrated instruction or training". (Alexander, 1996; Kasper, 2000; Singhal, 2001; Van Wyk, 2001) believe that in order to meet the reading needs of students within the 21st century, educators are pressed to develop effective instructional means for teaching reading comprehension and reading strategy use. Rosenshine and Meister (1992 cited in Larkin, 2002) state that A very useful strategy to optimize student learning is scaffolding which provides a supportive environment while facilitating student independence. Scaffolding is a process in which students are given support until they can apply new skills and strategies independently.

Thus, this study aimed to investigate the comparative effect of two scaffolding strategies, question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Due to the shift in the nature of teaching methodologies towards student's self centeredness in learning situations, the professionals are constantly seeking for implementing teaching methods to shift the responsibility of learning task to learners. Among many strategies, in this regard scaffolding is one of the principles of effective instruction which enables teachers to accommodate individual needs. Scaffolding is a metaphor to describe the type of help offered by an expert (such as a tutor or parent) to support a student to carry out the task that the student is initially unable to accomplish independently (Wood, Bruner, & Ross 1976).

The researcher as an EFL teacher and learner, has noticed EFL learners' struggle to cope with comprehending a written passage, and has been on the look for a way or technique to facilitate the task. Having this objective in mind the researcher decided to apply scaffolding strategies to help the learners to improve the reading comprehension abilities. But, in spite of the existence of numerous scaffolding strategies in this field, no research has been done to the best of the researcher's knowledge to investigate the comparative effectiveness of question answering and question generating to reveal the privilege of one strategy over another in improving reading comprehension of EFL learners. Therefore, the present study was an attempt to investigate which one of the scaffolding strategies would improve the learners' reading comprehension more.

Scaffolding

Benson, (1997 as cited in Lipscomb, Swanson, West, 2004) stated that, scaffolding was developed to describe the type of assistance offered by a teacher or peer to support learning. In the process of scaffolding, the teacher assists the student master a task that the student is initially unable to do it independently. The teacher helps with only those skills that are beyond the student's capability. Allowing the student to complete as much of the task as possible is an important point of scaffolding. Teacher only helps the student with tasks that are just beyond his current capability. Student errors are expected, but, with teacher feedback, the student is able to

achieve the task. When the student takes responsibility for the task, the teacher begins the gradual removal of the scaffolding, which allows the student to work independently. He continues that Scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know.

Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the act of understanding what you are reading. "Reading comprehension is an intentional, active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing"(Brummitt-Yale, 2008 p.2). Papalia (2006) also believes that "Reading comprehension entails more than knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. It also requires ability to perceive the exact nature of the passage being communicated-a deeper form of understanding sometimes called 'reading between the lines'. "Students must learn to detect mood and intentions as well as factual detail" (p.74).

According to Snow (2002), "reading is a process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language". (p.11)

Reading

Similarly Hughes (2007) says that reading is a complex interaction between the text, the reader, and the purposes for reading, which are shaped by the reader's prior knowledge and experiences, the reader's knowledge about reading and writing language and the reader's language community which is culturally and socially situated

Question generating (QG)

It is the purposeful posing and answering of questions about what is read especially to make inferences or uncover details (why, what, where, when, etc) and specific information needed to deeply analyze the body of knowledge process (Researchprécis, 2004). According to the "Generating Question"(2007), the generating questions strategy involves requiring students to read a specific text to create questions and elicit important information from the passage, and answer their questions.

Asking students to create their own questions about a reading passage encourages them to read more actively and helps them to focus their attention on key ideas.

Question answering (QA)

According to Raphael (1986), it is a reading comprehension strategy that was developed to "clarify how students approach the tasks of reading texts and answering questions"(p.206-221).It encourages students to be active, strategic readers of texts (Raphael, 1986)

Raphael (1986) continues that,Question Answer Relationship (QAR) is a useful tool in providing a basis for three comprehensionstrategies: locating information, determining text structures and how theyconvey information, and determining when an inference would be required. It initially helps children understand that information from both texts andtheir knowledge base. It helps students search for key words and phrases tolocate the appropriate information for answering

questions. Finally, QARshelp students recognize whether or not information is present in the text and, if not, that it is necessary to read between or beyond the lines to answer the question. Raphael, T.E., & Au, K.H (2005 cited in "The Reading Teacher", 2005) described that how Question Answer Relationships can provide a framework for comprehension instruction with the potential of closing the literacy achievement gap. According to the site "Reading Rockets", there are some steps in order to help students make use of QAR:

➤ *Right There Questions, Think and Search Questions, Author and You, On My Own*

RESEARC QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

Question: Is there any significant difference between the impact of question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the impact of ' question answering and question generating on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Sixty Iranian intermediate students of Parto Institute, in Tehran were non-randomly selected to participate in this study. The participants formed intact groups including males and females between 20 to 50 years old were divided into four classes and each two classes formed one of the experimental groups.

Instrumentation

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following instruments were utilized:

PET Test

Preliminary English Test was administered to assess the language ability of the participants. In this study, the sample of the test which was used included three sections of reading, writing, and listening. The reading section of this language proficiency test had 35 items. For the writing section, there were three parts including five sentence transformation items in the first part and in the other two parts, students were required to write one essay for each part; in other words, in the second part students were required to write a short communicative message about 35-45 words, and for the third part, they were required to write a longer piece of continuous writing about 100 words. The allotted time for the PET reading and writing parts was one hour and 30 minutes.

In the listening section, students were required to answer 13 three-option multiple-choice items and six filling-the-gap items and six true/false items. The allotted time for the PET listening part was 30 minutes. It is necessary to mention that with the aim of saving time, the researcher used only reading, writing, and listening parts of the PET. Moreover, the main focus of the study was reading comprehension, thus the speaking section was not administered in this study.

Therefore, the Reading section had 35 marks, listening section had 25 marks

The writing section had 25 marks. The total mark was out of 85. Before the main administration, the test was piloted on 30 students at intermediate level with the same characteristics of the target sample. The item characteristics including IF and ID were calculated. Items with item facility beyond 0.67 and below 0.33 and items with discrimination value below 0.4 were eliminated. Reliability estimated 0.82. There were 3 malfunctioning items and were excluded, two questions in reading and one in listening. After removing malfunctioning items the reliability was estimated as 0.84. The allotted time for answering the remaining 62 items and the two tasks of writing was two hours.

The first section of the writing was rated according to the writing scales of PET test. The writing sections 2 and 3 of the test were rated by two different raters, the researcher and another trained instructor and to make sure of the consistency between the two raters the inter-rater reliability was estimated ($r=.466$, $p=.009<.05$ for writing part 2 and $r=.654$, $p=.000<.05$ for writing part 3). Therefore, the mean of the two raters' scores for each individual was estimated for further analyses.

Pre-treatment test

The revised PET test was administered and the PET reading scores of the two groups of learners were compared to make sure that they were the same with respect to their reading comprehension ability before the start of the study.

Post-test

In order to check the improvement of reading comprehension of the participants after receiving scaffolding strategies instructions in reading, the learners were given another version of PET reading comprehension test. But prior to the administration of the post test, it was piloted on 30 learners who were similar to the main sample, and item characteristics were probed and reliability was 0.72, as the result four malfunctioning items were deleted from the test and the reliability turned out to be 0.75.

Procedure

This study was composed of a pilot study and a main study. In the pilot study the PET test was administered on 30 EFL learners with similar characteristics to the main sample. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine item characteristics as well as the reliability and gain some insight about the problems that the participants might encounter in the test administration. Also, another version of a PET reading test was piloted on a similar group of learners.

In the main study there were five stages. In the first stage the PET test was administered to ensure the homogeneity and assess the language proficiency of the participants in both classes. Then the reading scores of two groups were calculated and compared by Mann-Whitney U test, to make sure that the two intact groups were homogeneous regarding their general English proficiency in general and their reading comprehension proficiency in particular.

In the third stage, the treatment stage, the participants in the two groups received different treatments within 10 sessions; therefore, in one group question answering, and in another group,

question generating techniques were practiced every session. In the fourth stage, after 10 sessions of treatment there was a reading post –test, in order to reveal any possible improvement in reading comprehension abilities of the learners after receiving instruction in both groups. Thus the learners took a reading test which was piloted before. In the fifth stage, to determine whether there was any significant difference in reading ability of the learners, hence comparing the effect of the two treatments on the reading achievement of the learners, a t- test was conducted to reveal the significance of the difference between the two groups' mean scores.

The Treatments

Treatment in Question answering group

There were 30 intermediate male and female students in the first group. The condition of both groups regarding the time of the class (90 minutes) and the course book of the Institute (Four Corners 3) were the same. Four Corners 3 included 12 units with four integrated skills in which three units were being taught during 15 sessions of the class .Therefore, three reading sections of the units (1 to 3) followed by questions were being taught during the term as one of the practical sources. The teacher also taught some texts from Interchange2 (2005) which contained 16 units with four integrated skills but teacher just taught units (8, 9, 13) followed by some questions. She selected three short stories (p. 6, 8, 18, 22) with exercises from 'Steps t Steps to Understanding' to work on as the practical source during 10 sessions of treatment. All these sources were appropriate for intermediate level. In order to work on a Question answering strategy the research taught texts through the following steps:

For the first step in the first session, the teacher allocated 60 minutes

For introducing the Question Answering strategy explained that questions could be part of the reading lesson and previewing questions could help students focus on reading, then in order to show the relationship of questions to answers she hung a large chart in the class and introduced it to the students. She modeled how each level of QAR could be identified and answered. She said Questions on the chart were divided into four categories as follow and explained the definition for each category:

Right There: the answer is found in the text, usually as a phrase contained within one sentence.

Think and Search: while the answer is in the text, the student is required to combine separate sections or pieces of text to answer the question.

Author and You: as the answer is not directly stated in the text, the student draws on prior knowledge as well as what the author has written to answer the question.

On Your Own: requires students to think about what is already known from their reading and experience (prior knowledge) to formulate an answer (Rafael, 1982)

As the second step the teacher gave each student one copy of the text from the Interchange 2 and modeled the sample for the class. First she read the text aloud for students, then she read question aloud for the class and underlined the keywords of the questions .Finally, she read the text again in order to find the answers. She taught how to answer the questions according to Question Answering strategy depicted in the chart, explained each question and each answer in details according to the chart, categorized the questions and justified why each question related to

In the second and third sessions of the class teacher reviewed the strategy and asked students to work on another text in small groups to write different questions within the group, then they read aloud their answers for the class. The teacher corrected their answers and explained the category of the QAR for each question, gave them some feedbacks, examples or any explanations needed. For the other 7 sessions, students were exposed to different texts from Interchange 2 by Richards (2005), Four corners 3 by Richards and Bohlke (2012) and some texts that she selected from 'Steps For Understanding' by Hill (2005) as the practical source and were supposed to do the task independently by adopting Question Answering strategy on different samples as mentioned before and if necessary the teacher gave more explanations and clarifications of the answers.

Question generating

There were 30 intermediate male and female students in the first group. The condition of both groups regarding the time of the class (90 minutes) and the course book of the Institute (Four Corners 3) were the same. The Four Corners 3(2012) included 12 units with four integrated skills in which three units were being taught during 15 sessions of the class. Therefore, three reading sections of the units (1 to 3) followed by questions were being taught during the term as one of the practical sources. The teacher also taught some texts from Interchange2 (2005) which contained 16 units with four integrated skills but teacher just taught units (p. 8 , 9,13) followed by some questions. She selected three short stories (p. 6, 8, 18, 22) with exercises from 'Steps to Understanding' to work on as the practical source during 10 sessions of treatment.

For the first step of the first session in the second group, the researcher introduced the Question Generating strategy in 60 minutes.

She gave a text from Interchange 2 to each student, she modeled the text as she wrote the title of the passage on the whiteboard and asked students to think about the title that left them with unanswered questions, and sometimes she suggested a question such as what does the title show? What does it refer to? She then encouraged students to raise more questions about the title. On the second step, the teachers explained that for a better understanding of the events or story's characters and improve comprehension; the reader should ask questions as s/he reads (during reading). Then she directed them to a text and read the text aloud and modeled questioning process as she was reading it sentence by sentence, she made different questions and wrote them on the board and asked the students to add any questions of their own, during which she made comments on those parts of the story that contained the answers to the questions. While making questions students might have some difficulties, teacher helped them to make correct forms. On the next step the teacher had students share the text they read in small groups and encouraged them to discuss some of the unanswered questions they made in their mind such as why a particular character made that decision or what would have happened to the character if the story had continued. They could also finish the story or text as they liked or guessed. As she finished all the steps and students understood the strategy, she asked them to remember this strategy for the next sessions.

In the second and third sessions of the class teacher reviewed the strategy and asked students to work on another text in small groups to write different questions within the group, then they read aloud their answers for the class. The teacher corrected their questions, gave them some feedbacks, examples or any explanations needed.

For the other 7 sessions, students were exposed to different texts from Interchange 2 by Richards (2005), Four corners 3 by Richards and Bohlke (2012) and some texts that she selected from 'Steps For Understanding' by Hill (2005) as the practical source and were supposed to do the task independently by adopting Question Generating strategy on different samples as mentioned before and if necessary the teacher gave more explanations and clarifications of the answers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was an attempt to explore the comparative effect of scaffolding strategies on EFL intermediate learners' reading comprehension.

The reliability after removing three malfunctioning items turned out to be as high as .84

Table 1: Inter-rater reliability for PET writing scores
(Pearson Correlation)*

	Writing1 (Rater1)	Writing1 (Rater2)
Writing1 (Rater1)	1.00	.466**
Writing1 (Rater2)	.466**	1.00

*N=30

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

	Writing2 (Rater1)	Writing2 (Rater2)
Writing2 (Rater1)	1.00	.654**
Writing2 (Rater2)	.654**	1.00

*N=30

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

As shown in Table 1, the correlation between the two raters' writing scores part 2 turned out to be significant ($r=.466$, $p<.01$).

The correlation between the two raters' writing scores part 3 turned out to be significant ($r=.65$, $p<.01$).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the pretest reading scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Skewness ratios
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	
QApretest	30	26.83	1.931	.099	.427	.23
QGpretest	30	27.33	2.23	-1.246	.427	2.9

As shown in Table 2, the skewness ratio for the QG exceeds the normality range of ± 1.96 , hence the normality condition was violated, and the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was run instead. The following graphs show the distribution of the pretest scores:

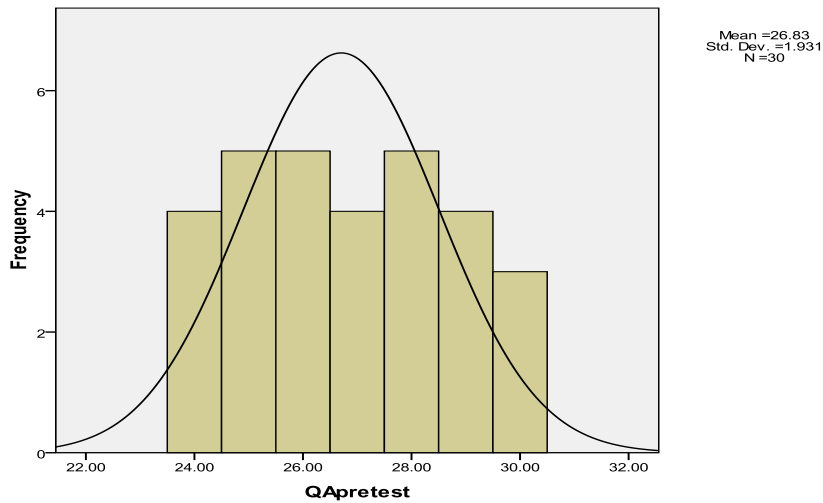


Figure 1: Histogram representing the QA pretest scores distribution

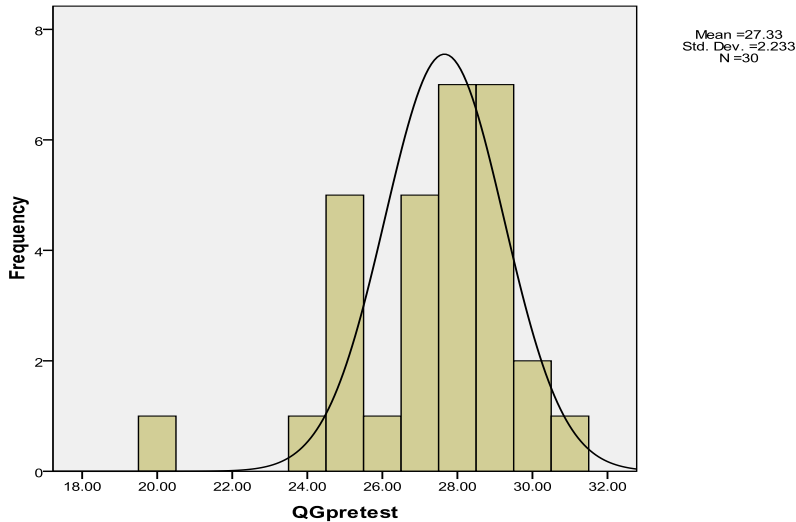


Figure 2: Histogram representing the QG pretest scores distribution

The following tables were generated to compare the pre-test scores through Mann-Whitney U test:

Table 3: Ranks of the pretest scores

	grouping	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
reading pretest	QA	30	27.78	833.50
	QG	30	33.22	996.50
	total	60		

As Table 3 shows, QG group gained a higher mean rank compared with the QA group. The following table shows the significance of this difference:

Table 4: Mann-Whitney test on the pretest scores

	Reading pretest
Mann-Whitney U	368.500
Wilcoxon W	833.500
Z	-1.220
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.223

a. Grouping Variable: grouping

As Table 4 shows, the difference between the two groups' reading abilities turned out to be non-significant at the outset ($M=368.5$, $p=.223>.05$). Therefore, the homogeneity of the learners with respect to their reading comprehension prior to the treatment was ensured.

Before administering the posttest, another version of the PET reading test was piloted on 30 subjects with similar characteristics of the main sample. Then item characteristics were calculated and items with facility index beyond 0.67 and below 0.33 and items with discrimination value below 0.4 were eliminated, as a result 4 items were found to be malfunctioning and were removed from the test Reliability of the test turned out to be 0.72,, and then the reliability was estimated at 0.75 shown in the following table:

Table 5: Reliability Estimates of the post test before and after Removing Malfunctioning Items

	Number of Participants	Number of Items	CronbachAlpha
Before Removing Malfunctioning Items	30	35	.72
After Removing Malfunctioning Items	30	31	.75

To test the null hypothesis, a t test had to be run between the two groups' posttest mean scores. But, firstly the normality condition had to be checked:

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of the posttest scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Skewness ratios	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	
QA posttest	30	26.9333	1.98152	.355	.427	.83
QG posttest	30	27.6333	1.69143	-.155	.427	.36

As shown in Table 6, both sets of scores were normally distributed as the skewness ratios were both within the normality range of ± 1.96 . Therefore, a t test was legitimate to run. The following tables show the result thereof:

Table 7: Group Statistics of the posttest scores

	grouping	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
reading posttest	QA	30	26.93	1.98	.36
	QG	30	27.63	1.69	.31

As Table 7 depicts, Question Generating gained a higher mean score compare with Question Answering .The following table shows if this difference was significant:

Table 8: Independent Samples Test on the posttest scores

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Differences	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Reading posttest	Equal	1.37	0.24	-1.47	58	0.147	-0.07	0.48	-1.65	0.25
	Equal variance not assumed			-1.47	56.605	0.147	-0.07	0.48	-1.65	0.25

As displayed in Table 8 the variances of the two sets of scores turned out to be homogeneous ($F=1.36$, $p=.24>.05$). Therefore, with this assumption met, the first row of the table was referred to in order to see the result of the t test. As the sig value under t test turned out to be .147, larger than .05, it is concluded that the two groups were not significantly different in their posttest performance. Hence, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected.

The following bar graph visually shows the mean scores of the two groups on the posttest:

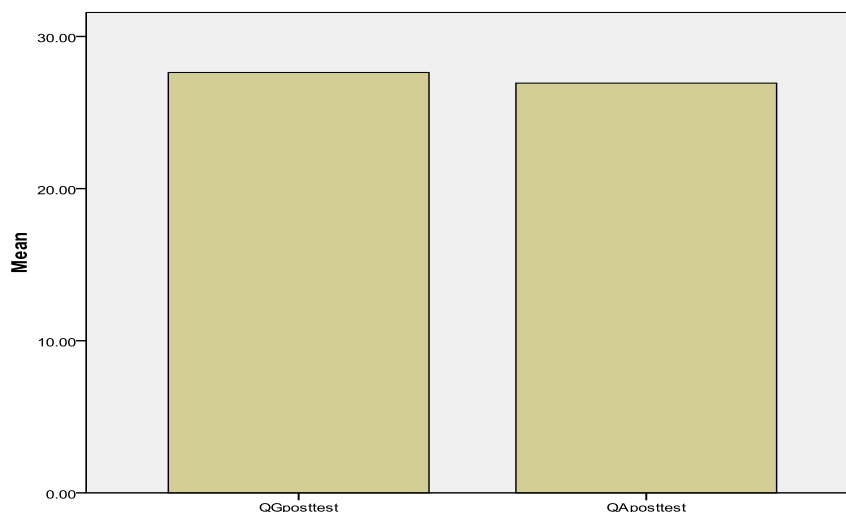


Figure 3: Bar graph representing the post test means scores of the two groups

The application of statistical analyses revealed that the learners did not improve from these two strategies and there was no significant difference between the effectiveness of question answering and question generating in promoting learners' reading comprehension. The results are in line with findings of (Fadakar, 2013) who investigated the impact of scaffolding on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners and found that scaffolding had no significant effect on the reading comprehension of intermediate EFL learners. However, These results are in contrast with a number of researchers' findings who confirmed that scaffolding strategies enhance reading comprehension of the learners (Martin & Rose, 2007; Dorkchandra, 2013; Hui-Chin Yeh & Pei-Yi Lai, 2012; in Humphries, 2011-2013; Hui-Chin Yeh & Pei-Yi Lai, 2012; Johnson, 2014; Wagoner, Smith, 2014). Also, here is another research by Hemmati and Bemani (2013) who worked on Comparing Effect of 'Summarizing', 'Question-Answer Relationship', and 'Syntactic Structure Identification' on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL students and revealed that QAR strategy led to better comprehension of reading texts which is in contrast with the researcher findings.

On the whole, this study revealed that scaffolding in its general sense did not affect students' reading comprehension which runs counter to the research conducted by Martin and Rose (2007) in which they applied scaffolding strategies for teaching reading and writing and achieved spectacular improvements in student outcomes.

It is needless to say that although comprehension is accepted as a process which is time-consuming and difficult to master, readers are not reading unless they comprehend (Haji Maibodi, 2008) which in turn calls for motivation. Therefore, one can ponder over issues such as what kind of texts teachers use in the classroom, how they create reading purposes for those texts, and in what ways they encourage students to read those texts.

The researcher agreed with what Yen-Chi Fan (2010) mentioned in his research that although implementing comprehension strategy instruction for one semester may help learners adopt some

degree of strategic reading behaviors, but it takes long-term efforts and practices for EFL learners to fully develop their strategic reading abilities. Walqui (2006) added in "Scaffolding Instruction for English Language Learners" that for our English learners we need to use scaffolding strategies more extensively, continuously building scaffolds as the need arises, and we need to communicate their purpose and uses to students. While for the native speaker two tasks may be sufficient to understand and practice a concept, the English Language Learner may need four or five different tasks to achieve similar competence. It will take teachers of English Language Learners longer to teach their units, and they may not be able to teach as much in terms of detailed content.

The researcher found these two strategies useful and motivating for learners but she came to the conclusion that as (Haji Maibodi, 2008) mentioned, it is very time-consuming and difficult to master them especially in classes in which teachers have time limitations, but she believes scaffolding improves learners comprehension if teachers make use of these strategies more than 10 sessions to master its techniques, sure more signification will turn out.

Based on the procedure adopted in this study, the researcher speculates that even more than 10 sessions of instruction may have been needed to improve the learners' reading comprehension significantly and/or to reveal a difference between the impact of the two strategies of scaffolding.

CONCLUSION

This study tried to investigate the effect of two scaffolding strategies on intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension. In order to do this, 60 students who were in four intact classes were assigned into two experimental groups.

After the instructional period through which one experimental group received scaffolding question answering reading strategy and another experimental group received question generating strategy, both groups took a reading posttest. The comparison of their mean scores revealed that there was not any significant difference between students' Question Answering strategy and Question Generating strategy on Reading comprehension of EFL learners'.

RR

Limitations

Certain limitations were imposed on this study. First, the age and gender of the participants were a source of difference because students were not exactly at the same age or the same gender since the institute where the study was carried out had a co-educational system. Therefore, generalization of this study to other age ranges in communities of EFL learners would not be appropriate without further research.

Second, there were limited numbers of students in each class in the institute; therefore, teacher should have at least four classes in order to have enough sample size for this study. This division which was imposed on the researcher might have had an influence on the outcome of the study as the classes were not held at the same hour.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, P.A. (1996). The past, present, and future of knowledge research: an examination of the role of knowledge in learning and instruction. *Educational psychology*, 31, 89-92
- Baleghizadeh, S. (2011). The impact of student's training in questioning the author teaching on EFL reading comprehension. *Procedia-social and behavioral science* 29 1668-1676. Retrieved April 12, 2014 from www.sciencedirect.com
- Brummit-Yale, J. (2008). What is reading comprehension? *Reading Instruction Resources for Teachers & parents*. Retrieved December 21, 2014 from www.k12reader.com
- Dorkchandra, D. (2013). The effects of question generating strategy instruction on EFL freshmen's reading comprehension and use of English tenses. *Journal of Liberal Arts*, Prince of Songkla University Vol.5, No.2
- Fadakar, M. (2013). *The Impact of Scaffolding on EFL Intermediate Learners' Reading Comprehension*. Unpublished MA thesis, Islamic Azad University, Central Branch, Tehran. Iran
- Farhady, H. (2005). *Techniques for effective reading*. Tehran: Rahnama Press.
- Fan, Y. (2010). The Effect of Comprehension Strategy Instruction on EFL Learners' Reading: *Center for General Education, I-Shou University*. Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education. 16, 8. DOI 10.5539/ass76n8p19 Retrieved from <http://www.ccsenet.org/ass>
- Garner, Wagoner, S.H., Smith, T., (2014). Externalizing question-answering strategies of good and poor comprehenders. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 18 (4) (1983), pp. 439-447. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/747378> .4.
- Generating Question", (2007), Nie Week.p.25 Garner, Wagoner, S.H., Smith, T., (2014). Externalizing question-answering strategies of good and poor comprehenders. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 18 (4) (1983), pp. 439-447. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/747378> .4.
- Haji Maibodi, A. (2008). Learning English through short stories. *Iranian Journal of Language Studies*, 2(1), 41-72.
- Hemmati, F., & Bemani, S. (2013). Comparing Effect of "Summarizing", "Question Answer Relationship", and "Syntactic Structure Identification" on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Students. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, 2, 1. ISSN 2200-3592. Retrieved from <http://www.ijalel.org/pdf/215>. University, Payam-e-Nour University, Tehran, Iran. DOI: 10.7575/ijalel.v.2n.1p.151 URL
- Hill, L.A. (2005). *Steps to Understanding*: Oxford University Press
- Hughes, J. (2007). *Teaching Language and Literacy*. Retrieved March 8, 2014 from faculty.uoit.ca/hughes/Reading/ReadingProcess.html
- Humphries, J. (2013). *Exploring students' questions, Reading motivations & processes during comprehension of narrative text*. Fordham University .
- Johnson, S. (2014). *Effect of Question Answer Relationship Strategy on the Reading Comprehension of Fifth Grade Struggling Readers*. Florida Memorial University.
- Lipscomb, L., Swanson, J., & West, A. (2004). Scaffolding. In M. Orey (Ed.), *Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology*. Retrieved <insert date>, from <http://epltt.coe.uga.edu/>
- Martin, J., & Rose, D. (2007). *Interacting with Text: the role of dialogue in learning to read and*

- write. Retrieved May 15, 2012 from
http://tvo.wikispaces.com/file/view/Interacting+with+T_ext.pdf.
- Papalia, A. (2006). *Interaction of reader and text*. In Rivers, W.M., *Interactive Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press. Research Precip, 2004. Retrieved from
<http://www.designedinstruction.com/research/brief-ed-032-.htm/>
- Raphael, T.E., & Au, K.H. (2005) Enhancing Comprehension and Test Taking Across Grades and Content Areas. *The Reading Teacher*, 59, 206-221.
- Raphael, T. (1986). "Question Answer relationship": Retrieved from
<http://www.readinrocket.org//Question.p.1-18>
- Richards, J., & Bohlke, D. (2012). *Four Corners 3*: Cambridge University Press
- Richards, J., Hull, J., & Proctor, S. (2005). *Interchange 2*: Cambridge University Press
- Rosenshine, B., & Meister, C. (1992). The use of scaffolds for teaching higher-level cognitive strategies. *Educational Leadership*, 49(7), 26-33.
- Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for understanding*. Pittsburg: Rand Education.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem-solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 17(2), 89-100. Retrieved May 2, 2014 from
www.sciencedirect.com
- Walqui, A. (2006). Scaffolding instruction for English language learners: A conceptual framework. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9, 159-180. Retrieved April 1, 2010 from www.sciencedirect.com
- Yeh, H., & Lai, P. (2012). Implementing online question generation to foster reading comprehension. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*. doi:2012,28(7),1152-1175

The Authors

Shahrzad Haghparsat holds an MA degree in TEFL from Department of English Language, Science & Research, Shahr-e-Qods Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. She has been teaching English in different Language Institute for the last 11 years.

Behdokht Mall -Amiri is Assistant Professor of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran, Iran. She has published several articles in domestic international academic journals. She is specifically interested in research areas related to translation, cognitive and learning styles, motivation, and program evaluation.

THE IMPACT OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING ON IRANIAN LOWER INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNER'S SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS AND AUTONOMY

Mohammad Ali Fatemi (PhD)
matorbat@gmail.com

Maral Alishahi (Corresponding author)
maral.alishahi@gmail.com

Monir Seifi
seifi.monir@gmail.com

Nasibe Esmaelzadeh
nasibe_esmailzadeh@yahoo.com
Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e- Heydarieh Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study explored the effect of employing smart board in enhancement of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking and listening skills. Forty lower-intermediate EFL students were selected from Kashmar, Iran. They were assigned to control and experimental groups. Participants in experimental group were provided with a smart board as a teaching tool while those in the control group were taught using a traditional white board. Smart board was found as an effective tool in educational contexts which can significantly influence learners' academic performance and autonomy. These results provide pedagogical implications for utilizing smart board as an effective educational tool in EFL contexts where technology will replace traditional teaching techniques and even teachers; as a result autonomous EFL students will learn independently from their teaches.

KEYWORDS: autonomy, test battery, smart board, digital pen.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Speaking and listening are categorized as oral communicative skills which are considered of great importance in the contexts of English as a foreign language (EFL). Since the main purpose of learning a foreign language is communication, searching for new techniques which help learners enhance their oral skills, listening and speaking is important (Khosravani, Khosravani & Ganji Khoosf, 2014). Several techniques and tools have been introduced and employed in EFL settings in order to enhance students' speaking and listening skills. With the advent of technology

EFL contexts have experienced significant changes. Technology has changed every aspect of human life in general and his/her foreign language learning (FLL) process, in specific. According to Haider and Chowdhury (2012), the emergence of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has resulted in significant changes in the arena of language teaching and learning starting from the use of innovative learning materials to the widening of interaction patterns among a huge and diverse community of learners. There have been arguments with respect to the advantages and disadvantages of CALL, though the trend of employing computer assisted tools in language teaching is increasing throughout the world (ibid). CALL has played a key role in personalizing education (Ghalami Nobar & Ahangari, 2012). Only when learners are able to take benefit from each learning opportunity rather than simply responding to different stimuli from the teacher can they be skilful manipulators of language in their language learning process (Ying, n.d.). The situation demands the urgent need of enhancing learners' initiatives and learner autonomy (ibid). Schmenk, (2005) states that: 'The popularity of learner autonomy may be at least partially related to the rise of computer technology and the growing importance of computers in language learning environments worldwide' (P.107).

Hence due to the popularity of computer use in EFL contexts the present study aims at exploring the effect of CALL on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' task-based listening speaking and autonomy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Haider and Chowdhury (2012) conducted a study based on a survey of the Communicative English Language Certificate (CELC) course run by the Foreign Language Training Center (FLTC), a project under the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh. Their study was done on 425 learners who had completed the CELC course at the selected four centers of FLTC. According to the findings obtained by these two authors it can be concluded that the FLTC project is doing a creditable task by offering quality English language teaching employing Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) facilities to the learners of Bangladesh. This study also manifests some weaknesses of the program delivery, teaching approaches and learning support. Some of these problems are not surprising because the program was still evolving and experiencing the changing practices during the study. These led to some of the instructors' difficulty in getting themselves at ease with the computer based materials and technological instruments quickly (ibid).

Park and Son (2009) investigated factors influencing EFL teachers' employment of computers in their classrooms in order to find out EFL teachers' attitudes toward CALL and ways to improve CALL practice in schools. The results of their study indicated teachers' positive and favorable attitudes toward the employment of the computers. They regarded computer technology as a helpful teaching tool which can improve ways of teaching through providing students with different language inputs and increasing students' learning experiences in real and authentic contexts. It was also reported that external factors including lack of time, insufficient computer facilities, rigid school curricula, textbooks and lack of administrative support put negative effects on the implementation of CALL in the classroom. Internal factors like teachers' limited computer

skills, knowledge about computers, beliefs and perceptions of CALL also appear to significantly influence teachers' decisions on the employment of CALL (ibid).

Barani (2011) investigated the relationship between CALL and listening skill of Iranian EFL learners. His results suggested that there was a statistically significant difference between CALL users and nonusers in favor of the experimental group ($p < .05$).

Ghalami and Ahangari (2012) explored the impact of CALL on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' task-based listening as a motivating device to improve formation of positive attitudes. Their findings indicated that there was a meaningful difference between the experimental and control groups; that is to say, the participants in experimental group performed better than those in control group and obtained a higher average. The motivation of the experimental group participants was also higher compared to those in control group.

Nachoua (2012) in a study entitled "Computer-Assisted Language Learning for Improving Students' Listening Skill" found that CALL is a motivating method and computers are valuable instruments in second/foreign language classes to improve students' listening skill. Also, participants in experimental group (CALL) outperformed those in control group. Students' performance was improved in grammar, vocabulary, writing and listening. Furthermore, many parameters indicated that significant progress was attained in the group receiving a CALL teaching.

Edalati Shams (2013) investigated the effects of hybrid learning on Iranian EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. Hybrid Learning (HL), according to Bärenfänger (2005, as cited in Edalati Shams, 2013), is a learning approach including traditional classroom learning, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and self-directed learning (SDL). According to Edalati Shams' findings a few of the learners manifested a considerable level of autonomy in learning from the outset. They were used to watching movies, reading books, listening to music, surfing the net, and gaming in English and outnumbered others in posts and comments they published on the weblog. The quantitative analysis proved that these already autonomous learners obtained the most significant gains throughout this HL course regarding both vocabulary knowledge and level of autonomy. Learners, mostly, had positive views on employing modern technology for the purpose of learning. The need for learner training and the significance of computer literacy were both expressed by the learners and witnessed by the researcher throughout the course. CALL and traditional classroom learning played complementary roles and each supplemented the disadvantages of another. Drawback to the use of weblogs observed in this course was regarding the asynchronicity of communication in a weblog. Regarding the learners' responses to the autonomy questionnaire at the beginning and end of the course, a statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the two sets of scores the learners got at the questionnaire which means that there was an improvement in the learners' level of autonomy after participating in the HL course (ibid). To sum up, the results of Edalati Shams (2013) indicated that learners' autonomy level and vocabulary knowledge increased at the end of HL course.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed by the researcher:

Q1: Does the employment of smart board have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening?

Q2: Does the employment of smart board have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' autonomy?

RESEARCH NULL-HYPOTHESES

The following research null-hypotheses were formulated by the researcher:

HO1: The employment of smart board does not have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening.

HO2: The employment of smart board does not have any significant effect on lower-intermediate EFL learners' autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A sample including 48 lower-intermediate EFL students learning English in Khorasan Institute Of Foreign Languages in Kashmar, Iran was selected. Their age ranged from 19 to 25. Only females took part in this study. None of these participants have traveled to an English speaking country. The participants' homogeneity was confirmed using Quick Placement Test.

Instrumentations

Quick Placement Test (QPT)

To make sure that the participants were at the same level of language proficiency this kind of test developed by Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (60 multiple-choice items; grammar, vocabulary, cloze test) was administered to a population consisting of 94 EFL learners. Those students who scored 24 to 30 out of 40 were selected as the subjects of the present study (lower-intermediate).

Listening Speaking test battery

Participants' speaking ability was assessed via an interview between the researcher and the respondents. Also, an audio-CD was employed to assess the participants' listening comprehension. These assessments were done at the start and at the end of the study, but the materials employed as the assessment instruments were different. The test battery was adopted from Top Notch Fundamental A and B (Saslow & Asher, 2013). These two books are taught at some Iranian language institutes.

Learner autonomy questionnaire

In order to assess EFL students' autonomy in learning a Learner Autonomy Questionnaire developed by Zhang and Li (2004) was administered to see how autonomous the participants were in learning English as a foreign language. The content validity and reliability of the questionnaire have been already confirmed. The questionnaire has two parts: Part 1 includes 11 multiple-choice items on a 5- point Likert scale. The choices range from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

Part 2 includes 10 multiple-choice self-reporting items and students had to choose one option from the five alternatives.

Procedure

Forty-eight lower-intermediate EFL learners selected as the participants of the study, based on QPT, were randomly assigned to control (N=24) and experimental (N=24) groups. Listening-speaking materials adopted from interchange were taught to both groups by the same teacher. Smart board was employed in experimental class. Smart board works with a computer, projector, digital pens, and software called Notebook. The computer screen is projected to the smart board. Also using digital pen the teacher and the student alike can annotate. The quality of displaying materials on the screen was very high allowing the students to watch and hear effectively. On the contrary, participants in control group were not provided with a smart board and traditional white board was employed in order to teach new materials. Finally students in both groups sat for the posttest. Also participants in the experimental group were asked to complete the learner autonomy questionnaire before and after the treatment so that the effects of using smart boards on enhancement of EFL learners' autonomy were explored.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section summarizes the data obtained from the instruments given to the participants; also the null-hypotheses already proposed are tested.

Results of the pretest

Table 1 shows data related to the participants' performance in the pretest (listening and speaking).

Table 1: Results of pretest

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	sig
Control	24	14.96	4.58	46	1.36	.17
experimental	24	16.75	4.51			

As Table 1 shows there is no statistically meaningful difference between mean of control group (M=14.96; SD=4.58) and that of experimental group (M=16.75; SD=4.51) because p-value is greater than .05 (sig=.17; t=1.36). Therefore, the homogeneity of the participants was confirmed at the beginning of the course.

Results of the posttest

Data in Table 2 show the results obtained from the participants' performance in the posttest.

Table 2: Results of posttest

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	sig
Control	24	17.29	3.11	46	2.40	.02
experimental	24	20.21	5.06			

Data in Table 2 show the effects of the treatment (employment of smart board) on EFL learners' speaking and listening. Based on these data, participants in experimental group (M=20.21;

SD=5.06) had significantly better performance than those in control group M=17.29; SD=311) in the posttest. Accordingly, the significant effect of employing smart board is confirmed ($p=.02<.05$).

Results of learner autonomy

To explore the effect of employing smart board on EFL learner's autonomy paired-samples t-test was employed since the questionnaire was given to the participants in experimental group as pre and posttest (Table 3).

Table 3: Results of learner autonomy

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	sig
Pair 1	24	64.67	13.95	23	12.10	.000
Pair 2	24	70.42	15.54			

Table 3 shows that the mean of experimental group in the pretest is 64.67 and its mean in the posttest is 70.42. Since p-value (.000) is less than .05 it can be concluded that using smart board in EFL speaking and listening classrooms can improve learners' autonomy. The present study aimed at exploring the effects of smart board on enhancing lower-intermediate EFL learners' speaking and listening skills and their autonomy. Findings confirmed the significant effects of employing smart board as an effective learning tool in order to enhance EFL learners' speaking and listening skills. This finding was in agreement with Ghalami and Ahangari's (2012) who explored the impact of CALL on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' task-based listening. Also these findings supported the effectiveness of smart board in improving EFL learners' autonomy. As Wheeler (2001) claims, through computer technology students are provided with power to access, manipulate, modify, store, and retrieve information thus enhancing their autonomy in the classroom. In addition, according to Elaziz (2008), utilizing smart boards can create a more enjoyable, creative, and interesting context of teaching and learning. As Bacon (2011) believes smart whiteboards influence learning through increasing the learners' engagement in a classroom, motivating the learners and promoting enthusiasm for learning. Smart whiteboards, as argued by Chapelle (2003), can support learning and can be used in a variety of learning contexts.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to explore the effects of CALL on Iranian lower-intermediate EFL students' speaking and listening as well as their autonomy. Having employed SPSS, the researchers tested the two research null-hypotheses formulated for the study. Results of t-test indicated positive effects of utilizing smart-boards in EFL speaking and listening classrooms, apparently due to the experimental participants' increased engagement in class activities and tasks. Also, the students' enhancement may be as a result of an increased level of motivation to learn. The findings offer pedagogical implications for utilizing smart-board and other technological tools in EFL contexts which need to be motivating and enjoyable.

Limitations of the study

The limitations of the present study were as following:

- The present study explored the effect of CALL on listening and speaking. Other skills such as writing and reading were not taken into consideration.
- Among psychological traits, only autonomy was examined and other traits such as confidence, motivation, self-regulation, etc. were excluded.
- Concerning technological tools, only smart board was implemented and other devices were not employed in the treatment group.
- Only lower-intermediate EFL students participated in this study and other EFL populations did not take part in the present study. Also, all of them were female.

REFERENCES

- Bacon, D. (2011). The interactive whiteboard as a force for pedagogic change. *Information Technology in Education Journal*, 15-18.
- Barani, G. (2011). The Relationship between Computer Assisted Language learning (CALL) and Listening Skill of Iranian EFL Learners. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 15, 4059–4063.
- Chapelle, J. (2003). *How Is the Interactive Whiteboard Being used in Primary School*. Becta Research Bursary. Retrieved from www.virtuallearning.org.uk/whiteboards/IFS_interactive_whiteboards_in_the_primary_school.pdf.
- Edalati Shams, I. (2013). Hybrid learning and Iranian EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93, 1587 – 1592.
- Elaziz, F. (2008). *Attitudes of students and teachers towards the use of interactive whiteboards in EFL classrooms*. Unpublished master' thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara.
- Ghalami Nobar, A., & Ahangari, S. (2012). The Impact of Computer Assisted Language Learning on Iranian EFL Learners' Task-Based Listening Skill and Motivation. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 2(1), 39-61.
- Haider, M.Z., & Chowdhury, T.A. (2012). Promoting CLT within a Computer Assisted Learning Environment: A Survey of the Communicative English Course of FLTC. *English Language Teaching*, 5(8), 91-102.
- Khosravani, M., Khosravani, M., & Ganji Khoosf, S. (2014). Fostering EFL Learners' Speaking and Listening Skills Via Oral Activities of Reading Short Stories. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, 5(1), 329-337.
- Nachoua, H. (2012). Computer-Assisted Language Learning for Improving Students' Listening Skill. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 69, 1150 – 1159
- Park, C.N., & Son, J.B. (2009). Implementing Computer-Assisted Language Learning in the EFL Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions and Perspectives. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, 5(2).
- Wheeler, S. (2001). Information and communication technologies and the changing role of the teacher. *Journal of Educational Media*, 26(1), 7-17.
- Ying, F. (n.d.). Promoting Learner Autonomy through Call Projects in China's EFL Context. *Teaching English with Technology*, (2, 5), 3-38.
- Zhang, L.X., & Li X.X. (2004). A comparative study on learner autonomy between Chinese students and west European students. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 15-23.

THE IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED EFFECT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' WRITING PERFORMANCE

Hossein Hashemnezhad (Ph.D)(Corresponding Author)

Department of English Language Teaching, Khoy Branch Islamic Azad University, Khoy, Iran

Email: h_hashemnezhad2000@yahoo.com

Fatemeh Fatollahzadeh

Department of English Language Teaching and Literature,

Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran

Email:ffatollahzadeh@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Dynamic assessment has opened new horizons for teaching and assessment of writing performance. The present study was undertaken to explore the impact of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on improving writing performance of Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) students, and also to explore whether dynamic assessment has any immediate and delayed effects on writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL students. The design of this study was quasi-experimental. Fifty Iranian students out of 120 were non randomly selected as participants of this study based on their scores on pet test. To determine the prior writing skill, a pre-test including two writing topics were administered to the participants in both experimental and control group. Then, the teacher worked on writing skill of experimental group with dynamic assessment technique, whereas she worked on control groups' writing through traditional method. At the end of the experiment, to check whether participants' writing performance had been improved through dynamic assessment, a post-test was administered to the participants of both groups. The result of this post-test was also the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. Thus, it can be concluded that dynamic assessment is an effective teaching tool for improving writing performance of students, and it has immediate effects. To explore the delayed effect of dynamic assessment, five weeks after the first post-test, the participants were called for the second post-test. Thus, the results showed that experimental group performed better than control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that, dynamic assessment has also delayed impact on writing skill of EFL Iranian students.

KEYWORDS: *Dynamic assessment, Non-dynamic assessment, Immediate effect, Delayed effect, Writing performance*

INTRODUCTION

Dynamic assessment (DA) in language learning, which derives from Vygotsky's (1978) idea on how child's cognition develops and applies Vygotsky's sociocultural theory into assessment, can offer new insights into assessment in the language classroom by revealing invaluable secrets about the ability of individual students and their abilities while answering each test item. The

reason can be the process-oriented nature of dynamic assessment. While the results of traditional Non-Dynamic assessment (NDA) can only show the already existent abilities of the student, the analysis of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) makes it possible to evaluate the ability of the student to learn from the interaction with a teacher or a more competent peer and predict their possible future development. Because Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development suggests that different people can have the same baseline score on a static test but may differ in the extent to which they can profit from instruction. Unaided performance on static measures tells us what has already been learned or accomplished, whereas the breadth of the zone of proximal development is thought to provide prospective indications of what can be learned (Ajideh & Nourdad, 2012).

Nowadays, in most of the countries, especially in Iran, product oriented testing and teaching are the most widely used testing methods in today's educational environments, including the field of second and foreign language learning. Many language teachers around the world including Iranian teachers, use final assessment tests in their curricula to see how much the students have progressed on the subject they are being taught. On the other hand, it is not a rare case to hear a teacher saying that s/he does not understand why some students perform very well in the class but cannot get high grades from the tests. At this point, dynamic assessment in language learning, which applies Vygotsky's sociocultural theory into assessment, might offer new insights to assessment in the language classroom. Vygotsky's theory basically suggests that if we want to understand learning and development, we have to focus on process instead of product. Lantolf and Thorne (2006), Vygotsky argued that "the only appropriate way of understanding and explaining forms of human mental functioning is by studying the process, and not the outcome of development" (p.28). This is the critical point which distinguishes dynamic assessment from other forms of assessment. In this approach, development process is seen as a predictor of the individual's or group's future performance.

Dynamic assessment according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory suggests that instruction and assessment should be inseparable from one another. In other words, if teachers want to see how their students really progress in their classes, their assessment should not focus on testing the students' performance with a final achievement test per se. The real focus should be on what students can achieve with the help of the teacher or peers during the class activities because what is achieved with the help of others shows the potential progress for achievement without any help. That is, if students are able to achieve a task with others today, this shows that they will be able to achieve it by themselves in near future because being able to achieve it with others proves that the internalization process has already begun. On the other hand, what teachers generally do in language courses is to assess students' actual development after some time of instruction, and to decide on the potential development by looking at the results. However, Lantolf & Thorne (2006) Vygotsky, this process should be the other way around because "the potential development varies independently of actual development, meaning that the latter, in and of itself, cannot be used to predict the former" (p.328).

On the other hand, dynamic assessment is a procedure which takes the results of an intervention into consideration. Dynamic assessment is basically grounded in Vygotsky's innovative insight

that in the zone of proximal development instruction leads development. Vygotsky (1978) argued that a person's potential developmental level is as important as the actual developmental level and responsiveness to assistance is an indispensable feature for understanding cognitive ability because it provides an insight into the person's future (potential) development.

Dynamic assessment is known as an effective teaching tool in EFL learning. In fact, dynamic assessment in language learning can offer new insights into assessment in the language classroom by revealing invaluable secrets about the ability of individual students and their abilities while answering each test item. The reason can be the process-oriented nature of dynamic assessment. While the results of traditional non-dynamic assessment can only show the already existent abilities of the student, dynamic assessment adjusted to the needs of particular learners makes it possible to evaluate the ability of the student to learn from the interaction with a teacher or a more competent peer and predict their possible future development. Regarding the advantages and effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and developing a foreign language, little attention has been paid to its place in the academic curriculums of many countries especially, Iran. Likewise, little research have been conducted on this issue.

As discussed above, unfortunately, in Iran, little attention has been paid to the effectiveness of dynamic assessment and therefore, this study investigated the effect of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. The central purpose of this research is determining the existence of any relationship between dynamic assessment and the writing performance of language students. In this study we investigated the scores of students in writing performance test to determine whether or not it is influenced by the intervention they received. In other words, the present research attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic assessment on the writing performance of students. Also, this study attempted to examine the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic and non- dynamic assessment on intermediate Iranian EFL students. There is no similar example of an experimental study in writing which examines the dynamic assessment and its immediate and delayed impact on the writing performance.

Furthermore review of literature on the use of dynamic assessment in EFL classrooms reveals that despite the rich and strong background of dynamic assessment, a few research has been conducted on the effectiveness and practicability of dynamic assessment in different learning environments in Iran, therefore, the present study attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic assessment on improving writing performance of intermediate Iranian EFL students.

LITREATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Research on Dynamic Assessment

Although theoretical framework of dynamic assessment was proposed by Vygotsky, he did not present any methodological guidelines for its application in real educational settings. There is a robust research literature on dynamic assessment in general education and psychology, however, the approach is relatively unknown or at least new in second/foreign language studies. In fact dynamic assessment has generated an impressive body of research in the study of general intelligence and of basic learning abilities among individuals with special needs (Tzuriel, 2000;

Lidz, 2002; Baek & Kim, 2003; Hasson & Joffe, 2007; Wang, 2010;), but studies of dynamic assessment's implications for problems particular to the development of L2 abilities are only beginning by a limited number of scholars in this field. Most of these discussions have been made at the theoretical level of dynamic assessment in language education and the number of studies focusing on practical and empirical dimensions to provide guidelines of methodological applications is very limited. For example Yildirim (2008) takes an in depth look at the issue of dynamic assessment from the standpoint of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. He draws the theoretical framework and also discusses the methodological applications of the theory but his study doesn't include practical and empirical dimension in detail.

In fact, the literature on the use of dynamic assessment in the classroom whether as a teaching or assessment tool is controversial. Although most of the researchers advocate the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and teaching and believe that dynamic assessment is an effective and useful teaching and assessment tool (e.g., Anton, 2003; Poehner 2008; Ajideh & Nourdad, 2012), some others criticize the reliability of dynamic assessment and see it as an inappropriate teaching and testing tool in classroom (e.g. Frisby & Braden, 1992).

And although most of the researchers advocate the effectiveness of dynamic assessment in learning and teaching, they assert also that some degree of subjectivity is an essential feature of dynamic assessment (Tzuriel, 2000). Aastrup (2010) thinks that the theoretical basis for dynamic assessment is well known but not always practiced in assessments or teaching. So far experience indicates that dynamic assessment is a good tool to investigate a pupil's mathematical thinking in order to plan and carry out adapted teaching. However, using the dynamic assessment material does not guarantee that the assessment will be carried out dynamically. It is only meant to be a good tool in order to practice the dialogue in an appropriate way, discovering how to help the pupil reach a new functional level. Therefore, applying the philosophy of socio-cultural learning theory and training in order to establish good dialogues is important for the assessment leader. Many pupils who find the assessment situation positive, their knowledge is more appreciated than they are used to, and they experience successes and a good atmosphere.

The dynamic way of meeting a pupil also influences the techniques teachers use in the classroom. Teachers seem to be more open to alternative ways of solving problems. In many cases the focus of the lessons moves from product to process, inspiring pupils to talk about their own strategies and jointly reflect on different strategies.

Considering this ambiguity on the effectiveness and practicability of dynamic assessment, the present study attempted to explore its effect on writing performance of EFL Iranian students.

Empirical Studies on Dynamic Assessment

In a recent study Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011) assessed the viability of dynamic assessment used as an instructional adjunct in the development of Iranian EFL learners' grammar. The study was conducted on 60 intermediate EFL learners and each session during the treatment the two groups of experimental and control took a grammar test in which the experimental group received

mediation on test items. The results of their study proved that dynamic assessment oriented instruction significantly improved the learning of L2 grammar.

In another study, Pishghadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) applied a computerized dynamic assessment on 104 university students with moderate proficiency level. The software could calculate the non-dynamic assessment score of the participants, that is their score before any intervention of each item, as well as a dynamic assessment score, which is the score after providing mediation for unsuccessful answers. Using a t-test the researchers compared the dynamic and non-dynamic score of the participants and found a significant difference implying the usefulness of dynamic assessment in increasing the reading comprehension score of the participants.

Immediate and Delayed Effect of Dynamic Assessment

According to Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) measuring student's ability in transferring the developed abilities into new items after some time is delayed effect. It refers to the degree of maintenance of the positive or negative effects of treatment on the writing performance students in a longer period of time. That is, delayed effect refers to the effects of a treatment that remain until some other time. In the present research, we use this sense of delayed effect.

According to the web definition immediate effect refers to the degree of the positive or negative effects of treatment soon after the treatment is over. Immediate effects are those that occur within minutes of the exposure. In the present research, also, immediate effect refers to the effects of a treatment on writing performance of Iranian EFL students right after the treatment, i.e., teaching through dynamic assessment is over.

According to Ajideh and Nurdad (2012) there is great difference between assessing reading comprehension ability of EFL learners dynamically and non-dynamically, and that dynamic assessment leads in increased reading comprehension ability and this improvement is not short-term and can remain after some time interval because learners take advantage of the mediation on their ZPDs.

Empirical Studies on Immediate and Delayed Effect of Dynamic Assessment

In a study Ajideh and Nourdad (2012), investigating the difference between applying dynamic assessment and non-dynamic assessment for reading comprehension ability of EFL learners and also the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment. The results of the study revealed a significant difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment with a statistically significant increase in the reading comprehension scores of the group being assessed dynamically. The findings of the study also presented the existence of not only immediate but also delayed effect of dynamic assessment on reading ability of the participants.

In another study Ajideh and Nourdad (2012), aimed at investigating the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment on reading comprehension ability of EFL learners at three proficiency levels. The results of the study revealed that while applying dynamic assessment had both immediate and delayed effect on improving the reading comprehension of the EFL learners,

no significant difference was observed among different proficiency levels. In other words there is no significant difference in the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment of EFL learners' reading comprehension ability in low-, mid-, and high-proficiency levels. That is to say dynamic assessment can be beneficial for EFL readers and its effect remains overtime. And learners of low-, mid-, and high-proficiency levels improve their reading comprehension ability almost equally and the proficiency level doesn't affect the amount of taking the advantage of dynamic assessment.

According to Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) measuring student's ability in transferring the developed abilities into new items after some time is delayed effect. It refers to the degree of maintenance of the positive or negative effects of treatment on the writing performance students in a longer period of time. That is, delayed effect refers to the effects of a treatment that remain until some other time. In the present research, we use this sense of delayed effect.

According to the web definition immediate effect refers to the degree of the positive or negative effects of treatment soon after the treatment is over. Immediate effects are those that occur within minutes of the exposure. In the present research, also, immediate effect refers to the effects of a treatment on writing performance of Iranian EFL students right after the treatment, i.e., teaching through dynamic assessment is over.

According to Ajideh and Nurdad (2012) there is great difference between assessing reading comprehension ability of EFL learners dynamically and non-dynamically, and that dynamic assessment leads in increased reading comprehension ability and this improvement is not short-term and can remain after some time interval because learners take advantage of the mediation on their ZPDs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

Q1: Is there any difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance?

Q2: What is the immediate effect of applying dynamic assessment on EFL writing performance?

Q3: What is the delayed effect of applying dynamic assessment on writing performance?

H1: There is a difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance.

H2: Applying dynamic assessment has immediate effect on EFL writing performance.

H3: Applying dynamic assessment has no delayed effect on EFL writing performance.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 50 female intermediate Iranian EFL language learners. After assuring the homogeneity of all of the students, one of the intact classes were randomly considered as experimental group and another one as control group. Because of the limitations

of the language institution schedule, it was not possible to randomize the participants, and therefore the two classes remained intact.

Instrumentation

The following instruments were utilized in the present study. A proficiency test (PET) was administered to the participants in order to homogenize participants in terms of language proficiency. PET stands for Preliminary English Test which is suitable for testing language proficiency of intermediate students. It included four sections of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and there were 8 questions and topics at writing section. The estimated time for the test was two hours.

Then, a pre-test was administered to both experimental group and control to determine the participants' writing performance abilities before the experiment. The pre-test included two writing topics. The pre-test conducted in a non-dynamic way, i.e. in the traditional or usual way, with which all of the participants were familiar.

After the pre-test, the treatment began and last for five sessions. In each session, the researcher as a teacher introduced a topic for writing, and received feedback. After 5 sessions of treatment, the teacher administered a post-test to the participants. Like the pre-test, the post-test included two writing topics, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. After five weeks, another post-test was administered to the participants of both groups to determine the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

Research Procedures

To conduct the present research, the researcher considered two classes of a language center which totally included 50 female students—25 in one class and 25 in another class. To assure the homogeneity of the two classes in terms of language proficiency, the researcher administered a Preliminary English test (PET) to the students. After determining the homogeneity of the students, the researcher considered one of the intact classes as experimental group and the other class as control group. Then, the researcher administered a pre-test to the participants to determine their writing skill before the treatment. The pre-test included two writing topics chosen from "Interchange series, volume 2, third edition", and its reliability and validity was determined beforehand. The pre-test included two writing topics. The pre-test conducted in a non-dynamic way, i.e. in the traditional or usual way, with which all of the participants were familiar.

In order to have a normal test Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was administered to tests. After the pre-test on writing performance, the treatment began and last for five sessions. In each session, the teacher introduced a topic for writing, and received learners' feedback. The teacher worked on the writing skill of experimental group in a dynamic assessment way. In other words, the teacher first gave a general topic, and then tried to narrow down it, and simplify the topic through word mapping and clustering, and question-and answer techniques, which are three common techniques for narrowing down a topic in a dynamic way. The teacher was also supporting learner development actively by understanding learner abilities. While, the teacher worked on writing skill of the control group through traditional or usual way, i.e., through non-dynamic

assessment way. It is worth saying that due to quantitative research it was not possible to apply the interactionist model of dynamic assessment. The selected model was, therefore, interventionist approach.

At the end of the treatment, the researcher administered the first post-test to determine whether learners' writing performance had been improved through employing dynamic assessment technique. Like the pre-test, the post-test included two writing topics, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. To observe the effect of dynamic assessment and to make the scores as reliable as possible the researcher avoided any help in that test session and the test takers of experimental group had to resort to their previous experience of taking dynamic test and get help of the key points of those sessions and show how much they had learned from those dynamic sessions. Students in control group took the test as usual because they were already familiar with and used to non dynamic tests. The comparison of the pre-test and post-test's mean scores used to answer to the first research question. The mean score of this post- test was also taken as immediate effect of dynamic assessment on writing of EFL students.

But the study was not limited to this point, and another new step was taken. For finding out about the delayed effect of dynamic tests, test takers were called for the second post-test after 5 weeks to conduct second post test, and the same testing procedure and statistical analyses were repeated with different writing tests and comparisons were made between control and experimental groups to realize any probable delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was conducted through pretest-posttest non-randomized quasi-experimental design to compare the writing performance of students in control groups with the writing performance of students in experimental groups.

Statistical Analysis for Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment of EFL writing performance.

In order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, first of all, the researcher determined the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their language proficiency through the Preliminary English Test (PET), and then in order to answer the first research question, the researcher administered a pre-test and a post-test. Accordingly, two Independent Sample t-tests were conducted-- before and after the treatment-- to compute and compare the mean scores and to check the participants' writing performance after the treatment. In order to answer to the second research question, five weeks after the first post-test, another post-test was administered to the participants of both groups to determine the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

Table 1 below shows the descriptive data for proficiency scores of the participants, and Table 2 shows the Independent Samples T-test results for the proficiency scores.

Table1: Descriptive statistics for proficiency scores

Group Statistics					
	CLASS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SCORE	Experimental group	25	62.5223	17.72064	4.82345
	Control group	25	64.1664	15.46584	3.64436

Table 2: Independent samples t-test results for the proficiency scores

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	3.240	0.123	-.565	38	.654	-3.14000	6.0326	-1.54634	.73540
Equal variances not assumed		.00000	-.565	35.754	.655	-3.14000	6.0326	-1.55130	.74530

It shows that there was no significant difference between the two groups considering their language proficiency ($t(38) = 0.565$, $p = 0.654$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group and control group are homogeneous.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for pre-test two Groups

One of the requirements of this test is the normality of the score distribution. Thus, it was necessary to conduct a One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

Table 3: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality

Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest experimental	.178	20	.097	.888	20	.226
Control	.189	20	.059	.950	20	.368

The results of kolmogorov-smirnov test for pre-test of control and experimental groups is $p > .05$, so the distribution of data is normal and the normal distribution assumption seems to hold.

A Pre-test on writing performance

After administering the proficiency test (PET) and assuring the homogeneity of the participants in experimental and control groups, the researcher administered a pre-test to both groups to determine the participants' writing performance abilities before the experiment. Students' pre-test compositions were evaluated by two experienced teachers. Students in control group were required to write about a topic without the mediation of the teacher, because they were taught through traditional method, while the experimental group were asked to write about the same topic but with mediation of the teacher, because they were taught through dynamic assessment. As it will be explained in the following section, post testing procedures were exactly the same as pretesting. Students writing were scored analytically. In this scale for measuring written proficiency, different parts of writing (grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, fluency and organization/form) are scored from 1 to 6. Furthermore, they must be added up to gain the score of written performance. Thus, a perfect writing scored 30 in this kind of scoring.

In order to calculate and compare the mean scores of the participants on pre- test, the researcher conducted another t-test. Table 4 and Table5 below present the descriptive data of the means of the pre-test and the results of the t-test.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the Means of the pre-test

Group Statistics					
	CLASS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SCORE	Experimental group	25	17.6534	3.67465	.69543
	Control group	25	18.0234	2.97343	.612345

Table 5: Result of the T-test for Pre-test Scores

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.322	.570	-.652	38	.516	-.54000	.86641	-1.19534E0	2.20734
Equal variances not assumed			-.652	37.452	.516	-.54000	.86641	-1.19605E0	2.27805

As it obvious, Table 5 shows that there is no significant difference between control group ($M=18.02$, $SD=2.973$) and experimental group ($M=17.65$, $SD=3.67$). Moreover, as it can be observed in Table 4.4., the magnitude of the differences in the means of the two groups (mean difference = .54) is very small, and the p-value is bigger than 0.05 ($t(38) = 0.652$, $p = .516$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the participants are homogeneous considering their prior performance on writing skill.

Hypothesis 2: Applying dynamic assessment has immediate effect on EFL writing performance. In order to test this hypothesis, it was necessary to compare the mean scores of the pre-test and the first post-test.

The First post-test for immediate effect

After the pre-test and determining the participants' proficiency on writing skill, the research treatment began and last for 5 sessions because of time schedule of the institute. After 5 sessions of treatment, a post-test was administered to the participants. Like the pre-test, the post-test included a writing topic which was taken from Interchange 2, and its reliability and validity was insured in advance. The estimated time for writing was 30 minutes, and all these tests—the pre-test and post-tests-- were conducted in non-dynamic way as Iranian students were familiar with. The purpose of the first post-test is to illustrate the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. 5 weeks after the first post-test, students invited to sit for the second post-test.

T-Test

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the Post-test

Group Statistics					
	CLASS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SCORE	Experimental group	25	22.97434	3.65340	.45423
	Control group	25	18.9724	2.02532	.36979

Table 7: Results of the T-test for the Post-test

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.065	.821	-4.679	38	.000	-4,40000	.98762	-6.18545	-2.53911
Equal variances not assumed			-4.679	37.764	.000	-4,40000	.98762	-6.19545	-2.52014

As it is shown in Table 6, the mean score of experimental group ($M = 22.97$) is higher than the mean score of the control group (18.97). Therefore, we can assume that the experimental group performs better than the control group. However, to see whether the mean differences are statistically significant, the results obtained from the Independent Samples T-test need to be analyzed.

Moreover, as it is displayed in the Table 7, the p-value is less than 0.05 ($t(38) = 4.679$, $P = .000$). Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group. This is the answer to the first question of this research. That is, dynamic assessment had an immediate impact on improving writing performance of EFL students, thus the first and second hypotheses are proved.

Hypothesis3: Applying dynamic assessment has no delayed effect on EFL writing performance. As it was mentioned before, 5 weeks after the first post-test, students were invited to sit for the second post-test to check the delayed effect of dynamic assessment on EFL writing performance.

The Second Post-test for Exploring Delayed effect

The purpose of the first post-test was to illustrate the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. 5 weeks after the first post-test, students invited to sit for the second post-test.

For finding out about the delayed effect of dynamic tests, participants were called for the second post-test five weeks after the first post-test, to measure their ability in transferring the developed abilities into new items after some time, and the same testing procedure and statistical analyses were repeated with different writing tests and comparisons were made between control and experimental groups to realize any probable delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

T-Test

Table 8: Descriptive statistics of the second Post-test

Group Statistics					
	CLASS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SCORE	Experimental group	25	22.01434	2.45527	.46412
	Control group	25	17.9724	2.5353	.36549

Table 9: Results of the T-test for the second Post-test

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the	
	F	Sig.	Difference	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.068	.820	-4.861	38	.000	-4.30000	.97689	-6.17933	-2.42871
Equal variances not assumed			-4.861	37.623	.000	-4.30000	.97689	-6.18325	-2.41022

As it is displayed in Table 8 the mean score of experimental group ($M = 22.01$) is bigger than the mean score of the control group (17.97). Thus, it can be assumed that the experimental group, again, outperformed the control group.

Furthermore, as it is displayed in the Table 9, the p-value is less than 0.05 ($t(38) = 4.861$, $P = .000$).

Discussion

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of dynamic assessment on EFL learners' writing performance in intermediate level, and also attempted to explore its immediate and delayed effect. In other words, the present study aimed at investigating the difference between applying dynamic assessment and non-dynamic assessment for writing performance of intermediate EFL learners and also the immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment.

The results of the research revealed a significant difference between dynamic and non-dynamic assessment with a statistically significant increase in the writing scores of the group being assessed dynamically. That is, the findings of the present study showed that EFL learners could gain that kind of development in writing ability because after going through dynamic assessment session and being given the appropriate mediation they were able to take the advantage of the mediations in their later independent performance in immediate post-test.

The findings were in line with the findings of some similar previous studies such as Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011). All these studies, like the results of the present study, revealed that dynamic assessment improved participants' writing skill or other skills. The findings of the present study also revealed the existence of not only immediate but also delayed effect of dynamic assessment on participant's writing ability.

The findings of this study support Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011)'s idea that dynamic assessment can improve learners' foreign language skills, they assessed the viability of dynamic assessment used as an instructional adjunct in the development of Iranian EFL learners' grammar. The results of their study proved that dynamic assessment oriented instruction significantly improved the learning of L2 grammar.

The results of the present study also support Pishghadam, Barabadi, and Kamrood (2011) research. They applied a computerized dynamic assessment on 104 university students with moderate proficiency level. The software could calculate the non-dynamic assessment score of the participants, that is their score before any intervention of each item, as well as a dynamic assessment score, which is the score after providing mediation for unsuccessful answers. Using a t-test the researchers compared the dynamic and non-dynamic score of the participants and found a significant difference implying the usefulness of dynamic assessment in increasing the reading comprehension score of the participants.

However, the findings of this study rejects Ajideh and Nourdad (2012) idea that dynamic assessment has no delayed effect. He investigated the impact of dynamic assessment on improving reading ability of EFL Iranian learners and found that dynamic assessment improved learners' reading ability which although this idea is consistent with the findings of the present study, he also found that dynamic assessment has no delayed effect which this idea is inconsistent with our findings.

The outcomes of this study also reject the study conducted by Frisby and Braden (1992). They studied the reliability of dynamic assessment used in the classroom, and found that dynamic

assessment reliability is questionable and it is not an appropriate testing tool. As it is clear, this idea rejects the findings of the present research.

CONCLUSION

Dynamic assessment integrates assessment and instruction into a seamless, unified activity aimed at promoting learner development through appropriate forms of mediation that are sensitive to the individual's (or in some cases a group's) current abilities. In essence, dynamic assessment is a procedure for simultaneously assessing and promoting development that takes account of the individual's or group's (ZPD). Dynamic assessment focuses 'on modifiability and on producing suggestions for interventions that appear successful in facilitating improved learner performance' (Lidz, 1991)

Considering the dynamic assessment as an effective teaching technique in the classroom, this study mainly attempted to investigate the effect of dynamic and non-dynamic assessment on writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. In other words, the central purpose of this research is determining the existence of any relationship between dynamic assessment and the writing performance of language students. This research also investigated the impact of immediate and delayed effects of dynamic assessment on writing performance of EFL learners.

To determine the prior writing skill, a pre-test including two writing topics were administered to the participants in both experimental and control group, and the mean score was calculated. Then, the teacher worked on writing skill of experimental group with dynamic assessment technique, whereas she worked on control groups' writing through traditional method. At the end of the experiment, to check whether participants' writing performance had been improved through dynamic assessment, a post-test was administered to the participants of both groups. Comparison of the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test revealed that experimental group outperformed the control group. The result of this post-test was also the immediate effect of dynamic assessment. Thus, it can be concluded that dynamic assessment is an effective teaching tool for improving writing performance of intermediate students, and it has immediate effects. To explore the delayed effect of dynamic assessment, five weeks after the first post-test, the participants were called for the second post-test. The second post-test, like the previous test, was two writing topics. Thus, the results showed that experimental group performed better than control group. Therefore, it can be concluded that, dynamic assessment has also delayed impact on writing skill of EFL Iranian students. The results of this study can be useful and informative for both teachers and learners in providing them with new horizons of instructing students through a step by step procedure.

Pedagogical implication

The findings of this study can have several pedagogical implications for language teachers, language learners, and curriculum designers. First, considering the positive impact of teacher mediation during teaching, language teachers can easily use dynamic assessment as a new effective technique in the classroom for teaching different aspects of English language. Second, applying dynamic assessment, language teachers can develop a learning environment which is

stress-free, and hence leads into positive washback effect during exams because dynamic assessment provides a learning environment in which testing and teaching aims and procedures are in line with each other and interwoven. Third, through mediations, teachers can develop learners' autonomy in the classroom and also make them autonomous in doing similar tasks later on.

Dynamic assessment helps students to take the advantage of mediation provided by the assessor and become autonomous in the classroom and in doing similar tasks later on. Likewise, applying dynamic assessment provides learners with mediation which results in reduced stress. In other words, dynamic assessment provides a stress-free learning environment for learners, and because of this, it presents a true picture of learners' abilities and learning potential (i.e. their current status and hidden potential in the zone of proximal development), which is the first and most important purpose of assessment. Accordingly, learners can be aware of their potential abilities.

Finally, based on the finding of this study which shows that dynamic assessment is helpful in improving writing performance, language learners can benefit from syllabuses which use dynamic assessment technique. Curriculum designers can develop syllabuses which employ dynamic assessment as a teaching technique, because exploiting dynamic assessment results in better learning outcomes and also, as mentioned above, results in learners autonomy and positive washback. Currently, both of the issues of learner autonomy and washback effect are of great importance and under investigation in EFL. Likewise, because dynamic assessment provides a stress-free learning environment for learners, it presents a true picture of learners' abilities and learning potential (i.e. their current status and hidden potential in the zone of proximal development), which is the first and most important purpose of assessment.

Suggestions for further research

This study is an effort to empirically examine the impact of dynamic assessment on improving EFL learners' writing skill and also explore its immediate and delayed effect on improving their writing performance. Further research is needed in these areas to have a thorough understanding of these issues. The following recommendations are stated as suggestions for further research:

It is recommended that this study be replicated with a larger number of participants with the same background. It would also be interesting to conduct the same research across levels of proficiency i.e., for learners with different levels of language proficiency. Moreover, the research may include both male and female learners. In the present research all of the participants were female college-level (intermediate) university students.

Another research can be designed to investigate the impact of dynamic assessment on another aspect of language learning like vocabulary learning or improving another skill, such as speaking, reading, listening. It is hoped that the outcome of this study will be of some use to future research studies. The present research used interventionist approach of dynamic assessment to examine its impact on writing skill of intermediate students, therefore, another research can be designed to investigate the impact of dynamic assessment through interactionist approach.

REFERENCES

- Aastrup, S. (2010). *Dynamic assessment by overall evaluation in connection with difficulties in mathematics*. University of Iceland: Trøndelag Resource Center.
- Ajideh, P., & Nourdad, N. (2012). The effect of dynamic assessment on EFL reading comprehension in different proficiency levels. *Language Testing in Asia*, 2(4), 101-122.
- Ajideh, P., & Nourdad, N. (2012). The immediate and delayed effect of dynamic assessment on EFL reading ability. *English Language Teaching*, 5 (12), 141-151.
- Anton, M. (2003). Dynamic assessment of advanced foreign language learners. Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics, Washington, D. C.
- Baek, S. G., & Kim, K. J. (2003). The effect of dynamic assessment based instruction on children's learning: *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 4 (2), 189-198.
- Frisby, C.L., & Braden, J.P. (1992). Feuerstein ' s dynamic assessment approach: a semantic, logical and empirical critique. *Journal of special education*, 26(3), 281-300.
- Hasson, N., & Joffe, V. (2007). The case for dynamic assessment in speech and language therapy. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 23(1), 9-25.
- Lantolf, J.P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lidz, C. S. (1991). *Practitioner's guide to dynamic assessment*. New York: Guilford
- Lidz, C.S. (2002). Mediated learning experience (MLE) as a basis for an alternative approach to assessment. *School psychology international*, 23(1), 68 – 84.
- Pishghadam, R., Barabadi, E., & Kamrood, A. M. (2011). The differing effect of dynamic assessment of L2 reading comprehension on high and low achievers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(6), 1353-1358.
- Poehner, M. E. (2008). *Dynamic Assessment: A Vygotskian approach to understanding and promoting second language development*. Berlin: Springer Publishing.
- Sadeghi, K., & Khanahmadi, F. (2011). Dynamic assessment of L2 grammar of Iranian EFL learners : The role of mediated learning experience. *International Journal of Academic Research*, 3(2), 931-936.
- Tzuriel, D. (2000). Dynamic assessment of young children: Educational and intervention perspectives. *Educational Psychology Review*. 12(4), 1 –35.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wang, T. H. (2010). Web-based dynamic assessment: Taking assessment as teaching and learning strategy for improving students' e-learning effectiveness. *Computers and Education*, 54, 1157-1166.
- Yildirim, A. G. O. (2008). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and dynamic assessment in language learning. *Anadolu University Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(1), 301-308.

THE EFFECT OF TEACHER TALK ON EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE LEARNING PERFORMANCE, AND LEARNING STRATEGY USE

Bahador Sadeghi

Assistant Professor Islamic Azad University, Takestan, Iran

Farzaneh Jaber Ansari

MA in English Islamic Azad University, Takestan, Iran

Corresponding Author: Farzaneh Jaber Ansari

Ramin Rahmani

Assistant Professor Islamic Azad University, Takestan, Iran

ABSTRACT

Teacher talk which constitutes a preliminary attribute of much education, plays a significant role in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts marked by the restriction of L2 exposure to the language classroom. The present study explores the effect of appropriate teacher talk in terms of the provision of opportunities for learner interaction, language achievement and the fostering of positive attitudes. To this end, 50 learners and 2 experienced language institute teachers took part in the study. One class received appropriate teachers talk with the encouragement of language interaction while the other class did not present learners with opportunities for self-expression. Data were collected through questionnaire, test and observation. Results clearly showed the positive effect of appropriate teacher talk on learners' engagement and attitudes. Findings highlighted how the pedagogical discourse and language learning is mutually shaped by teachers and learners in their language learning practices. The study yields crucial implications which can be directly applied by teachers and teacher educators to the actual classroom practice.

KEYWORDS: teacher talk, interaction, language performance, attitude, education programs

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, scholars have argued that the classroom should be considered as a context in its own right or as interdependent contexts that is jointly shaped and defined by the participants: the teachers and learners (Johnson, 1995; Seedhouse, 1996; van Lier, 1988). According to this perspective, the analysis of teacher and learner interaction needs to begin with the belief that verbal behavior is goal-oriented and dominated by specific rules which is also true for participants in interactions of other contexts such as a restaurant (Walsh, 2002). Therefore, similar to other discourse contexts, interactants in the language classroom are kept within bounds

of the prevailing features of the context. Some of these features are outlined by Walsh (2002, p. 4):

1. Teachers largely control the topic of discussion;
2. Teachers often control both content and procedure;
3. Teachers usually control who may participate and when;
4. Students take their cues from teachers;
5. Role relationships between teachers and learners are unequal;
6. Teachers are responsible for managing the interaction which occurs;
7. Teachers talk most of the time;
8. Teachers modify their talk to learners;
9. Learners rarely modify their talk to teachers;
10. Teachers ask questions (to which they know the answers) most of the time.

If the social nature of the EFL classroom in its own right is recognized which has the value of research by itself without any comparison to other contexts, then the focus on the comprehension of classroom discourse should attend to teacher quality instead of quantity. This goal is attained by considering the essential relationship between language use and instructional purpose.

A considerable body of research exists on the interrelation of interaction, input, output and the importance of the negotiation of meaning (e.g., Long, 1983, 1996; Swain, 1985, 1995; Pica, 1994; Foster, 1998). Although the current perspectives on the nature of the relation between negotiation of meaning and language learning is still dismal, its very identification is certainly a strong benchmark of the necessity of giving more attention to the connection of teacher talk and learners' language learning.

Research on teacher talk

In the past few decades, there has been an increasing interest in teacher's linguistic input during instruction (Cazden, 2001) and during classroom routines (Dickerson, 2005; Glazer & Burke, 1994; Maloney & Larrivee, 2002; Moguel, 2004; Short, Kaufman, Kaser, Kahn, & Crawford, 1999; Patrick, Anderman, Ryan, Edelin, & Midgley, 2001; Steele, 1998). In the other word, studies of teacher talk are related to two language types. One is the investigation of language that teachers use in their language classrooms, and the other is the investigation of language that they use in subject matter lessons. In recent years there has been several studies reporting on the specificities of teacher talk and the role of it regarding EFL learners' language acquisition (Incecay, 2010). Kim and Suh (2004), for example, studied teacher talk in Korean English classroom. They analyzed recorded data from six middle school teachers in Busan. The results showed that teachers' talk accounted for about 60% of classroom discourse and teachers talked about 17 times a minute, which is 4.5 times more than the students' talk. The findings also indicated that teacher talk in the teacher-fronted class was more than that in the student-centered classes.

In another similar research, Lin (2005) investigated whether there were differences between the teachers' talk in monolingual and bilingual classrooms. The results of the study showed that there were significant differences between teachers' talk in both classes, such that teacher talk in

monolingual class was more focused on content-area vocabulary and its function. The teacher also used all the participant organization types including teacher to student, teacher to class, choral repetition and self-repetition strategies. In addition, the teacher used limited and broad references in the class time. On the other hand, in the bilingual class, the teacher talk focused more on form rather than content and teacher talk contained more phonological cues for teaching vocabulary items. The teacher used more visual support and repetition and the range of reference was narrow and focused on routine exchanges. Moreover, the teacher used more instruction and procedural directives in the classroom.

Xiao-Yan (2006) examined the amount of teacher talk in total class time and investigated its impact on foreign language learning of 80 Chinese students. The results of the study revealed that most of the class time was allocated to teacher talk- 76% of the total class time. According to the learners of this study, this amount of teacher talk could change the atmosphere of the class because "most of the students like to listen to teachers' instruction and view it as a good learning strategy. But they do not like teachers to explain everything to them" (p. 36). Nevertheless, most of the learners believed that teacher talk is the most useful source of learning inside the classroom and it has direct and positive effect on their learning.

In another research, Rezaee and Farahian (2012) asked 12 intermediate learners to participate in their study to examine the amount of teacher talk in the classroom and investigated the role of teachers' questions on students' learning. The results of the study showed that in each class session, 62% to 73% of the class time was devoted to teacher talk and almost 20% to 25% was allocated to student talk with the rest of the class time devoted to other tasks such as the groups works to related questions or issues raised by the teacher to the whole class.

Incecay (2010) investigated the role of teacher talk in young learners' language learning. The results of the study revealed that some of the features of teacher talk could facilitate learners' language process while other features restricted the learning process. More specifically, 'direct error correction', 'prompting', 'extended wait time' and 'repairing' facilitated students' learning process and 'turn competition', 'teacher echo' and 'extended use of turn taking' obstructed learners' acquisition.

The effect of teachers' talk on incidental vocabulary learning of 20 high-intermediate and advanced ESL students in an institute in Montreal was explored by Horst, Collins, White, and Cardoso (2010). The results of the study showed that teachers rarely used new vocabulary items in the class time and their talks were short and limited. Moreover, the results of the study revealed that although the teachers' discourse exchanges were short, they were comprehensive and complete. The findings of this study support the idea that teacher talk improves incidental vocabulary learning of the students.

Slavit and Mason (2011) examined the oral academic language used by teachers during content area instruction. The results of the study revealed that students did not have much opportunity to hear the specialized language of the content areas from their teachers because teachers used more than 88% of non-academic language during content area instruction. These opaque terms or non-

academic language included homophones, idiomatic expressions, heteronyms, deictic pronouns and demonstratives which caused some problems for the students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With respect to the socially-constructed nature of the language use in EFL classrooms which is comparable to the language in naturally occurring contexts, the present study intended to focus on the teacher's speech which constitutes a large amount of classroom discourse. This research aims at answering the following questions:

1. Does positive teacher talk have effect on student's language learning?
2. Does positive teacher talk increase student's interaction during the classes?
3. Does positive teacher talk promote students' attitudes towards the teacher?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Learners

50 female language learners in a language institute in Hamedan, Iran were selected as the participants of this study. Their age ranged from 12 to 19 years and had the same language and educational background. Their level of proficiency was lower-intermediate which was determined according to Oxford placement test administered at the beginning of the study. As a result of the proficiency test, 25 learners were randomly assigned to a class where positive teacher talk was practiced and the other 25 learners were assigned to a class without positive talk.

Teachers

Two experienced teachers of EFL (five or more years of teaching experience) were invited to participate in this research. Both teachers had post-graduate degrees.

Instruments

The instruments of this study were questionnaire, tests and observation. Following is the description of each.

Questionnaire: in order to get better insights about the learners' attitudes towards their teacher's language use and interaction in the classroom, the Learner Perception of a Good Teacher questionnaire (2005) which was developed by the Character Education Partnership was adopted (see appendix). This questionnaire was used to collect information on language learners' evaluation of their English classes and their teachers' speech on the basis of their usually and normally practiced classroom activities. This questionnaire is divided into two parts and is composed of 36 items. The questionnaire is a 5-point Likert type scale with the items ranging from '1 = rarely', '2 = once in a while', '3 = sometimes', '4 = most of the time', and '5 = almost always'. The participants were asked to read each statement and indicate their reaction by choosing a number in the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was computed using the Cronbach Alpha method. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient value for the reliability analysis of the questionnaire was found as .85.

Preliminary English Test (PET): PET was used as the post-test to determine control and experimental participants' overall language performance after the treatment. PET includes 35 reading questions, 7 writing questions, 25 listening questions and 4 parts of speaking skill. The overall score obtained from the test was considered as the criterion for the comparison of the control and experimental groups.

Observation: Classroom observation was also carried out for the reason that the observation focuses on naturally occurring data and includes a fine-grained analysis. Thus, this approach is highly empirical, highlighting naturally occurring data without any effort to match the data to pre-conceived categories. The proof that such categories are employed by the participants was shown by reference to and instances from the data. In sum, observation leads the researcher to attend solely to the interactional patterns appearing from the data, rather than focusing entirely on any pre-identified ideas which language teachers might try to implement to the data.

Procedure

After assuring the learners' language homogeneity, they were assigned two different classrooms and received different treatments for equal time of seven weeks. In class one, the participants received positive teacher talk treatment which included 'teacher questions', 'feedback', 'wait time', 'pausing', 'paraphrasing', 'probing for specificity', 'putting ideas on the table', 'paying attention to self and other', 'presuming positive intentions' and 'balancing advocacy and inquiry'. The teacher attempted to provide adequate input to the learners in teacher-fronted activities by encouraging learners in the classroom interaction, encouraging conversational adjustments between teacher and learners, advocating opportunities for self-expression, facilitating and motivating clarification by learners, repeating and rephrasing utterances, and scheduling several activities during the class time. Quite the reverse, teacher talk in the control class included exchanges through display questions, speech modification in response to non-understanding, students' rare modification of their speech, teachers' rare request for learners' speech modification, control of the topic of conversation, and rare asking of questions for which they did not have answers.

After the completion of classes, the PET test and the questionnaire were administered to the learners. In addition, the results of observation were analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze the data to test the research questions, the statistical procedures have been carried out using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 21 (2012). First, the scores of dependent variable were analyzed to ensure the assumptions of normality. The results of the histograms, Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, and the box plots are presented below.

Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

Null hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distribution of performance is normal with mean 87.68 and standard deviation 11.60.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	.42	Retain the null hypothesis.
The distribution of interaction is normal with mean 10.94 and standard deviation 4.6	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	.49	Retain the null hypothesis.
The distribution of attitude is normal with mean 25.38 and standard deviation 2.66.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	.36	Retain the null hypothesis.
The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show that the scores of all dependent variables are normally distributed ($p > 0.05$).			

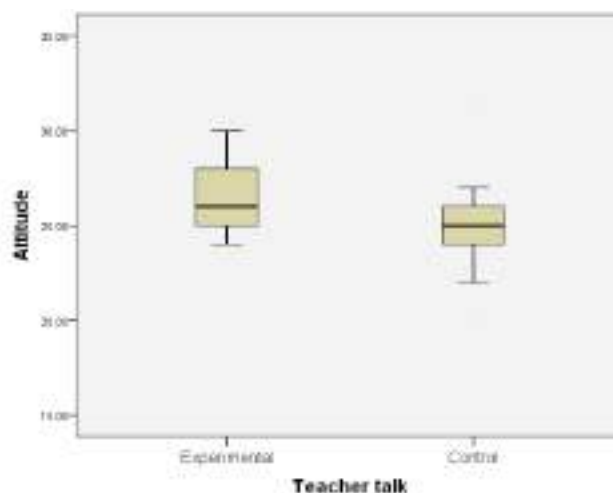


Figure 1: Box plot results for attitude

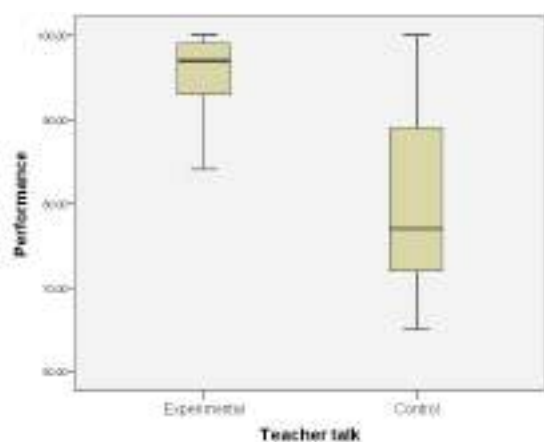


Figure 2: Box plot results for performance

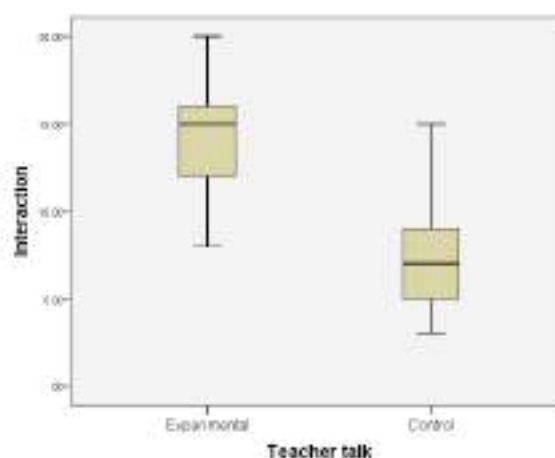


Figure 3: Box plot results interaction

Having ascertained the assumptions of independent samples *t*-test as a parametric test (i.e., the normality of data), the next step was to conduct the *t*-tests.

In order to investigate the first research null hypothesis on the role of teacher talk on learners' language performance, an independent samples *t*-test was carried out. First, the results of descriptive statistics are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups

	Teacher talk	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Performance	Experimental	25	94.5200	5.99389	1.19878
	Control	25	80.8400	11.90476	2.38095

As the mean and standard deviation scores in table 4.2 show, there are differences between the experimental ($M = 94.25$, $SD = 5.99$) and control ($M = 80.84$, $SD = 11.90$) group learners' performance in the test. However, in order to get more accurate and reliable results, an independent samples *t*-test was run, the results of which are displayed in table 4.3.

Table 3: T-test Results of Group Differences in Language Performance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Performance	Equal variances assumed	11.39	.001	5.13	48	.000	13.68	2.66	8.32	19.03
	Equal variances not assumed			5.13	35.43	.000	13.68	2.66	8.27	19.08

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.001$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are not same. The results of independent samples *t*-test show statistically significant difference ($t(35.43) = 5.13$, $p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control groups in the performance test. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that learners in the experimental group ($M = 94.25$, $SD = 5.99$) who were exposed to positive teacher talk outperformed those in the control group ($M = 80.84$, $SD = 11.90$). Therefore, the first null hypothesis of the present study is rejected.

In order to examine the second research hypothesis which is concerned with the role of teacher talk on learners' language interaction, an independent samples *t*-test was run. First, the results of descriptive statistics are shown.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Interaction across Groups

	Teacher talk	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Interaction	Experimental	25	14.5200	3.24191	.64838
	Control	25	7.3600	2.69072	.53814

As table 4.4 shows, there are significant mean differences between the experimental ($M = 14.52$, $SD = 3.24$) and control ($M = 7.36$, $SD = 2.69$) participants' interaction scores. The results of t -test are indicated in table 5.

Table 5: T-test Results of Group Differences in Interaction

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Interaction	Equal variances assumed	.50	.48	8.49	48	.000	7.16	.84	5.46	8.85
	Equal variances not assumed			8.49	46.42	.000	7.16	.84	5.46	8.85

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.48$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are the same. The results of independent samples t -test show statistically significant difference ($t(48) = 8.49$, $p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control group learners in the interaction scores. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that the experimental ($M = 14.52$, $SD = 3.24$) learners who received positive teacher talk gained higher scores in terms of language interaction compared to control group peers ($M = 7.36$, $SD = 2.69$). Thus, the second null hypothesis of the present study is rejected. For the investigation of the last research hypothesis of the present study, too, an independent samples t -test was run. First, the results of descriptive statistics are reported.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Attitude across Groups

	Teacher talk	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attitude	Experimental	25	26.4800	1.91746	.38349
	Control	25	24.2800	2.87981	.57596

As table 6 shows, there are significant mean differences between the experimental ($M = 26.48$, $SD = 1.91$) and control ($M = 24.28$, $SD = 2.87$) participants' attitude scores. The results of t -test are indicated in table 7.

Table 7: T-test Results of Group Differences in Attitude

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Attitude	Equal variances assumed	.07	.78	3.17	48	.003	2.20	.69	.80	3.59
	Equal variances not assumed			3.17	41.78	.003	2.20	.69	.80	3.59

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.78$, which means that the variances for the two groups (experimental and control) are the same. The results of independent samples t -test show statistically significant difference ($t(48) = 3.17$, $p < 0.05$) between the experimental and control group learners in the attitude scores. The descriptive statistics, too, point to the same finding showing that the experimental ($M = 26.48$, $SD = 1.91$) learners who received positive teacher talk held a more satisfying attitude towards the classroom compared to control group peers ($M = 24.28$, $SD = 2.87$). Thus, the third null hypothesis of the present study is rejected.

The findings of the present study clearly shed light on the significance of teachers' speech in EFL classroom. The results of statistical analyses showed that experimental learners' attitudes, language performance, and interaction were enhanced at the end of the treatment period compared to their control peers. The results of the study are therefore in line with those of previous studies (e.g., Love, 1991; Musumeci, 1996; Pica, 1994; Walsh, 2002). The results of these studies, too, pinpoint the advantages of teacher talk in creating opportunities for learner involvement due to the fact that the teachers' use of language and pedagogic aim are at one. In other words, the teacher facilitates high learner involvement by developing a context in which learners are actively involved. Walsh (2002) argues that "the teacher, by controlled use of language and by matching pedagogic and linguistic goals, facilitates and promotes reformulation and clarification, leading to greater involvement and precision of language on the part of the learners" (p. 9).

CONCLUSION

There is in fact a vicious circle in the language use of teachers and the students' achievement. As the teachers use language which is appropriately tailored to the students' comprehension, goals, level, needs and wants, students' perceptions of success develops and extends which itself strengthens the self-efficacy of teachers in language use. Learners' success affects teachers' instruction type, choice of tasks, perseverance in achieving goals, and persistent effort. This behavior on the part of teachers can lead to the learners' development of long term goals about English learning who can form positive and constructive orientations toward English. Therefore, positive attitudes can help them set longer term goals and expectations of success, leading in turn

to higher self-efficacy beliefs. And, learners' level of achievement or language performance could lead to lower or higher self-efficiency beliefs in teachers' interactional discourse.

The findings of this study, therefore, have significant implications for teacher education and research. Teachers should be conscious of the significance of effective language use in the EFL classroom. By recognizing the connection between instructional purpose and language use, teachers can be more conscious of the essence of appropriate language use according to the teaching goal. Teachers also need to quit the idea of filling in the gaps in the language of the EFL learners. By using these strategies, teachers diminish the chance for conversational adjustments and learning opportunities.

Teachers should pay attention to the fact that students, especially those at the beginning stages cannot easily understand them; thus, they should teach at a slow to normal pace. This argument is in line with Krashen's $i+1$ (as cited in McLaughlin, 1987) and Pienmann's Teachability hypothesis (as cited in R. Ellis, 2008). Both of these lines of argument advocate the level of instruction that is slightly above the learners' current level of development. They can break thoughts into manageable phrases, but not into individual words, as this will interrupt the rhythm of speech. As with importance of holistic learning, teachers can use visual clues so learners can associate words with objects. It is helpful to label as many items in the classroom as possible.

As one of the data collection tools in the present study was classroom observation, teachers can be more aware about their language use in the classroom by recording their classes. By so doing, they can get better insight about their verbal behavior in the class. Listening to the audio or video records and also analyzing the transcripts can increase teachers' awareness about efficient and useful language use.

With regard to the educational programs, it should be noted that they can spend more time and attention to the appropriate teacher talk in the classroom. This point is significantly important since the current pre- and in-service education programs do not pay due attention to the importance of useful communication and the significance of measuring the use of language in teaching. Current models of teacher education are commonly focused on two issues: the methodology issue and the language awareness issue. It is suggested that the third issue of teacher talk, interaction and learning be also included in education programs.

There should also be a more comprehensive understanding of the quality language use in the classroom in order to reach a series of guidelines which bring about effective teaching in the classroom. With adequate attention given to the teachers' differences in terms of their teaching style and with the avoidance of being too much prescriptive about pedagogical practices, much can be done to boost teachers' comprehension of the relation between teachers talk, interaction and language acquisition. This can lead to a more thoughtful and controlled use of language in the classroom.

The study has some limitations that should be taken into consideration. First, the cross-sectional nature of the study in which the variables have been tested at once, exerts restrictions on the

generalizability of results which can be neutralized by the conduction of longitudinal research. Second, questionnaires can be subject to responses silhouetted with social desirability. Results of the study, therefore, need to be interpreted with due consideration.

REFERENCES

- Cazden, C. B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Dickerson, V. (2005). The nature of student and teacher discourse in an elementary classroom. *Curriculum and Teaching dialogue*, 7, 109-122.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Foster, P. (1998). A classroom perspective on the negotiation of meaning. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 1–23.
- Glazer, S.M. , & Burke, E.M. (1994). *An integrated approach to early literacy: Literature to language*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Horst, M., Collins, L., White, J., & Cardoso, W. (2010, March). *Does ESL teacher talk support incidental vocabulary acquisition?* Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, Atlanta, GA.
- Incecay, G. (2010). The role of teacher talk in young learners' language process. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 277-281.
- Johnson, K.E. (1995). *Understanding communication in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kim, Mi-Rae., & Suh Chun-Soo. (2004). Teacher talk in English classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 16(4), 181-204.
- Lin, H. Y. (2005). *Teacher talk of native and non-native English teachers in EFL classrooms*. Unpublished master thesis, Min-Chuang University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Long, M.H. (1983). Native/non-native conversation and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 126–41.
- Long, M.H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W.C. Ritchie, and T.K. Bhatia, *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 54-59). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Maloney, E. S., & Larrivee, L. S. (2007). Limitations of age-equivalent scores in reporting the results of norm-referenced tests. *Contemporary Issues in Communication Science and Disorders*, 34, 86–93.
- McLaughlin, B. (1987). *Theories of second-language learning*. Edward Arnold, London
- Moguel, D. (2004). What does it mean to participate in class?: integrity and inconsistency in classroom interaction. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 39(1), 19–29.
- Patrick, H., Anderman, L. H., Ryan, A. M., Edelin, K. C., & Midgley, C. (2001). Teachers' communication of goal orientations in four fifth-grade classrooms. *Elementary School Journal*, 102(1), 35–58.
- Pica, T. (1994). Research on negotiation: What does it reveal about second language learning conditions, processes, outcomes? *Language Learning*, 44(3), 493–527.

- Rezaee, M., & Farahian, M. (2012). An exploration of discourse in an EFL classroom: Teacher talk. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 47, 1237-1241.
- Seedhouse, P. (1996). *Learning talk: A study of the interactional organization of the L2 classroom from a CA institutional discourse perspective*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of York.
- Short, K., Kaufman, G., Kaser, S., Kahn, L., & Crawford, K. M. (1999). "Teacher- watching": Examining teacher talk in literature circles. *Language Arts*, 76(5), 377-385.
- Slavit, G., & Poveda, G. (2011). Teacher knowledge and minority students: The potential of saberes docentes. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 6(1), 1-15.
- Steele, K. E. (1998). The positive and negative effects of the use of humor in the classroom setting. Unpublished thesis, West Virginia, Tokyo University.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass, & C. Madden, *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 120-126). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Swain, M. (1996). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook, & B. Seidlhofer, *Principle and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 45-46). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- van Lier, L. (1988). *The classroom and the language learner*. New York: Longman.
- Walsh, S. (2002). Construction or obstruction: Teacher talk and learner involvement in the EFL classroom. *Language Teaching Research*, 6(1), 3-23.
- Xiao-Yan, M. (2006). *Teacher talk and EFL in university classrooms*. Unpublished manuscript, School of Foreign Languages and Literature.

Appendix

(Learner Perception of a Good Teacher)

Name of Institute:

Name of student:

Gender : Male

Female

Age :

Date:

Direction: this questionnaire is just a part of my research about (Teacher talk) -how you can learn best in English classroom- please answer carefully and objectively .your responses to this questionnaire will help instructors confirm quality teaching and improve teaching skills and methods. Helps from you will be highly appreciated. Thank you very much.

PART 1:

ITEMS		<div> <div>Extremely Important</div> <div>→</div> <div>Not important</div> </div>				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The teacher explains important concepts/ideas in ways that I can understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	The teacher stimulates my interest in the subject	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	The teacher demonstrates enthusiasm in teaching the unit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Appropriate teaching techniques are used by the teacher to enhance my learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5	The teacher is helpful if I encounter difficulties with the lecture/unit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	The teacher is available for consultation (e. g., email, online, face-to-face or telephone).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	I receive feedback in time to help me improve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PART 2: The number rating stands for the following:

1 = rarely 2 = once in a while 3 = sometimes 4 = most of the time 5 = almost always

Circle the answer that fits with your experience of this teacher for each item.

<p>EXPLICIT CURRICULUM: How well does the teacher teach the core subject?</p>						
1	Teacher is prepared for class.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Teacher knows his/her subject.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Teacher is organized and neat.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Teacher plans class time and assignments that help students to problem solve and think critically. Teacher provides activities that make subject matter meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Teacher is flexible in accommodating for individual student needs.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Teacher is clear in giving directions and on explaining what is expected on assignments and tests.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Teacher allows you to be active in the classroom learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Teacher manages the time well.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Teacher returns homework in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Teacher has clear classroom procedures so students don't waste time	1	2	3	4	5
11	Teacher grades fairly.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I have learned a lot from this teacher about this subject	1	2	3	4	5
13	Teacher gives me good feedback on homework and projects so that I can improve.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Teacher is creative in developing activities and lessons	1	2	3	4	5
15	Teacher encourages students to speak up and be active in the class.	1	2	3	4	5

ISBN: 2269-2787 & ISBN: 2269-8218 www.wjilatwib.org

IMPLICIT CURRICULUM: How well does the teacher model the core values through how he/she behaves with students and with other staff persons?						
16	Teacher follows through on what he/she says. You can count on the teacher's word.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Teacher listens and understands students' point of view; he/she may not agree, but students feel understood.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Teacher respects the opinions and decisions of students.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Teacher is willing to accept responsibility for his/her own mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Teacher is willing to learn from students.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Teacher is sensitive to the needs of students.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Teacher's words and actions match.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Teacher is fun to be with.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Teacher likes and respects students.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Teacher helps you when you ask for help.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Teacher is consistent and fair in discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I trust this teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Teacher tries to model what teacher expects of students.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Teacher is fair and firm in discipline without being too strict.	1	2	3	4	5

Any other comments or suggestions:

Thank you for taking the time to think through the items carefully and thank you for completing this questionnaire honestly.

THE EFFECTS OF AWARENESS-RAISING OF SPOKEN TEXT CHARACTERISTICS ON EFL LEARNERS' ORAL PERFORMANCE ACROSS GENDER

Mortaza Aslrasouli

Department of English language, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Maragheh, Iran

Elham Khodayari

Department of English language, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Maragheh, Iran

ABSTRACT

Over the past decade or so, an effort has been made to draw learners' attention on various linguistic features through different language activities. Among these, raising learners' awareness on the linguistic aspects is considered to play an effective role on their improved performance. Hence, the present study sought to examine the effects of awareness – raising of spoken text characteristics (i.e., time-creating, facilitation, and compensation devices) on Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' oral production in a speaking task across gender. A total of 28 upper-intermediate students from Voice of Tabriz institute, Iran, participated in the study. The participants were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction on the spoken features; however, the control group underwent the same course of instruction in a traditional method without any treatment. Following an administration of a posttest, it was found that the experimental group outperformed the control group with respect to the spoken features. However, the statistical analyses did not reveal any significant differences across the gender role, with male and female participants performing relatively identical degree of oral performance. The findings lend support to the idea that the students' awareness should be raised with respect to the features of speaking skills during the class activities. The findings suggest implications for educators, materials developers, and EFL learners in particular.

KEYWORDS: Awareness-raising, Time-creating devices, Facilitation devices, Compensation devices, Gender, Spoken text features, Oral performance,

INTRODUCTION

Following language awareness movement in 1980s, the role of consciousness in second language acquisition (SLA) received considerable attention by theoreticians, researchers, and practitioners in the field. It is argued that the key role of consciousness should be specifically regarded if we are to make progress in understanding how language acquisition occurs (e.g., Leow, 2000). By understanding the functions and effects of the concept of consciousness in SLA, students will be able to use language consciously and appropriately. Evidence from research findings and their relevance to the issues of consciousness lend support to the fact that conscious learning can contribute to successful second language (L2) acquisition (Robinson, 2003).

Conscious awareness of the target language system, as Schmidt (1990, 1995) contends, is vital if learners are to create more correct forms and utilize them less erroneously. Schmidt (2001) has also argued that SLA is driven by what learners pay consciously attention to and notice in the target language input and what they understand the significance of the noticed input to be. Four concepts of consciousness are currently discussed in the literature: attention, awareness, intentionality, and control. Since the focal point in this study is on awareness-raising, the concept of awareness is explicated for a better understanding below.

Awareness

Awareness is an individual's subjective experience of a stimulus or cognitive content. Ellis (1993a), in his discussion of implicit and explicit knowledge, stated that explicit knowledge is a conscious representation which is not the same as articulated knowledge. The significant issue, then, is whether awareness is stimulated by oral or written language, by reference or not, by timing, by different social arrangements, by formal or functional activities involving a focus on L2 input or reflection on input (Long, 1991). In line with Ellis (1993a), three conditions, according to Allport (1988), are conceived as essential for a person to be aware of a given experience. First, the person must indicate a behavioral or cognitive change as a result of experience. Second, the person must show that he / she was aware of the experience at the time it happened. Finally, the person must be capable of describing the experience.

A point of distinction between two types of knowledge seems essential to better understand the role of awareness in learning. Paradis (1994) makes a distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge where the former is acquired without awareness, unavailable to conscious memory even after competence and put to use spontaneously without conscious control. The latter, however, is knowledge that the learner is aware of and can access on demand. Schmidt (1990) argues that learners have to pay some kind of attention to language forms in order for the acquisition of accuracy.

It is, hence, safe to argue that teachers should make learners aware of the processes involved in language learning and to help them find environments that suit their needs best. Kohonen (1991) argues that raising the awareness of one's own learning and gaining an understanding of the processes involved is a core factor for the development of autonomous learning. Therefore a balance must be found between providing opportunities for the learners to take control over their learning while at the same time supporting those learners who are not ready or who feel unprepared to take on this responsibility for themselves.

Speaking Proficiency and awareness

The concept of consciousness-raising, particularly awareness-raising activities, are hotly debated in the field to come up with more practical employment devices of those activities with respect to various areas of L2 acquisition. One such area has been the command of speaking skills in English which is a priority for many L2 or foreign-language learners (Richards, 2008). Learners often evaluate their success in language learning and the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. They only feel satisfied of their development when they realize they can speak and utter English words

easily, or that the effort they have to make in order to speak decreases as they acquire new information through their material with the assistance of their instructor. Allison and Martyn (1993) believed that materials developers have to devote some parts in the course books to introduce the unique characteristics of spoken language.

Characteristics of spoken texts

Many learners of English encounter more difficulties in listening and speaking than in reading and writing. One of the contributing factors is that much emphasis is laid on the written text in the teaching syllabus. The effect is that young learners start learning the written form of the language with little regard to its aural-oral aspect. When listening to natural, unscripted speech, students are exposed to loose, flowing texts. On the other hand, when reading, they are exposed to dense, structured texts. Many teachers fail to highlight this difference to the students and subsequently the teaching and learning of listening and speaking skills can only achieve minimal results.

Foreign language teachers, thus, are strongly suggested to equip the learners with ways to alert learners to these characteristics in order that they can cope with real-world listening input and real-life communication more effectively. Classroom listening, however, is not real-life listening. So it is very important to provide students with training in listening comprehension that will prepare them for effective functioning outside the classroom. Activities should give learners practice in coping with at least some of the features of real-life-situations. They will be more motivating and interesting to do than contrived textbook comprehension exercises. EFL learners should take the following factors into account if they want to make communication easy and deal with its issues in a better way (Lam, 2002):

Utilization of time-creating devices

The speaker uses the time creating devices to simplify the speech production as well as to generate time to produce what to tell next in unplanned speech. One example is the utilization of pause feature even if pause filler doesn't have any lexical or syntactic function such as "um" , "urh" , "eh" that is invented to offer great help for speaker to gain enough time to communicate his words .

Utilization of facilitation devices

Bygate (1987) argues that speakers employ facilitation devices when they are under time pressure in real-life communication to make their speech production less demanding. If learners are not equipped for these devices in listening and fail to recover the full meaning of these constructions, they will experience difficulties in real-life communication. Utilization of fixed and conventional phrases, speech formulas, and Stock phrases such as "I see what you mean," "I'm sure you're right but..." "You know," "I mean," "kind of," are some of the devices to facilitate speech production. (Lam, 2002). The use of these ready-made phrases reduces the burden of speaker's task, thereby increasing speed and fluency. As effective listeners, students need to be instructed about them understand their function.

Utilization of compensation devices

Since listening data are processed very swiftly, the rate of natural speech is highly difficult so that spoken discourse cannot be retrieved during normal interaction. Redundancy in natural speech, however, provides the speakers with some processing time to overcome the deficiency. The three common ways of repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing can be employed to create redundancy and relieve memory load. Speakers always find themselves correcting or improving what they have already said. They may repeat part of speech at the request of listener or express their ideas in different ways. According to Lam (1997), repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing are used by speaker to build redundancy and effective listeners need to be familiar with these elements of redundancy to be able to guess meanings from the help of compensation devices.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recent years have witnessed a bulk of research considering the role of awareness-raising activities on learners' ultimate comprehension and production elements of language enterprise. Quite a number of studies (e.g., Elbro & Petersen, 2004; Nakatani, 2005; Saito, 2007; Shu-Chin, 2012; Svalberg, 2007), have acknowledged a general positive impact of awareness giving on learners' subsequent performances. Altman (1997), from her personal language learning case study, found that, "a key to the success of the language learner seems to be the extensive employment of awareness—the focusing of attention on all aspects of the language to be learned" (p. 93).

Nakatani (2005) explored the influence of awareness giving on young Japanese adults' use of oral communication strategies such as maintenance of fluency and negotiation of meaning. The findings revealed that the learners in the experimental group who received awareness produced longer sentences and used more achievement strategies, and did not leave the message as often as the learners in the comparison group.

Following this line of enquiry, Shu-Chin (2012) found positive effect of the use of rhetorical consciousness-raising instructional materials in writing research papers. In line with the results found by Nakatani (2005), Jones (2001) found positive impact of explicit training in conversational story telling. Similarly, Elbro and Petersen (2004) came to this conclusion that phonological awareness-raising of kindergarten children of dyslexic parents was influential. The children received awareness-raising for 17 weeks and it was revealed that the awareness training had long-term effects as late as grade 7.

Sze (2008) researched the effect of awareness-raising in teaching of phonetics. He addressed the question of how teachers should approach phonics teaching in L2 contexts. His main purpose in his paper was to argue for an awareness raising approach to teaching phonics to school children who learn English as a second language. He then explains and concludes that the approach of awareness-raising is more advantageous and it applying it to the classroom and the process of teaching leads to a more successful teaching outcome in phonetics.

It has been claimed that explicit learning within language awareness framework is facilitative in a variety of linguistic fields (Svalberg, 2007). Despite the core role of awareness raising in the process of L2 acquisition and learning of different skills (e.g., Ghorbani, 2011; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1994, 2001), there are some arguments against the significance of language awareness. For example, Alderson, Clapham, and Steel (1997) in their study conclude that whilst knowledge about language may be worthwhile in its own right, there is no evidence to justify the teaching of metalinguistic knowledge as a means of improving students' linguistic proficiency. Al-Hejin (2004) also takes a more cautious stance, but concludes that both attention and awareness facilitate learning. The debate includes Norris and Ortega's (2000) synthesis and analysis of 49 published studies, which concluded that on the available evidence explicit instruction, is more effective than implicit instruction.

Speaking skill is a very important and crucial part of learning any language. Its importance and specific characteristics have been pointed out constantly by experts involved in the field. It has also been emphasized that teachers must be aware of such characteristics in order to better instruct their pupils. Unlike the sole focus on the mere skill and teachers familiarity with it, the matter that whether learners' awareness of the existence of such factors has any effect on their acquisition, have not been taken under close scrutiny to see whether knowing these characteristics prior the material learning can guide language learners through a better learning path or not. Also the fact that whether this knowledge is gender relevant has not been considered much in the studies. This study tackles the issue that whether familiarizing the learners with characteristics of spoken text and raising their awareness of such characteristics increases their language intake and also the issue that whether learners' gender plays a role in this process. The aforementioned studies imply that awareness-raising is not just limited to the forms of language but it can be expanded to different skills of language. Although so many studies have been done in this field, but few researches have reported the effect of awareness-raising features on speaking skill. As it has been stated before, this study is an endeavour on the base of Lam's theory the effect of awareness-raising about features on spoken text in order to improve EFL learners' speaking skill.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will be an attempt to find scientific answers for the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of raising awareness about characteristics of spoken text on the upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners' speaking skill?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners' use of speaking features?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In order to fulfil the objective of the study, the following null hypotheses have been proposed:

Ho. (1): Awareness-raising of the characteristics of spoken text has no effect on the speaking proficiency of the upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners.

Ho. (2): There is no significant difference between male and female upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners' use of speaking features.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 28 students participated in this study. An equal number of 14 students, namely, 7 male and 7 female, took part in the experimental and control groups. The study participants attended in English conversation courses at Voice of Tabriz institute (Foreign Languages Center). The English conversation course lasted for 2 months and was held twice a week for 105 minutes per session in the evening (Holidays were excluded). For the homogeneity of the subjects, prior to research, the proficiency test PET (Cambridge Preliminary English Test, 2004) was administered to 56 students. From this pool 28 students participated in the study and were assigned randomly into the experimental and control groups.

Instrumentation and materials

This study was conducted with 28 EFL students chosen from among 56 students based on their proficiency scores. The proficiency test PET (Cambridge Preliminary English Test) was administered to make sure as to the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of their level of proficiency. The test included two parts, namely, a reading-writing part and a listening part.

In addition to the proficiency test, a pretest was administered to measure as well as to homogenize the participants' speaking skill in both groups of the study. The pretest included an argumentative topic selected from Top Notch series. The test required the participants to express their opinion on a predetermined topic which was not already discussed in the course. Their oral performance was recorded by the tape recorder and later was rated via three different raters.

Following this, the study included treatment sessions twice a week for two months in which a 6-minute English B.B.C podcast was used. The program involved different real-situation conversations in dialogue and monologue forms of authentic speech. The experimental group received discussion activities after each listening activity; however, the participants of the control group did not receive any discussions.

In order to measure and compare the participants' oral performance in both groups and the effects of awareness-raising on students' speaking performance in the experimental group, a similar posttest was administered to the groups. The scoring criteria for the conducted tests will be discussed later in this chapter.

Procedure

The study was conducted through the following stages: First, Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to homogenize the participants in terms of their English language proficiency. From among 56 participants who took this test, 28 students whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the experiment. Second, the participants were randomly assigned into two groups: an experimental and a control

group, each including 14 participants. Next, a speaking assessment pretest was administered. For this purpose, we asked the very same topic with allotted 2 minutes to each and every individual of participants and the results were evaluated by three. The raters were already instructed about the rating criteria and necessary guidelines were offered in a one-hour session.

The next step of the experiment was the treatment stage that lasted for 9 weeks (2 months). In each session, the participants in the experimental group were exposed to authentic listening tasks to get familiar with the real-life speaking features and become aware of the communication devices employed by native speakers. After highlighting the spoken features in listening task, a discussion over these features was formed. More than 20 minutes was allotted to this activity in each session.

The participants in the control group were exposed to the same listening tasks in each session. They didn't receive any treatment of discussion, or awareness - raising activities about the features of spoken language which were the use of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices before, during, and after listening to the materials. But the difficult vocabulary or ideas were presented to them as a pre-listening activity. On the other hand, the experimental group received discussion, or awareness - raising about the features of spoken language in terms of the use of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices before, during, and after listening to the materials. Every session, the researcher at the beginning of the class talked about the different kinds of real conversation features and during the listening task he explained those features. At the end of the class, he asked students to distinguish those features in the listening task and discuss about them.

Finally, a posttest was given to the participants of both groups at the end of the course of instruction to compare their oral performance and to see whether awareness-raising of features of real speech has any impact on their speaking performance. After collecting the data, the participants' oral performance was transcribed to measure their oral production.

Measurement of Speaking Performance

Following the collection of the audio-taped data, three criteria of time-creating, facilitation, and compensations devices were developed to evaluate the quality of the participants' oral production. The three measurement criteria were intended to assess the fluency dimension of participants' oral performances. That is, the aim was to better understand whether employing any of the devices explained below leads to more fluent speech in learners. Each rater was instructed about the related strategies and their scores were averaged for later data analysis and rating basis. The criteria were operationalized as follows:

1. *Time-creating devices*: application of pause feature even if pause filler doesn't have any lexical or syntactic function such as "um" , "urh" , "eh" that is invented to offer great help for speaker to earn enough time to convey his words .

2. *Facilitation devices*: employment of ready-made phrases to simplify speaker's task, thereby increasing speed and fluency. Such phrases as "you know," "I mean," and "well" may serve as pause fillers as well.

3. *Compensation devices*: The three common ways are use of repetition, reformulation, and rephrasing strategies to create redundancy and relieve memory load. Speakers always find themselves correcting or improving what they have already said.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After collecting the data, the experimental and control groups' oral performance was transcribed. Their oral production was measured based on the established criteria with respect to speaking features. To answer the research questions, the data were then submitted to statistical analyses which included several Independent Samples t-tests and descriptive analyses. That is, four different Independent Samples t-tests were used in order to measure and compare the homogeneity and amount of progress in speaking features for both groups in pre-test and posttest. In all analysis the alpha was set at .05.

A statistical analysis was run to calculate the distribution of data in the pre-test and posttest. Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistics for data distribution for speaking variable in pretest and posttest. The mean score in pretest and posttest were **29.54** and **34.93** respectively and the minimum and maximum scores were **20** and **40** for the pre-test and for the posttest were **21** and **48** respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Data Distribution – Pre/Posttest

	N	Mean	Std.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	28	29.54	5.922	.180	-.196	20	40
Posttest	28	34.93	7.195	.177	.111	21	48

In order to investigate the distribution normality of variables score, kolmogorov-samimov test was used. The *p* value in pretest was **0.863** and in posttest was **0.985**. With regard to acquired significance level, it is concluded that speaking variable in both pretest and posttest has normal distribution. Table 2 shows the statistics for the normality distribution.

Table 2: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Pre/Posttest

	Mean	N	Std.	Sig.
Speaking Pre-test	29.54 34.93	28	5.922 7.195	.863
Speaking posttest		28		.985

An Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the homogeneity of the two groups of the study in pre-test. Table 3 indicates the results of independent samples t-test for pre-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Pre-test Speaking

	Mean	N	Std.	t	df.	Sig.
Speaking Pre-test						
Control group	29.86 29.21	14	5.600 6.423	.282	26	.780
Experimental group		14				

As Table 3 indicates the mean score for speaking pretest in control group was **29.86** and in experimental group was **29.21** and the p level was **0.78**. That is, the participants in two groups of the study performed rather equally with respect to the three features of spoken devices (time-creating, facilitation, and compensation devices). As a result, the control and experimental groups do not statistically differ with respect to speaking pretest. So the homogeneity of control and experimental group is verified.

In order to study the homogeneity of male and female, speaking pretest scores were compared in either group. Another independent samples t-test was used for this comparison.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Male and Female- Pre-test Speaking

	Mean	N	Std.	t	df.	Sig.
Speaking Pre-test						
Male	29.07 30.00	14	5.690 6.325	.408	26	.686
Female		14				

As Table 4 illustrates, the mean score of speaking pretest in male's group was **29.07** and in female's group was **30** and the significance level was **0.686**. Table 4 shows the results of Independent Samples t-test for both male and female groups. Regarding the significance level ($p=0.68$) in t-test, the null hypothesis was not rejected. In terms of gender, no group outperformed another one with respect to the three dimensions of spoken features. As a result,

there is no significant difference in the speaking pretest scores in both groups of male and female. So the male and female groups are homogeneous.

First hypothesis: Awareness-raising of spoken text characteristic has no effect on EFL learner speaking skill.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Posttest Speaking

	Mean	N	Std.	t	df.	Sig.
Speaking Posttest						
Control group	32.07	14	6.318	2.254	26	.033
Experimental group	37.79	14	7.073			

An Independent Samples t-test was used to answer this hypothesis. As Table 5 indicates, the mean score of speaking posttest in control group was **32.07** and in experimental group **37.79**. The latter group outperformed the former in speaking posttest. With regard to the significance level of t-test ($p=0.033$), the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the experimental groups' speaking fluency improved in terms of the three dimensions of features of spoken text in the posttest which means that the awareness-raising of spoken text characteristics tends to have a significant effect on EFL learners' speaking skill.

Second hypothesis: There is no significant difference between male and female in applying the speech techniques.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the Male and Female- Posttest Speaking

	Mean	N	Std.	t	df.	Sig.
Speaking Pre-test						
Male	34.79	14	7.628	.103	26	.919
Female	35.07	14	7.022			

Finally, another Independent Samples t-test was used to answer the second hypothesis. As Table 6 indicates the mean score of speaking posttest in male's group is **34.79** and in female's group is **35.07**. The female group outperformed the male one in the posttest. With regard to p value ($p=0.919$), the null hypothesis is not rejected. As a result, there is no statistically significant difference between the female and male groups in speaking posttest. So there is no significant difference between male and female in applying the spoken features in terms of time-creation, facilitation, and compensation devices which lead to ultimate fluency.

Discussion

The present study was designed to shed light on our understanding of spoken text features when the awareness-raising is employed in language activities. The rationale underlying this study is that when learners are aware of the kinds of characteristics used in the spoken texts and they receive instruction on these features, their oral performance, and hence, their oral production is improved. Since learners often judge their success in language learning and the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency, instructing them about the spoken text features and consequently raising their awareness on these characteristics will equip them with necessary skills and strategies to succeed in their final oral productions. Compared to other studies, it has taken the view that learners' oral performance in EFL contexts extremely suffers due to the scarcity of exposure to the target language and the ignorance of focusing attention (the absence of learners' awareness) on different spoken text features which are embedded in language activities. Therefore, the present study has focused on the awareness-raising of spoken text characteristics and then on the influence of this awareness EFL learners speaking skill and their subsequent oral production.

Using a range of measures, the participants' oral performances in both groups of the study were measured and compared. First, the speaking variable in both pretest and posttest had normal distribution. Second, the researchers found some evidence that raising learners' awareness of characteristics of spoken language resulted in improvements in their oral performance. This finding is supported by the idea that adding specific texts or instructions regarding speaking skill's characteristics to the English learning materials appear to be a necessity. If EFL learners recognize the features of spoken language, their future difficulties will be removed in the final stage of language production.

The findings of the study are also supported by Allison and Martyn's belief (1993) that materials developers have to be required to develop and incorporate some parts in the course books to introduce the unique characteristics of spoken language.

The results of the study are also in line with the suggestions made by Lam (1997) and Wu (1993) who stated that students need to recognize the features of spoken language and be aware of such techniques as the use of time-creating, facilitation and compensations devices in order that they can handle real-life listening input and real-world communication. Wu (1993) further pointed out that in order to formulate and create what to say and facilitate his/her speech production; a speaker is suggested to use time-creating devices to gain the necessary time in final stage of oral production. Consequently, Bygate (1987) suggests that time pressure in real-world communication makes it necessary for the speaker to apply facilitation devices to facilitate the production of speech. Again, the finding of the present study is in line with the idea proposed by Bygate (1987).

However, with respect to gender and its impact on the learners' application of speaking techniques, no positive effect was found in this study. The results of the study did not indicate any statistically significant differences in terms of gender and its role in speaking activities

between the two genders of the study. The reason for the absence of significance between the two genders leaves another question for further investigation in later attempts.

The first research question addressed the effects of raising awareness about the characteristics of spoken text. The results of the study indicate that EFL learners' awareness is significantly raised by instructing them about the features of spoken texts and equipping them with such techniques as the time-creating, facilitation and compensations devices, which gives more support to the insights and theories of Allison and Martyn (1993), Lam (1997), Wu (1993), and Bygate (1987).

Therefore, it is safe to argue that raising learners' awareness about the characteristics of spoken text and providing them with the necessary speaking devices give them the opportunity to recognize the skills and strategies that should be included in the completion of an oral production activity. In doing so, learners' oral performance quality is likely to improve to a great extent. Therefore, the findings of the study are in line with the previous studies regarding raising learners' awareness.

The second research question addressed the effects of gender on EFL learners' use of speaking features. The findings in this study did not indicate a statistically significant effect on L2 production as a result of gender differences between male and female learners. Although the participants' awareness was raised with respect to the speaking features and was instructed equally on the communication techniques, when they came to produce L2 under the real time communication, gender differences were not capable of improving learners' oral performance. Therefore, the results revealed that no gender outperformed the other in terms of the quality of their oral production.

CONCLUSION

This study made an attempt to investigate the effects of awareness – raising of spoken text characteristics on Iranian learners' oral production in a speaking task. The research was conducted with 28 students taking an English conversation course at Voice of Tabriz institute at upper-intermediate level. Doing the same speaking task, the participants' oral performance in both experimental and control groups was recorded and measured based on the established criteria. The effect of awareness-raising on the established aspects of language production was determined by comparing the participants' performance among participants with and without exposure and instruction to/about communication strategies.

Previous research findings (e.g. Ghorbani, 2011; Jones, 2001; Nakatani, 2005; Shu-Chin, 2012, and Sze, 2008) provide evidence supporting the effectiveness of awareness - raising in enhancing and improving EFL learners' oral performance. The findings of the present study provided support for the close link between awareness-raising as a metacognitive strategy and high quality of oral performance.

The findings of this research supported claim which proposed that the communicational skills can be learnt consciously and that the communicational skills are important to enable learners to have a conversation and it is a great part of their language development.

In brief, it can be concluded that in EFL contexts teaching features of spoken texts by raising learners' consciousness about different communication devices and techniques is an effective way to improve their oral performances. Accordingly, it can be an effective replacement for the traditional way of practicing and testing speaking skill in EFL classes.

Pedagogical implications of the study

The present study supports the findings of previous research regarding awareness - raising. The most important contribution of this study is that it provides L2 and L2 educators with a clear explanation of how awareness - raising affected the L2 learners' (a) cognitive strategic processes, (b) their application of social strategies, and (c) the affective aspect of their speech. The present study has implications for pedagogy. In terms of pedagogical practice, the findings of this study suggest that awareness-raising can promote an optimal balance between conscious attention/awareness and characteristics of spoken texts. In addition, the findings suggest that learners' awareness of those features can balance the learners' quality of speech.

Lastly, there are certain implications taken from this study for language teachers and material development experts. Teachers can include consciousness-raising activities in their daily teaching programs to enable learners to improve their quality of speech. In teacher education courses, the findings can be beneficial for training language teachers who are to teach English as a foreign language in EFL contexts.

Suggestions for further research

First, the present study did not take into account different levels of proficiency. Only upper-intermediate learners participated in the study. To examine the effects of raising awareness on the learners' oral performance, different levels of proficiency should be included in the study. Second, from the different types of language learning skills and sub skills, only speaking skill was used to be performed and measured after doing consciousness raising task in the classroom setting. Different results might be observed with different levels of proficiency and various skills and sub skills of English language in an EFL setting. Third, the number of students participating in the study was limited to 14 in each group. A larger sample of participants should be selected and examined to ensure the effectiveness of awareness-raising on the learners' oral performance. It seems that a large sample might produce more reliable and different results.

REFERENCES

- Alderson, J. C., Clapham, C., & Steel, D. (1997). Metalinguistic knowledge, language aptitude and language proficiency. *Language Teaching Research*, 1(2), 93-121.
- Al-Hejin, B. (2004). Attention and awareness: Evidence from cognitive and second language acquisition research. *Working papers in TESOL and Applied Linguistics*, 4(1), 1-22.
- Allison, D., & Martyn, E. (1993). *The teaching of spoken English. In teaching grammar and*

- spoken English: A handbook for Hong Kong schools*. Hong Kong: Education Department, Hong Kong Government Printer.
- Allport, A. (1988). What concept of consciousness? In A. J. Marcel and E. Bisiach (eds.). *Consciousness in contemporary science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Altman, R. (1997). Oral production of vocabulary: A case study. In J. Coady & T. Huckin (Eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition* (69-97). Cambridge, USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Elbro, C., & Petersen, D. K. (2004). Long-term effects of phoneme awareness and letter sound training: An intervention study with children at risk for dyslexia. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(4), 660–670.
- Ellis, R. (1993a). The structural syllabus and second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27, 91 – 113.
- Ghorbani, M.R. (2011). The Impact of Phonetic Instruction on Iranian Students' Listening Ability Enhancement. *Asian EFL Journal*, 52 (2), 24-34.
- Jones, R. E. (2001). A consciousness-raising approach to the teaching of conversational storytelling skills. *ELT Journal*, 55(2), 155–163.
- Kohonen, V. (1991). *Foreign Language Learning as Learner Education: Facilitating Self Direction in Language Learning. Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe*. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Switzerland.
- Lam, W. Y. K. (2002). *Raising Students' Awareness of the Features of Real-World Listening Input*. In *methodology in language teaching* (eds.) (pp.248-254).
- Leow, R. P. (2000). A study of the role of awareness in foreign language behavior. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 22, 557 – 584.
- Long, M. H. (1991). Focus on form: a design feature in language teaching methodology. In de bot, K., Ginsberg, R.B., and Kramsch, C., editors, *Foreign language research in cross – cultural perspective*. Amsterdam: Benjakmins.
- Nakatani, Y. (2005). The effects of awareness raising training on oral communication strategy use. *Modern Language Journal*, 89(1), 76–91.
- Norris, J. M., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, 50(3), 417–528.
- Paradis, M. (1994). Neurolinguistic aspects of implicit and explicit memory: Implication for bilingualism and SLA. In N. Ellis (ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp. 393 – 420). New York: Academic Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking: from theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Robinson, P. (1995). Attention, memory and noticing hypothesis. *Language Learning*, 45(2), 283-331.
- Robinson, P. (2003). Attention and memory during SLA. In C.J. Doughty & M. Long (eds.). *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. pp.631- 678. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Saito, K. (2007). The influence of explicit phonetic instruction on pronunciation teaching in EFL settings: The case of English vowels and Japanese learners of English. *Linguistics Journal*, 3(3), 16-40.
- Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied*

linguistics, 11(2), 129-158.

- Schmidt, R. (1994). Implicit learning and the cognitive unconscious: Of artificial grammars and SLA. In N. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp. 165-209). London, UK: Academic Press.
- Schmidt, R. W. (1995b). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. In Schmidt, R. (Ed.) *Attention and Awareness in Foreign Language Learning* (pp.165). Honolulu: university of Hawaii Press.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3–32). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Shu-chin, Y. (2011). L2 students' use of rhetorical consciousness raising instructional materials in writing research articles. *Asian EFL Journal*, 13 (3), 130-152.
- Svalberg, A. (2007). Language awareness and language learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(4), 287–308.
- Sze, F. (2003). Word order of Hong Kong Sign Language. In Anne Baker, Beppie van den Bogaerde & Onno Crasborn (eds.), *Cross-linguistic perspectives in sign language research: Selected papers from TISLR 2000*, 163–192. Hamburg: Signum.

THE ROLE OF TEACHING GRAMMATICAL LINKERS IN COMPREHENDING WRITTEN ACADEMIC DISCOURSE AMONG IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Soraya Sobhani¹, Bahman Gorjian*²

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

²Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of teaching grammatical linkers (GLs) on Iranian pre-intermediate L2 learners who read to comprehend the written academic discourse. Reading comprehension of written academic discourse may be enhanced if university students are familiar with GLs as cohesive devices (e.g., however, and, so, etc.). In doing this study, 80 university students took part in the investigation. Through the administration of a homogeneity test, 52 pre-intermediate students who enrolled in the second year of English translation at Abadan Azad University were chosen. Then they were randomly divided into two groups of control (n=26) and experimental (n=26). They took a reading comprehension pre-test to assess their knowledge of GLs at the beginning of the research. To evaluate the frequency of GLs used by participants, they also took a pre-test of writing one-paragraph essays. During eight sessions, both groups worked on reading passages. The experimental group received explicit instruction including explanation on the form and function of GLs, while the control group received conventional instruction including examples in an implicit method. At the end of the treatment, a post-test on reading comprehension were administered to evaluate the effect of GLs instructions and a one-paragraph essays to assess the participants' uses of GLs. The results obtained from the Independent and Paired Samples t-tests revealed that there was a significant difference between the performances of two groups. In the post-test, the experimental group outperformed the control group in comprehending written academic discourse. The results of analyzing GLs frequency showed a significant difference between the pre and post-tests. This study suggests that teaching cohesive devices such as GLs may help teachers to teach reading comprehension effectively.

KEYWORDS: Grammatical linkers (GLs), Reading comprehension, Written academic discourse

INTRODUCTION

Discourse is described as a piece of writing or speech that is longer than a sentence or an utterance. In academic writing, it is indispensable for the writers to guide the readers through the discourse signaling what is important and how each sentence links to others (Schiffrin, 1987). Accordingly, grammatical linkers (i.e., addition, contrast and comparison, conclusion, etc.) are the discourse signaling cues and use between sentences and between paragraphs. They connect

the related ideas, so they help readers to see connections that they might miss or misunderstand (Risselada & Spooren, 1998).

Grammatical linkers (GLs) are the main elements of linguistic production and the crucial factors in successful language learning. These linkers (e.g., but, however, and, or, etc.) are partly familiar to the authors and readers who often participate in academic discourse. The loss of such words and phrases might show the lack of cohesion in a particular discourse. There is no doubt that as writers mature; they rely increasingly on GLs as cohesive devices and that the lesser use of them is considered as a characteristic of the novice writers (Fraser, 1999). Students of English as a foreign language (EFL) may be unfamiliar with GLs as well as their functions in written academic discourse, and therefore may have the problems in comprehending these kinds of texts. In addition, as Fung (2011) states, nowadays a few teachers are prepared to teach students how to make use of grammatical linkers to build comprehension, though it is a widely accepted fact that knowledge of GLs is important for reading.

Students can benefit from explicit instruction that focuses on the identification of these linkers and their functions. Furthermore, they can get cues for signaling information and discourse organization, which are used to control the amount of information presented in the text as well as the ways in which the new information is introduced, and which in turn help reading comprehension, especially with more difficult texts (Hyland, 2005). There are many different GLs and, perhaps even more importantly, some of them are used more in speech than in writing, or vice versa or some of them are more informally used than formally and so on. Some researchers (e.g., Halliday & Hasan, 1976) have provided the lists of GLs, classified them, assigned different names to each category and defined special features for each of them.

According to Parker (1982), GLs include Addition, Comparison, Contrast, Emphasis, Example, Exception, Place, Proof, Purpose, Result, Sequence, Summary, Time (Appendix E). Among these categories, just four groups have been selected and taught in this study. They are as follows:

Table 1: GLs' Classification (extracted from Parker, 1982)

Contrast	but, in contrast, on the contrary, although, however, whereas, while, though, even though
Addition	And, in addition, furthermore, moreover, besides, also, additionally, further, not only-but also, as well as
Time	After, before, then, once, next, finally, at last, first, second, etc., at first, soon, meanwhile, at the same time, for a minute, hour, day, etc., during the morning, day, week, etc., immediately, as soon as, when, until, as
Summary	Therefore, so, consequently, thus, in short, in conclusion, in brief, as a result

GLs rank among the key cohesive devices in formal written discourses. What is more, the knowledge of these linkers helps to understand and create text with greater ease. Many Iranian pre-intermediate L2 learners have problems in comprehending written academic discourse and their teachers often complain from the weaknesses of the students and the low level of EFL classes. It seems the training that these students receive does not enable them to attain full

competence in comprehending written academic discourse (Parvaresh & Nemati, 2008). These learners may be unfamiliar with GLs and their functions in the written texts. The present study intends to investigate teaching these linkers into pre-intermediate L2 learners who have many problems in comprehending written academic discourse.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

GLs are words and expressions taken into consideration within the text in order to join one sentence to another sentence or one paragraph to another paragraph. A writer utilizes these linkers between sentences to show relationships between ideas in adjoining major sections of academic discourses. S/he presents an idea and then other ideas to deepen the first idea by adding for example: and, besides, further. Here, it should be clarified what is meant by the term 'GLs' in this study.

One of the ways that writers help readers through discourse is by "marking" how the coming sentence or clause relates back to previous discourse. Thus if the author wants to show a continuation of a previous line of thought, s/he will begin the coming sentence with a linker such as *in addition* or *moreover*. This automatically helps the reader to approach the coming sentence with the knowledge of how it relates to the theme the author is constructing. If, on the other hand, the author wants to signal a change in direction of the discourse, s/he will utilize a linker such as *on the other hand* or *conversely*. Groups of researchers have worked on GLs.

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), there are many ways of relating one clause to another besides the use of a connective adjunct. Coordinators are one such device; syntactically, these have distinctive properties that lead us to analyze them differently from connective adjuncts. Nevertheless, the division between coordinators and connective adjuncts is not entirely clear-cut, and items such as *yet* and *so* have some uses where they are clearly connective adjuncts, others where they are very similar to coordinators. According to Hyland (2005), GLs are conjunctions and adverbial phrases that help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument by making comparison, contrast, and consequence in the discourse. In comparison, writers show the way two or more ideas are the same (e.g., similarity, likeness, equally). In contrast, writers show the way two or more ideas are different (e.g., in contrast, however, but). Consequences relations tell readers that either a conclusion is being drawn or justified (e.g., therefore, consequently) or an argument is being counted (e.g., nevertheless, anyway).

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) introduced conjunctions in this way: "Coordinating conjunctions (a) conjoin syntactically equivalent constituents and (b) lead the listener/ reader to certain interpretations of the way that clauses relate to each other meaningfully. Adverbial subordinators and conjunctive adverbials are often called logical connectors. Like some coordinating conjunctions, logical connectors are typically said to be types of cohesive devices, lexical expressions that may add little or no prepositional content by themselves but that serve to specify the relationships among sentences in oral or written discourse, thereby leading the listener/reader to the feeling that the sentences "hang together" or make sense" (p. 519).

According to Parrot (2002), conjunctions are divided into three categories: coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions and discourse markers. "Coordinating conjunctions include only three words: and, but, and or. They can serve to (a) link together parts of constituents and are therefore contained within the constituent and (b) to form a link between clauses" (p. 262). "Subordinating conjunctions serve to link two clauses of unequal importance. They consist of (a) one word, such as after, although and if, (b) two or more words: as if, as soon as and as long as if, (b) two or more words: as if, as soon as and as long as" (p. 335). And, those connective elements between sentences indicating logical relationships and sequence are called DMs.

Discourse analysis forms the discipline that studies and analyses the actual language in use. It involves both language form and language function. Moreover, it includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. A discourse analysis of written texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences. Cohesion and coherence are two main aspects of discourse. When a writer is planning to write a well-organized text, cohesion and coherence are important considerations. Here, these two aspects will be explained. Cohesion is a particular feature of the spoken and written human speech. In general, cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which connect different parts of a text. These relations organize and create a text by needing the reader to interpret words and expressions with reference to other words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs and hence, according to Halliday and Hassan (1976), make the text 'cohere' (Carrell, 1982).

Coherence is another feature that comes usually to be related to the feature of cohesion. Some researchers apply the term cohesion to the surface structure of the text and the term coherence to the concepts and relations underlying its meaning (Jin, 1998). Cohesion has sometimes been applied to smaller units of language in the text, and coherence, to some general overall interrelatedness in the text. Other researchers have defined cohesion as "continuity in word and sentence structure", and coherence as "continuity in meaning and context" (Louwerse & Graesser, 2005). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are two kinds of cohesion that help the coherence, one being lexical cohesion and the other being grammatical cohesion.

Written Academic Discourse

Discourse is a term becoming more and more usual in a wide range of academic and non-academic contexts, in written and spoken form. Some linguists use it in reference to texts, while others claim it means speech. One definition of discourse is that "discourse is a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit such as a sermon, argument, joke, or narrative" (Crystal, 1992, p. 25). Somewhere else, the terms 'text' and 'discourse' are nearly utilized interchangeably implying that the first term refers to the linguistic product, whereas the second one denotes the entire dynamics of the processes.

The term 'discourse' has been also defined in a various ways: for example, as language use above the level of the sentence, as language use in context, and as real language use. The tasks and preoccupations of discourse analysts may change while studying spoken or written language. Whereas "conversational analysis" is a term used for analysis of spoken discourse, some linguists

for the study of written discourse use the term “text linguistics”. Written academic discourse is different from other discourses in any aspect of linguistic behavior, in the study of particular patterns of pronunciation, in the word choice, sentence structure, semantic representation, and the pragmatic analysis. The crucial function of the written academic discourse is referential, which involves the following aspects: it conveys information, presents arguments and explains facts and the different relations between them. To fulfill this function successfully, the written academic discourse needs a high level of explicitness, clear logical organization and an avoidance of ambiguity. In order to achieve all these criteria, this kind of discourse uses the appropriate terminology, formal language, complete sentences, relative clauses, and other devices among which GLs are certainly worth emphasizing.

Why Teaching GLs?

In contrast to the early years of the communicative approach that was felt the knowledge of grammar may not be necessary for one to communicate in a language, in recent years there has been a re-thinking about grammar teaching. In these days, it is being more accepted that language learning is essentially learning how grammar functions in the achievement of meaning (Widdowson, 1983). Nowadays, learners are first exposed to a new language in a comprehensible context, so that they are able to understand its function and meaning. Only then is their attention turned to examining the grammatical forms that have been used to convey that meaning. Organization of discourse is often indicated by GLs. They are viewed as effective means of cohesion in English, no matter whether it is written or spoken, formal or informal.

Over the past 20 years or so, the description of linguistic items related to GLs has been a research focus in many studies related to language learning and teaching. Schiffrin (1987) began writing about the significance of GLs in the 80s. Research studies on GLs can be generally divided into two categories. The first category describes research on GLs through the descriptive analysis of them in a particular language as spoken by native speakers (NS) of the language. The second category describes research on GLs which relate and examine the acquisition of GLs of the target language by non-native speakers (NNS), mostly that of teachers and language learners. Fung and Carter (2007) state that the second category of research on GLs has been studied much less. Yunus and Haris (2014) believe that GLs are not only important in joining words, sentences or paragraphs, but also indispensable for the coherent of the whole essay. These researchers studied the use of GLs in ESL students' essay writing. When they analyzed the secondary school students' essays, they identified something about the use of GLs such as the misused, the overused and the advanced used of them. These researchers also interviewed the teachers to get extra information about their opinion regarding GLs based on their teaching experience. When the researchers analyzed the answers, most of the interviewees seemed clueless and had no idea what GLs are all about. In this way, there was not enough exposure to GLs to make the students had a better understanding on how to incorporate the use of them in their essay.

In a study, Kalajahi and Abdullah (2012) attempted to examine Iranian English language teachers' perception towards the use of GLs in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. This research extended on Fung's (2011) study and further included the listening and speaking skills together with the role of GLs in teaching the reading and writing skills. Three

research questions were posed in this study. They were: (1) What is the perception of Iranian English teachers toward the use of GLs?; (2) How do Iranian English teachers perceive GLs?; and (3) Do Iranian English teachers exhibit high, moderate, or low attitudes toward the use of grammatical linkers? The descriptive method to the data analysis in this study provided better understanding of teacher's perception towards the use of GLs. Forty five Iranian English teachers participated in the study via a questionnaire survey. Results from the analysis of data showed that Iranian English teachers seem to have a moderate attitude toward GLs. Findings also suggested that teachers tend to believe in the pragmatic and practical value of GLs.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The current study aims to answer the following question:

Does teaching GLs have any effect on EFL learners' comprehension of written academic discourse?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study was conducted with the help of 80 male and female participants majoring in English Translation. These students were studying in the third and fourth semesters at Abadan Azad University, Iran. These students' age were ranging from 20 to 35 years old. To achieve the objectives of the present study and to evaluate the homogeneity level of the participants, all of them were given a homogeneity test (Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy & Zukowski, 2008). Upon the administration of this test, 52 participants whose test scores were one standard deviation below or above the mean score were assigned to the group of study. Then they were randomly divided into two groups of control (n=26) and experimental (n=26). The control group received implicit instruction on GLs and the experimental group received explicit instruction on contextual learning of GLs.

Instrumentation

To run this study, several instruments were utilized. At first, 80 EFL learners took a homogeneity test based on "Interchange passages placement and evaluation package" (Richards et al., 2008). This test was consisted of 50 items on grammar and structure in multiple-choice format performed for making the participants homogeneous at the pre-intermediate level. The total score of this test was 50 and its reliability was computed through KR-21 formula as ($r=.751$). The second instrument was composed of two separate pre-tests. One of the pre-tests was on reading comprehension (Appendix B) included two parts and 40 items. Each part was consisted of 20 items in the multiple-choice format. The items of the first part were based on "Top Notch, level 1 A & B" (Saslow & Ascher, 2007), and the items of the second part were based on the students' textbook; "Expanding Reading Skills" (Markstein & Hirasawa, 2005). Both parts aimed to determine the learners' knowledge on GLs before the treatment. The pre-test was piloted on the learners with the same proficiency level to arrive at the reliability of the pre-test. The total score of this test was 40 and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach Alpha formula as ($\alpha=.801$). The pre-test on GLs frequency was also assessed through writing one-paragraph essays on

a topic selected by the learners among three topics. The frequency of GLs was numbered by two raters. The inter-rater reliability of the test was calculated through Pearson Correlation Coefficient as ($r=.811$). The last instrument was two separate post-tests. The first post-test was modified based on the pre-test to determine the effect of teaching GLs on further comprehension of written academic discourse after the treatment. The reliability of this test was also calculated through Cronbach Alpha formula as ($\alpha=.761$) and another post-test on writing one-paragraph essays was administered to evaluate the frequency of GLs used by two groups after the instruction. The inter-rater reliability of the essay post-test was estimated through Pearson Correlation Coefficient as ($r=.793$).

Materials

In this study, the materials prepared for two groups were consisted of "Expanding Reading Skills" extracted from Markstein and Hirasawa (2005) and Top Notch, level 1 A & B extracted from Saslow and Ascher (2007). The first book included 12 reading passages. Among these passages, just eight of them were taught during the course. In order to check learners' understanding on each passage, each one had some reading comprehension exercises. These exercises were directed to three areas of reading skills development: (1) vocabulary development; (2) structural analysis; (3) relational and inferential analysis. The second book was introduced to both groups for extensive reading activities.

Procedure

At first the researcher asked the students of third and fourth semesters who were studying at Abadan Azad University to take part in a study. They were 80 students, both male and female, majoring in English translation. In order to determine the homogeneity of these subjects at the pre-intermediate level, a homogeneity test based on the *Interchange passages placement and evaluation package* extracted from (Richards et al, 2008) was administered. Next, among them 52 students whose scores were one standard deviation above or below the mean score were selected and randomly divided into two groups: control ($n=26$) and experimental ($n=26$). Both groups were under the instruction in 10 sessions, during five weeks, twice a week and 30 minutes per day.

In order to examine the effect of teaching GLs on improvement of written academic discourse comprehension, in the first session of the course a pre-test on reading comprehension was administered and both groups answered some multiple-choice questions in terms of their knowledge on GLs. This test lasted for 45 minutes. Then both groups were involved in the learning activities and their progress was carefully controlled during the eight sessions. In this course, teaching some reading passages was the main work of the instructor. The focus of each passage was on GLs to enhance students' reading comprehension. These passages were chosen from students' textbook, "Expanding Reading Skills" (Markstein & Hirasawa, 2005). In each session, one reading passage and one category of GLs were taught to both groups. Since among different categories of GLs, the focus of this study was on four clusters (contrast, addition, time, and summary), only these four groups were taught throughout the course. During these eight sessions, experimental group received explicit instruction on the form and function of GLs. Through explicit instruction, all the information about GLs' structures was expressed precisely

and clearly. These students underlined GLs in their reading passages and received full explanation on the usage of the members of each category. In contrast to this group, the control group received implicit instruction on the form and function of GLs. Through implicit instruction, information regarding GLs' structures was implied but indirectly expressed. Instead of underlining GLs, control group worked on the usual format of the reading texts. The instructor prepared for this group of participants separate examples on the usage of each category. Control group dealt with these examples without getting any explanation from the instructor. They unconsciously learnt the structures of GLs. At the end of each session, both groups answered some reading comprehension exercises. Besides working on these reading passages, reading strategies such as scanning and skimming as well as intensive reading were emphasized in both groups. Both of them also practiced finding lexical relations such as synonyms, antonyms and hyponyms as well as the structures of standard written English. In the tenth session and at the end of the treatment, a posttest on reading comprehension that was a modified form of the pre-test was administered to show the students' comprehension of written academic discourse in terms of their knowledge of GLs. This test also lasted for 45 minutes. To calculate the effectiveness of treatment on the experimental group comparing with the control group, Independent and Paired Samples t-tests as well as chi-square will be used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the goal of this study which was the investigation of teaching GLs into pre-intermediate EFL learners for further comprehension of written academic discourse, the participants of this study passed a pre-test as well as a post-test on reading comprehension. After the analysis of these tests, the following results obtained:

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	26	23.5909	5.34219	1.13896
Control	26	20.0000	8.71780	1.59164

The above table shows the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on reading comprehension in the pre-test. The mean score of the experimental group is 23.59 and the mean score of the control group is 20.00. In order to see if there is any significant difference between two groups in the pre-test and they have been homogeneous before the treatment or not, an Independent Samples t-test was administered. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Difference
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	variances	7.233	.010	1.709	50	.094	3.59	2.10	-.63	7.810
Equal variances not assumed	not assumed			1.835	48.67	.073	3.59	1.95	-.34	7.52

Table 3 shows the observed t (1.709) is less than the critical t (2.000). This means that the difference between two groups is not significant. Thus, the two groups have been homogeneous.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	26	28.13	8.51	1.81
Control	26	21.33	11.23	2.05

Table 4 indicates the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on reading comprehension in the post-test. The mean score of the experimental group is 28.13 and the mean score of the control group is 21.33. To find out if there is any significant difference between the two groups in the post-test, an Independent Samples t-test was administered. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
								95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Difference
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	
Equal variances assumed		2.001	.163	2.380	50	.021	6.80	2.85	
Equal variances not assumed				2.483	49.9	.016	6.80	2.73	

The above table shows the observed t (2.380) is greater than the critical t (2.000). It means that the difference between two groups is significant.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics (Pre and post-tests)

Groups		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test Experimental	23.59	26	5.34	1.138
	Post-test Experimental	28.13	26	8.51	1.81
Pair 2	Pre-test Control	20.00	26	8.71	1.59
	Post-test Control	21.33	26	11.23	2.05

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics of pre and post-tests on reading comprehension for each group. According to this table, the mean score of the experimental group in the post-test is 28.13 while this amount for the pre-test of the same group is 23.59. This table also shows that the mean score of the control group in the post-test is 21.33 whereas this amount for the pre-test of the same group is 20.00. In order to discover if there is any significant difference between the pre and post-tests of each group, a Paired Samples t -test was administered. Table 7 indicates the results.

Table 7: Paired Samples t -Test (Pre and post-tests)

Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pairs		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper
Pair 1	Pre-and post-test Experimental	4.54	7.34	1.56	7.80	1.28
Pair 2	Pre-and post-test Control	1.33	15.18	2.77	7.00	4.33

The above table indicates that the observed t (2.902) of the pair 1 (Experimental group) is greater than the critical t (2.080). So the difference between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group is significant. In contrast, observed t (.481) of the pair 2 (Control group) is less than the critical t (2.045). Therefore, the difference between the pre-test and post-test of the control group is not significant.

Discussion

In order to answer the first research question, the researcher compared the two groups of participants in the pre and post-tests. The pre-test was compared to the post-test to show any difference between the participants' performance on developing reading comprehension concerned with using GLs. After analyzing data through the software "SPSS", version 17, the results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the pre-test showed an increase in the mean score of the experimental group in the pre-test. Then based on the administration of an Independent Samples t -test, it was revealed that the observed t was less than the critical t , so it was clear that there was not any significance difference between two groups in the pre-test. As a result, the two groups were homogeneous.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the post-test also indicated an increase in the mean score of the experimental group in contrast to the mean score of the control group in the

post-test. Through the administration of another Independent Samples t-test, it was revealed that the observed t was greater than the critical t . It means that there was a significant difference between two groups of the participants in the post-test and consequently, experimental group had a better performance.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the pre and post-tests showed another increase in the mean scores of both groups in the post-test in contrast to their pre-test. This time, through the administration of the Paired Samples t-test and the comparison between the observed t and critical t of each group revealed that the observed t of the experimental group was greater than its critical t . This means that there was a significant difference between the performances of the experimental group in the pre and post-tests in contrast to the control group. Since through the data analysis had been proved both groups were homogeneous before the treatment, the recent results showed that the experimental group performed more successfully than the other group after the treatment.

The reason of this progress can be interpreted in terms of the explanation the experimental group received on the forms and functions of GLs in analyzing the reading texts during the course. However, in this regard the control group received implicit instruction, mainly examples. By explicit instructions, the instructor clearly outlines what the learning goals are for the students, and offers unambiguous explanations of the skills and information structures the learners need. By implicit instruction, we refer to teaching where the instructor just gives examples and may explain the subject orally as what is currently used in conventional classrooms. The teachers teach the subject to the students and allow them to make their own conclusions and create their own conceptual structures and assimilate the information in the way that makes the most sense to them (Ellis, 1994).

If learners become familiar with the writing structures, they can comprehend the reading passages more easily. GLs are one of these structures which control group could not master it through implicit instruction and cognitive learning; hence, they showed a low performance after the treatment. On the contrary, the experimental group received a kind of instruction on GLs during the course that was compatible with their level of learning.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted with the assumption that the teaching of the various GLs might cause a relative improvement to EFL learners' comprehension of written academic discourse. As very little was done and known in this context, this study was based on empirical research on teaching GLs and a series of activities and exercises and home works done in class or at home to consolidate the teaching sessions. The field work brought a number of results in that the experimental group showed a higher mean of comprehension whereas the control group got a much lower one. The direct explanation to these results is that after 10 sessions of instruction, the experimental group not only answered almost all the items of the pos-test and obtained higher scores than the control group, but also got high scores in the most difficult part of this test (long reading text). On the contrary, the control group failed in solving a good number of items, even

the easiest ones (mini-texts). Besides, in the essay writing the experimental group also appeared more successful than the other group in the proper use of wide range of GLs. The explanation to this fact is due to the implicit instruction that control group got on GLs during these sessions.

Through implicit instruction, control group did not become aware of this fact that based on meaningful connection some linkers are used at the beginning of the sentences, some of them in the middle and some in other places. They also were not aware of this fact that GLs receive different punctuations in different positions. For example, in the sentence "Mary had a bad headache; *however*, she went to work", they did not know that based on the presence of semicolon and comma, among several contrastive linkers, just the linker "*however*" is used. Moreover, control group did not get enough knowledge of this fact that some linkers are used in combination with particular prepositions.

This study evaluated the effect of GLs on reading comprehension and its data was collected through the tests. Further studies could evaluate the effect of these linkers on other language skills such as listening or speaking and collect data through other ways such as the interview, voice recording or classroom observation. Because of low number of English major students at Abadan Azad University, this study was done on a small sample population. Any replication should attempt to use a larger sample population, which may have affected the reliability of the results. This study was conducted on Iranian learners that English is their foreign language (EFL); it is possible to do it on the learners of other countries that English is their second language (ESL). This study was done on language learners at pre-intermediate level. Interested researchers can study the relation between recognition of GLs and reading comprehension on other levels of language ability such as intermediate or advanced. Considering the fact that this study was conducted on both male and female learners, it is suggested that similar studies could be done with the participants including only male or female ones. This study was done on students that English was their major. Other investigations could be conducted on the students of other majors.

Like all studies, this study had limitations and could not include all the issues related to the topic. Since the subject of GLs was wide, this study was only limited to this aspect of cohesive devices. It is clear that there exists another important category of cohesive devices that is the lexical one, within the same context of cohesion. This study would gain much objectivity if this aspect had been dealt with, too. In this study, adaptation of the reading texts to the students' level of proficiency which respond to all requirements of the study was another constraint; as the researcher could not find a reading text including different GLs from different categories.

REFERENCES

- Carrell, P. L. (1982). Cohesion is not coherence. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16 (4), 479-488.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Crystal, D. (1992). *Introducing linguistics*. London: Penguin English.
- Ellis, N. (1994). *Implicit and explicit learning of languages*. London: Academic Press.

- Fraser, B. (1999). What are discourse markers? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31, 931-952.
- Fung, L. (2011). Discourse markers in the ESL classroom: a survey of teachers' attitudes. *Asian EFL Journal*, 2(13), 199-248.
- Fung, L., & Carter, R. (2007). Discourse markers and spoken English: Native and learner use in pedagogical settings. *Applied Linguistics*, 28(3), 410-439.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Meta discourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London: Continuum.
- Kalajahi, S. A. R., & Abdullah, A. N. (2012). Perceptions of Iranian English language teachers towards the use of discourse markers in the EFL classroom. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(10), 2002-2010.
- Louwerse, M. M., & Graesser, A. C. (2005). Coherence in discourse. In Strazny, P. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of linguistics*. (pp. 216-218). Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn.
- Markstein, L., & Hirasawa, L. (2005). *Expanding reading skills*. Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers, Inc. Rowley.
- Parker, J. F. (1982). *The writer's workshop*. Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley.
- Parrot, M. (2002). *Grammar for English language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Parvaresh, V., & Nemati, M. (2008). Metadiscourse and reading comprehension: The effects of language and proficiency. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 5(2), 220-239.
- Richards, J. C., Lesley, T., Hansen, C., Sandy, C., & Zukowski, J. (2008). *Interchange passages placement and evaluation package*. (3rd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Risselada, R., & Spooren, W. (1998). Introduction: Discourse markers and coherence relations. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30(2), 131-133.
- Sanders, T. J. M., & Noordman, L. G. M. (2000). The role of coherence relations and their linguistic markers in text processing. *Discourse Processes*, 29(1), 37-60.
- Saslow, J., & Ascher, A. (2007). *Top Notch, level 1 A & B*. (2nd ed.). London: Longman.
- Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Learning purpose and language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yunus, M. M., & Haris, S. N. F. (2014). The use of discourse markers among form four SLL students in essay writing. *International Education Studies*, 7(2), 54-62.

THE EFFECT OF LISTENING MICRO SKILLS' AWARENESS-RAISING ON BILINGUAL LISTENING SKILL

Ali Saki¹, Bahman Gorjian*²

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

²Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the most effective and frequently used listening micro-skills in English as foreign language (EFL) classes in bilingual context at lower levels. Moreover, this study was also to probe empirically the effect of awareness-raising about these micro-skills and the most effective cognitive strategies on developing EFL listening comprehension skills. For studying the effect of awareness-raising, first 30 teachers and M.A students took part in identifying the most frequently used micro-skills in Khuzestan Province as a bilingual context. After gathering data, 7 listening micro-skills were identified as being the most frequently used skills for performing tasks in EFL classes. 40 bilingual learners took the Nelson proficiency test and they were divided into two groups, one experimental and one control group. The experimental group underwent awareness-raising activities on micro-skills in listening comprehension as well as elaboration and prediction strategies based on Chamot and O'Malley (1994) model. The control group did not receive any strategy-based treatment and was taught listening activities through a conventional method. Finally, a post-test from "Tactics for Listening" (Richards, 2011), was given to both groups after nine weeks instruction. Using the Independent Samples t-test, the findings revealed that (a) micro skill and strategy awareness-raising had positive effect on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners in a bilingual context and (b) instruction of micro skill and strategy had no differential effect on listening comprehension of female and male learners. Implications of the present study contribute to the teachers who teach listening comprehension and help them to raise learners' awareness in learning listening tasks effectively.

KEYWORDS: Listening micro-skills, bilingual context, lower level students

INTRODUCTION

With the growing tendency toward developing communicative competence, speaking and listening have gained lots of attention from both teachers' and learners' side. According to Rivers (1984), "adults spend 40-50% of communication time listening, 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading, and about 9% writing" (p. 331). Therefore, composing large part of communication, it is necessary to investigate the different aspects of speaking and listening. Communicative competence framework, the abilities underlying language proficiency, according to Canal and Swain (1980) are: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence

and strategic competence. Regarding these, speaking and listening skills can be assumed as multidimensional constructs, succeeding at which requires exploring their effective components and improving those parts. Listening is a critical skill that underlies all verbal communication inside and outside a classroom. Individuals use listening all the time, in and out, at home, at work, for social, entertainment or for academic settings. In everyday life, listening is used more than any other language skill.

Some researchers (e.g., Krashen & Terrell, 1983) have stressed the key role that listening as comprehensible input plays in acquiring the target language. Listening is a fundamental skill in first language acquisition and is important in English as Foreign Language learning (Bozorgian & Pillay, 2013). Peterson (2001) stated "it is the primary channel for language input and acquisition" (p. 87).

Despite the importance of listening and the rewards listening can bring to the second or foreign language learning process, it has, instructionally, been neglected or overlooked until the last few decades. Compared with other skills in TEFL/TESL, listening has neglected in many language learning situations (Buck, 2001). It was assumed that listening comprehension is naturally acquired and improved by students as they are listening to the teacher all day. Wolvin and Coakley (1996) noted that "how utterly amazing is the general assumption that the ability to listen well is a natural gift for which no training is required" (p. 26). Listening has recently started to receive attention and to be recognized as a skill that needs to be developed just like any other language skill (Brown, 1990). Perhaps the most important reason for such recognition stems from the great problems listening cause for large numbers of English language students.

Listening comprehension is a complex process and a number of theorists have tried to describe it in terms of taxonomies of micro-skills. One of the first taxonomies is the division of listening into a two-stage process: the first step is the extraction of the basic linguistic information and the second step is the utilization of that information for the communicative purpose. Other attempts were aimed at describing listening skills in communicative terms. These taxonomies go beyond linguistic processing and consider a wide variety of skills necessary for relating the basic linguistic processing to the wider communicative situation. Weir's (1993) taxonomy is one of communicative taxonomies. The most detailed communicative taxonomies were built and suggested that different lists of 'micro-skills' are required for various listening purposes (Richards, 1983). Besides the assumption that there are identifiable listening skills, there seems to be agreement in the language testing literature that these skills can be arranged in a hierarchy from lower order (e.g. understanding utterances at the literal level) to higher order (e.g. making inference and critical evaluation) (Weir, 1993). This skills- approach and the existence of such skills treated with caution. Buck (2001) declares that although there is no evidence that these lists of micro skills constitute a complete unified description of the listening process, there is no doubt that many of the components are of crucial importance in listening.

A more fruitful way of approaching listening difficulties reflects current practice in the teaching of reading which regards efficient reading as dependent on a set of micro skills (Grellet, 1981). Field (1998) pointed out breaking listening into micro skills offers two possibilities. "It can

support the kind of diagnostic approach already outlined, providing a checklist against which many breakdowns of understanding can be matched: is the breakdown due, for example, to failure to identify unstressed words, to failure to select the most important points of information, or to problems caused by assimilation?" (pp. 111-112). Some researchers stress the necessities of explicit teaching of listening strategies (Mendelsohn, 1994). Field (2001) emphasizes that listening should be broken into separate micro skills and strategies should be modeled in relation to a task rather than taught separately. This is in line with an interest which has offered thought-provoking ideas about what good language learners do to succeed. Applied research on language learning investigates the feasibility of helping students become more effective language learners by teaching them some of characteristics of the "good language learner" (Rubin, 1975).

Unfortunately, teachers, especially in EFL contexts, often are not aware about the process of listening; as a result, the common practice in the class is that teachers and educators focus on the outcome of the listening rather than listening itself (i.e. the process of listening). Field (1998) believes that most published courses continue to practice listening rather than teach the skill, raising the concern that the material tests not teaches.

Students are the heart of the learning process that can actually do the learning. In a community where English is learned as a foreign language, learners are less exposed to listening input. Consequently, most of the EFL learners at low levels have problems in listening comprehension and listening seems the most demanding skill. In this context most educators test listening not teach it and consider it as a product without regarding the processes and skills through which listening takes place (Sheerin, 1987). As a result, there is a need to do more research on listening in such contexts and present appropriate methodology, skills and tactics to make up for the gap. One possible way to teach the process of listening is to give learners awareness about listening micro-skills and strategies.

Learner-centered approaches require the teachers to assess their students' differences and strategies and micro skills they utilize in process of learning a foreign language in different context. Furthermore, research results in the field of language learning have indicated that learners' cultural backgrounds and gender do affect their learning process. Learners from two different sex and linguistic and cultural backgrounds may employ different listening micro skills and strategies when approaching a new language. Limitations in raising the existing literature highlight the need for the study of this topic in lower intermediate level EFL contexts in Iran.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Listening is a process that enables the brain to construct meaning from the sounds heard. It is, however, known that listening is an internal process, which cannot be observed directly. This means, "It is difficult to assess whether the listener has effectively used the skills at a particular occasion, what listening strategies are employed, which source of information is dominantly used, and what problems the listener experiences" (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). This feature of listening might lead to the view that listening is a passive skill in which the listener simply receives a spoken message. Thus, listening remains the least understood and studied in the

language teaching/learning area (Rost, 1990). Although it has been difficult to define listening, a sort of agreement seems to have recently been reached on what listening comprehension entails.

Listening, nowadays, is perceived as an active process that involves four interrelated processes: receiving, attending to, assigning meaning and responding to an aural stimulus based on on-going complex and multidimensional cognitive processes (Buck, 2001). Based on the above mentioned statements, listening comprehension is a cognitive skill. It may develop through acquisition of learning skills and strategies. Explicit instruction of listening skills and strategies is necessary and useful for EFL learners.

A number of researchers have attempted to investigate the effect of some aspects of listening ability instruction on listeners' comprehension performances. Their aim is to identify the effect of different contexts and variables on skill and strategy instruction. Bacon (1992) investigated the learning strategies used by 50 learners of Spanish at an American university when listening to and comprehending authentic text. The study revealed that females and males reported using different strategies to deal with passage difficulty. Females reported using a significantly higher proportion of metacognitive strategies than did males. Males appeared to use cognitive strategies more than females. Paulauskas (1994) in an attempt to assess the effect of strategy training on the listening achievement of high beginning and low intermediate adult learners examined the reciprocal strategy methodology and direct methodology. The two strategy groups received training in four comprehension-fostering strategies: predicting text content, summarizing main information, questioning for comprehension of main ideas and clarifying comprehension difficulties. As predicted in the first hypothesis of this study, it was found that the two strategy groups performed significantly better than the control group on the two listening test measures. No significant differences were found between the two strategy groups. Nakatani (2005) studied the influence of awareness giving on young Japanese adults' use of oral communication strategies such as maintenance of fluency and negotiation of meaning. The researcher found that the learners in the experimental group who received awareness produced longer sentences and used more achievement strategies, and did not leave the message as often as the learners in the comparison group. Recently, Bozorgian and Pillay (2013) investigate the effect of training five listening strategies delivered in L1 (guessing, making inferences, identifying topics, repetition, and note-taking) on listening comprehension and the results indicated that listening strategies delivered in L1 led to a statistically significant improvement in their discrete listening scores compared with the control group.

Having reviewed the related research literature, it appears that further study of listening proficiency improvement through explicit listening micro skill and strategy instruction may be useful. Hence, this current study seeks to document the impact of using listening micro skills awareness on the development of L2 listening proficiency.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the most effective listening micro-skills used in the performing listening comprehension among bilingual learners in Iranian context?

2. Do awareness- raising activities about listening micro skills have any effect on the listening comprehension among the bilingual learners?
3. Does listening micro skills awareness have any differential effect on listening comprehension of Iranian female and male learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population among which participants of the present study were selected included 74 pre-intermediate bilingual Iranian EFL learners studying English at Safereh Andisheh Institute, Shoush, Iran. To select and ensure the homogeneity of the participants included in the final stage of the study, the Nelson Homogeneity Test was administered to the whole population. The students who scored one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the most homogenous students. Among them, 40 learners 20 male and 20 female were randomly selected and assigned in two groups one was experimental group with 10 male and 10 female and the other was control group with 10 male and 10 female to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for data collection in this study included:

A Questionnaire was developed based on Weir's (1993) taxonomy of micro-skills and Nunan (2001) taxonomy of Most Effective Listening Micro Skills. It was developed in an attempt to determine the effective micro skills used in the bilingual context.

Nelson Homogeneity Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976). The reliability of the test was estimated ($r=.78$) through a pilot test based on KR-21 method.

c) A pre-test contained the actual test items, in order to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment. Its reliability which was estimated (.71) based on KR-21 method.

d) The tasks used in the classroom extracted from American New Interchange (Richards, 2005) and Tactics for Listening (Richards, 2011). The rationale for this selection is that this writer's books are the most popular in the field of listening and speaking. These are the books most commonly used in Iran for listening classes for lower intermediate learners and the listening tasks used are authentic and compatible with EFL contexts.

e) A post-test used to reveal the effect of the treatment of the effective listening micro skills and on listening comprehension. Its reliability which was estimated (.88) based on KR-21 method.

Research Procedure

Since it was not possible to raise awareness about all the listening micro-skills in the current study, an attempt was made to determine the most effective and frequently used listening micro-skills which are used in the bilingual EFL context as a base line study. For this purpose and in order to select the effective and most frequently used skills for the study, 30 bilingual EFL teachers and MA bilingual students were asked to response each skill. In effect, they were provided with the list of different skills and were asked to response to each micro skill ranging from 1 least useful to 5 most useful in bilingual EFL classes.

For selecting homogenous subjects, first Nelson Homogeneity Test was administered to a group of EFL learners who were learning English in the institute. The subjects were 74 pre-intermediate bilingual Iranian EFL learners. In order to select homogenous subjects, those who scored one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the most homogenous learners. After selecting the homogenous subjects, 40 participants included 20 male and 20 female who were assigned to the control and experimental groups randomly so that every male or female participant had the equal chance of being in the control or experimental group. For the purpose of randomization, every participant was assigned a number and then the odd numbers were selected as the control group and the even numbers were selected as the experimental group. Thus, there were 20 learners 10 male and 10 female in the experimental group and 20 learners 10 male and 10 female in the control group. Before any instruction, pre-test was given to both experimental and control groups to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment.

The experimental and comparison groups went through different procedures during the study. While the comparison group did not receive any treatment, the experimental group received the treatment. They were given awareness about the most useful listening micro-skills involved in the listening process in bilingual EFL context. All the classes meet twice a week at different times of the day, covering the same content and material for all the groups and in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the study, the same material was used by the same teacher. The course of treatment lasted seven weeks in which students becoming trained in and practicing one micro skill or in every two sessions. The control group received the traditional and common practice in English classes that is the teacher plays the listening text in the class two or three times and after that focuses on the incoming listening comprehension questions. They are given handouts containing comprehension questions on each listening segment. Following the Instructions they just answer the same tasks done by the pure exposure group and hand them to the teacher to be marked. No group discussion was done by control group students. This typical method goes on in listening classes without teaching listening skills, while students in the experimental group were taught different listening skills. These training sessions heavily relied on the instructions and suggestions given by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) emphasize explicit teaching of the different learning strategies. The instruction model is the following the preparation, presentation, modeling, practice, evaluating phases.

When the training sessions and exercise giving sessions were over for the experimental and control groups respectively, another version of listening comprehension test for post-test was administered to both groups to test their listening comprehension enhancement. The scores in both experimental and control groups were calculated and separated for the data analysis using independent samples t-test test with SPSS package, version 17.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned before, this study attempted to investigate the effect of the most effective micro skills awareness giving on listening comprehension skills in bilingual context. So the first research question is:

An answer to the first research question is used as the baseline for the main study. The data obtained from the questionnaire and the mean scores of its items provided us with the most effective and less effective micro skills used by all the subjects. The findings reported by subjects in the questionnaire are as follows:

Table 1: Questionnaire Analysis of Listening Micro skills

Listening sub skill	Mean	%
Listening for the gist of oral material	4.2	84
Listening for the main ideas; and distinguishing that from supporting details and examples	4.1	82
Listening for specific information, including recall of the important details	3.7	74
Listening for determining the speaker's attitude	2.53	50
Making inferences, deductions and understanding of the speaker's purpose	4.3	86
Relating utterances to speakers' social and situational context	3.26	65
Recognizing the communicative function of utterances	3.4	68
Ability to guess the meanings of unfamiliar lexical items in the context	4.5	90
Ability to understand reduced forms of words in spoken language	3.76	75
Understanding grammatical notions such as comparison, cause and effect, result, etc	3.46	69
Understanding discourse markers	3.43	68
Understanding the main syntactic structure of clauses, phrases and sentences	3.33	66
Understanding cohesive devices especially reference	4.3	86
Understanding lexical bundles and collocations	3.3	66
Understanding lexis of the oral materials	3.06	61
Ability to extract the salient points to summarize oral material	3.36	67
Ability to select relevant key words	3.26	65
Listening for phonemic distinctions	2.4	48
Listening for stress recognition	2.66	53
Listening for tone/pitch to identify speaker's attitude in speech	2.53	50
Total mean	3.22	64

Table 1 presents the mean of responses for each item in questionnaire. The average of individual micro skill items ranged from a low of 2.4 (item 18) to a high of 4.5 (item8), while the overall mean of this sample was 3.224, indicating that these micro skills had medium of effectiveness in EFL (English as a foreign language) bilingual context. [In examining micro skills use on the five-point scale, three types of usage were identified as suggested by Oxford (1990): high (mean>3.5), medium (2.5<mean<3.5), and low (mean<2.5)].

A close examination of the individual micro skills suggests that the most effective micro skill is ability to guess the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context [M=4.5] and less effective one is listening for phonemic distinctions. The results of questionnaire revealed that seven of micro skills identified as the most effective micro skills divided into groups in an inventory of effective listening micro skills.

First to ensure that the experimental and the control group have the same level of language proficiency and that the any difference of the groups after the treatment was not due to different language backgrounds, an analysis of the experimental and the control group's pre-tests was made. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' listening pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), means, standard deviations (SD), and (SEM) standard errors of mean.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics (Experimental vs. Control groups, Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	20	42.7500	2.67296	.59769
Control	20	43.7500	2.73140	.61076

The above table indicates the mean score of the experimental group was 42.75 with standard deviation of 2.6729 and the mean score for the control group was 43.75 with SD=2.7314. However, to see whether this difference between the experimental group and the control group was statistically significant or not, a *t*-test was used the results presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent Samples *t*-Test (Experimental vs. Control groups, Pre-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed		.182	.672	-1.170	38	.249	-1.00	.85	-2.72	.72
Equal variances not assumed				-1.170	37.9	.249	-1.000	.85	-2.72	.72

The results of the independent samples *t*-test for the experimental and control groups pre-test revealed that there is no significant difference between mean scores of experimental (M=43.75) and control (M=42.75) groups in pretest exam. The critical *t* is greater than *t* observed in the pre-test and *P* value equals 0.249 by degree of freedom 38 is greater than critical *P* value ($p > 0.05$) which means there is no statistically significant difference between the performances of experimental groups comparing it to the control group.

To test this question and in order to investigate the difference between control and experimental groups after the treatment, the gathered listening comprehension scores obtained in listening post test by both groups subjected to statistical analysis of independent samples *t*-test to verify whether the performances of both groups were the same or different. The data for question two is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics (Experimental vs. Control groups, Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	20	69.8000	5.52125	1.23459
Control	20	52.8000	2.35305	.52616

Although the above table shows that the mean score of the experimental group (69.8) with standard deviation of 5.5212 was greater than the mean score for the control group (52.80) with standard deviation of 2.3530, an Independent Samples *t*-test was applied in order to ensure that this large difference was statistically significant. Table 5 shows this clearly.

Table 5: Independent Samples *t*-Test (Experimental vs. Control groups, Post-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed		16.769	.000	12.667	38	.000	17.00	1.34	14.28	19.71
Equal variances not assumed										

Table 5 shows, the observed-value in the above table reached 12.667 by degree of freedom 38 and significant level of (sig = 0.000). Since it is greater than the critical *t*-value and *p* value is less than critical *p*-value, it can be concluded that the *t*-test value was significant at the level of 0.05 ($p < .05$). The result was in favor of the experimental group. This is proof that the experimental group outdid the control group with a statistically significant difference. Hence, it can be said that the skill and strategy approach had a strong positive effect on the students' listening skills. Thus, the null hypothesis, which stated that:

"Listening micro skills awareness-raising do not affect bilinguals' listening comprehension skills" was not supported because results showed a significant difference between the experimental group and the control one. Finally, to answer the third research question and to investigate the effect of treatment on gender an analysis of male and female experimental group's pre-tests and post-test was conducted to ensure that the male and the female in experimental group have the same level of language proficiency before the treatment and to examine the difference after the treatment. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics (Experimental Groups, Pre-test vs. Post-test)

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male (Pre-test)	10	42.4000	2.83627	.89691
Female(Pre-test)	10	43.1000	2.60128	.82260
Male(Post-test)	10	71.2000	6.21468	1.96525
Female(Post-test)	10	68.4000	4.62361	1.46211

Table 8 indicates that the mean score of male in experimental group' pre-test (M=42.4, SD=2.8362) and the mean score of female in experimental group' pre-test (M=43.1, SD 2.6012) and the mean score of male in experimental group' post-test (71.2, SD=6.2146) and the mean score of female in experimental group' post-test (M=68.4, SD=4.6236). To determine whether there is significant difference between male and female performance in experimental group' pretest and posttest, an independent samples t-test was applied. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Independent Samples t- Test(Experimental Groups, Pre-test vs. Post-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference				Lower	Upper
Pre-test (Male vs. Female)	Equal variances assumed	.338	.568	-.575	18	.572	-.70	1.21				-3.25	1.85
	Equal variances not assumed												
Post-test (Male vs. Female)	Equal variances assumed	2.21	.154	1.143	18	.268	2.80	2.44				-2.34	7.94
	Equal variances not assumed												

Table 9 shows the homogeneity of male and female in experimental group before the treatment. The observed p-value (Sig. = .572) is more than the level of significance (.05). Therefore, there is no difference on listening comprehension performances of female and male learners of experimental group in pre-test. The results of this table also show that there is no significant difference between females and males in the listening comprehension post-test.

Discussion

English teachers and M.A students responded to items of researcher-made questionnaire which provided them with answering to the Likert scale. The results indicated that among 20 items

(micro skill), the subjects reported 7 as the most effective and frequently used in bilingual context. The means of this 7 micro skills range from 3.7 to 4.5 that indicate high use or effectiveness of them in listening comprehension. They are as follow: 1. listening for gist of the oral passage, 2. listening for main ideas or important information; and distinguishing that from supporting details, examples, 3. listening for specific information, including recall of important details, 4. making inferences and deductions and understanding the speaker's purpose, 5. ability to guess the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items from context, 6. understanding cohesive devices especially reference, 7. ability to understand reduced forms of words in spoken language.

The high level of effectiveness of these micro skills used among Iranian bilingual may be attributed to several factors. One of the most important of them is the fact that Iran is a context in which English is considered to be a foreign language. Since learners find little opportunity to use English outside the formal setting of the classroom, they learn and practice English in the classroom with listening materials and comprehension questions clearly train and test these micro skills more than others. The second factor which seems to be influential in the high use of this is due to the easiness of systematic training of these listening micro skills. They are also easy to teach and learners learn and employ them easily. They usually try to make gist or elicit specific information to help them reach to answers for items when they feel that a linguistic item or structure is beyond their heads. Also, if they encounter a difficult word they may guess the meaning of unfamiliar word from context. In fact they routinely do these in their educational career.

The results of the study and the data analysis also revealed that bilingual learners use a wide range of cognitive micro skills. They used seven as high level and 12 as medium level of effectiveness among 20 cognitive micro skills. This may be due to the assumption that bilinguals possess the two competences which elevate their cognitive skills since they have a previous language learning experience. Nation and McLaughlin's (1986) statement support the results of this study that bilinguals are superior to monolinguals when it comes to cognitive skills. This also is consistent with Sanborn's (2005) research findings that bilingual learners have advantages of meta-linguistic awareness, cognitive flexibility, creativity and divergent thinking, elasticity in thinking and slightly speedier cognitive development.

The selection of distinguishing phonemic distinctions as low level of effectiveness in learning listening can be explained due to uselessness of this skill in information process and that bilingual learners do not care this skill when they are exposed to listening materials. The second reason is that the bilingual learners approach learning listening skill in the top-down process more than the bottom-up process. This is consistent with Jiménez, Garcia, and Pearson (1996) research findings that successful bilingual learners used more top-down approaches than did the monolingual groups.

The main findings of the analysis indicated a positive answer to the second research question of the study. It was found that the raising awareness about effective listening micro skills had a positive effect on the students' listening skills. This was proved through the higher mean score (69.8) that the experimental group obtained in the post-test in comparison to mean score (52.8) of

control group. Specifically, the experimental group's performance was more differentiated than that of the control group in the post-test. Furthermore, the pre-test results for both groups did not reveal any statistically significant difference between the two groups. This means that before the application of the experiment they both had nearly similar listening levels. That is to say, they had the same language background.

The big difference between the experimental group and the control group could be attributed to many reasons. Firstly, the effective listening micro skills that were taught in the experimental group are the foremost reason for the improvement of this group listening comprehension. During the seven weeks of the experiment, the experimental group used to be aware and practice important micro skills and such listening training can be said to have enhanced the experimental group's listening abilities in an effective way. On the other hand, the control group did not have that opportunity to deal with listening micro skills. They just listen to same materials and answer comprehension questions without any training in listening process. In fact their listening is just tested. The second reason for the outperformance of the experimental group is that the students who are trained strategically as well as they practice the more effective mental activities for comprehending the listening are likely to gain the metacognitive knowledge about listening tasks. This knowledge is perhaps the most important factor in effective listening strategy training. This goes in line with Chamot and O'Malley (1994) who believe that "explicit metacognitive knowledge about task characteristics and appropriate strategies for task solution is a major determiner of language learning effectiveness" (p. 372). The second reason is that the learners in experimental group start to feel self-confidence and remove anxiety because they equipped with the appropriate knowledge (metacognitive knowledge) and tools (micro skills). This confidence further enhanced student strategies to deal with listening tasks (cognitive strategies) and regulate their listening (metacognitive strategies) as well as assist learners to overcome the difficulties they confronted with. This seems to be corresponding with Nyikos (1996) who states that "strategy instruction helps students overcome fear or anxiety" (p. 112). This also leads them feel independent as they had cope with and overcome their difficulties.

In sum, the interaction between all the factors discussed above was the interpretation for the positive results obtained for second research question. These factors result in reducing learners' anxiety, as well as increasing their confidence that in turn lead to a better listening performance. The results are also regarded as confirmation of numerous previous studies suggested that skills and strategies can be taught and that such teaching increase performance in the second and foreign language process.

Research has shown evidence of gender differences in the use of language learning strategies, with the majority of studies reporting higher use of strategies by females than males (Bacon, 1992). Despite the assumption that females outperform males in learning and using language learning skills and strategies, the findings of this study indicated that gender did not have any significant effect on the learning listening micro skills. Furthermore, considering the mean differences between pre and post-test scores it can be found that male improved more than female in learning listening micro skills.

The main reason that can encounter for these findings is that the males have more tendency to achieve survival learning where males would be more motivated than females for survival needs (e.g., supporting their family). The second reason may be due to cultural context of study that is traditional male-oriented culture. The males are more motivated for getting proficiency in English because this may help them to get a better job. Other reason for this contradictory evidence of gender differences is the mental acts which are not the same among male and female bilinguals. As Wharton (2000) suggested that socialization and life experience as a result of previous language learning experience may be more effective than gender on types of learning strategy use.

CONCLUSION

This study is primarily beneficial to EFL learners who intend to make improvements in their listening skill. As this study indicated the skill and strategy approach is absolutely conducive by providing learners with activities that can help learners overcome or cope with listening difficulties so that they can have better control over their listening comprehension. This is an important tenet of skill and strategy instruction that students are more active when they are in charge of their own learning. Learners trained in micro skills and strategies can manage, monitor, and evaluate their learning process and check their progress in language learning frequently and this does not only improve listening performance but also leads to a degree of autonomy. Most importantly skill and strategy instruction leads learners to revise and modify their beliefs that they are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning and sharing the burden with their teachers and look at learning differently and to be in the belief that what causes success is not luck or mere innate ability but rather having and using appropriate strategies and the ability to take risks.

The findings of this research have important implications for task designers. According to the findings, it is suggested that listening tasks should be designed in accord with listening micro skills and strategies. Task designers are well counseled to design their listening comprehension activities in such a way that necessitates the employment of listening micro skills and strategies. Also, they must bear in mind that micro skills and strategies should be presented in a right time and at suitable levels that conforms to the listeners' actual potential in cognition, in order for them to comprehend the listening passages better. In the sense that before designing tasks for the EFL listening courses, task designers should consider the most frequently used listening micro-skills and strategies that learners use in performing the listening tasks. Most of the books available are not based on the different listening micro-skills and strategies; therefore, it is recommended for the material and task designer to design materials and tasks based on the listening micro-skills and strategies that are used more frequently in the EFL context. This needs teachers and task designers enhance their own awareness of these skills and strategies which aid them modify the materials and tasks in accord with these micro-skills and strategies.

The present research faced some limitations including the small size of the research sample since they are available at that time. The main limitation was to determine who is a pure bilingual and the criteria of bilingualism. In Khuzestan province, Iran, Arab communities use Arabic mostly for

conversation rather than writing and reading skills, they may not be pure bilinguals. However, they use Arabic in their family and social interactions and Farsi is just their official language. Therefore, we call them bilingual in that sense.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bacon, S.M. (1992a). Authentic listening in Spanish: How learners adjust their strategies to the difficulty of the input. *Hispania*, 75, 398-412.
- Bozorgian, H., & Pillay, H. (2013). Enhancing foreign language learning through listening strategies delivered in L1: An experimental study. *International Journal of Instruction*, 6(1), 1-18.
- Brown, G. (1990). *Teaching the spoken language*. (2nd ed.). London: Longman.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1- 47.
- Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). *The CALLA handbook: Implementing the convictive academic language learning approach*. White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Long man.
- Field, J. (1998). Skills and strategies: Towards a new methodology for listening. *ELT Journal*, 52(2)110-118.
- Field, J. (2001). Finding one's way in the fog: Listening strategies and second language learners. *Modern English Teacher*, 9(1), 29-34.
- Grellet, F. (1981) *Developing reading skills*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jiménez, R. T., García, E. E., & Pearson, P. D. (1996). The reading strategies of bilingual Latina/o students who are successful English learners: Opportunities and obstacles. *Reading Research Quarterly* 31(1), 90-112.
- Krashen, S. D., & T. D. Terrell. (1983). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Mendelsohn, D. J. (1994). *Learning to listen: A strategy-based approach for the second language learner*. San Diego, CA: Dominic Press.
- Nakatani, Y. (2005). The effects of awareness raising training on oral communication strategy use. *Modern Language Journal*, 89(1), 76-91.
- Nation, R., & McLaughlin, B. (1986). Novices and experts: An information processing approach to the "good language learner" problem. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 7, 41-56.
- Nunan, D.(2001). *Second language teaching & learning*. Boston: Heinle&HeinlePublishers.
- Nyikos, M. (1996). The conceptual shift to learner-centered classrooms: increasing teachers and students strategic awareness. In Oxford, R. (ed.) *Language learning strategies around the world. - cross-cultural perspectives (Technical Report 13)*, (pp.109-117). University of Hawaii': Honolulu HI.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A.U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House.

- Paulauskas, S. (1994). *The effects of strategy training on the aural comprehension of L2 adult learners at the high beginning/low intermediate proficiency level*. Unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Toronto.
- Peterson, P.W. (2001). Skills and strategies for proficient listening. In M. Celce- Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 87-101). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Richards, J. C. (1983). Listening comprehension: approach, design, procedure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(2), 219-240.
- Richards, J. (2005). *American new interchange* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2011). *Tactics for listening*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Rivers, W. (1984). What practitioners In say about listening: Research implications for the classroom. R. A. Gilman and L. M. Moody. 1984. *Foreign Language Annals* 17/4: 331-4. Retrieved My 17m 2014 from:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1984.tb03236.x>
- Rost, M. (1990). *Listening in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the “good language learner” can teach us. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 41-51.
- Sanborn, B. R. (2005). The benefits of Japanese-English bilingualism and biliteracy. *Memoirs of Osaka Kyoika University*, 53(2), 127-134.
- Sheerin, S. (1987). Listening comprehension: Teaching or testing? *ELT Journal*, 41(2), 126-131.
- Weir, C. (1993). *Understanding and developing language tests*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Wharton, G. (2000). Language learning strategy use of bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. *Language Learning*, 50, 203-243.
- Wolvin, A., & Coakley, C. (1996). *Listening* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USING TRANSITION MARKERS IN ENGLISH SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES AMONG ENGLISH NATIVE AND IRANIAN NON-NATIVE RESEARCHERS: FOCUSING ON THEIR DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION SECTIONS

Mozhde Bagheri¹, Bahman Gorjian^{*2}, Abdolreza Pazhakh³

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

²Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

³Department of TEFL, Dezful Branch, Islamic Azad University, Dezful, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study compared and analyzed the use of transition markers (TMs) in research articles (RAs) on the three disciplines of physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics written in English. It aimed to find the possible similarities and differences in using TMs by native English writers of physics, computer and applied linguistics articles. It also compared the use of TMs in applied linguistics written by native English and non-native Iranian authors. To achieve this goal, 180 RAs from international and national journals were selected between 2005 and 2012. RAs included 25 on physics, 56 on computer engineering and 54 on applied linguistics written by English writers and 45 applied linguistic ones written by Iranian authors. A classification of transition markers was formulated by Halliday and Hassan (1976) to form the model for analyzing the data. After determining the frequency and percentage of each transition marker, Chi-square analysis was used to see if the differences between these disciplines were significant. Findings revealed that computer engineering writers used transition markers more than physics writers. The intra-discipline analysis showed that Persian writers of applied linguistics used less TMs than their English counterparts. The results of this study could be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran and all who are interested in learning more about English.

KEYWORDS: Metadiscourse markers, Transitions, Scientific writing, Articles

INTRODUCTION

Researchers should be objective and unbiased in reporting their findings in academic writing; this belief of academic writing has been criticized by several researchers (e.g., Hyland, 2001). Researchers (e.g., Hyland, 2005) claim that interaction in written text can be managed in the same way as the spoken text, though with different effects due to the different medium. Hyland (2004) describe academic writing as social engagement, comprising interaction between writers

and readers. Hence, intellectual and proficient writers are not supposed to write texts to signify an external reality, rather to use language to express themselves and their work, and to acknowledge and negotiate social relations with readers.

Academic writing is created by different disciplines which includes features represent a particular community. In order to represent these features of an underlying community in research articles, the writers should engage and influence the readers. One way to do this is through the use of metadiscourse markers. Metadiscourse refers to ‘the cover term for self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer(or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community’(Hyland 2005).It is believed that metadiscourse is a central part in academic writing which makes a mutual understanding between writers and readers. It involves linguistic devices which writers use to shape their arguments to the needs and expectations of their target language.

One of the metadiscourse features through which the writer helps reader to understand the text is transition markers. On the other hand, transition markers make the written text easy to understand at first time. According to Hyland (2005), transition markers are mainly conjunctions and adverbial phrases which help readers interpret pragmatic connections between steps in an argument by making additive, contrastive, and causative steps in the discourse. Addition adds elements to the argument (e.g., *and, furthermore, moreover*). Comparison marks arguments as either similar (e.g., *similarity, likeness, equally*) or different (e.g., *in contrast, however, but*). Consequences relations tell readers that either a conclusion is being drawn or justified (e.g., *therefore, consequently*) or an argument is being counted (e.g., *nevertheless, anyway*).

Despite the crucial role of transition markers in academic writing, not many studies have been conducted concerning the frequency and use of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of research articles. Therefore, this study aims to compare and contrast the frequency of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of English native and non-native research articles.

Metadiscourse is increasingly important to research in reading, writing and text structure. Despite their importance, studies of metadiscourse outside of European or U.S contexts have not received the attention they deserve (Crismore & Abdollahzade, 2010). In addition, the lack of comparative research on the use of transition markers has created some sort of unawareness as to which disciplines are more TMs compared with other discipline. There is no perfect answer to questions like these due to the small number of researches carried out in this regard.

Although some researchers (Vassileva, 2001) compared TMs in research articles in English and Persian research articles, analysis of discussion and conclusion sections of research articles in terms of the type and frequency of TMs has received little attention. Thus, comparative studies on frequency and type of the use of TMs have been rare and this requires more studies to be conducted comparing native and non-native researchers in the use of TMs.

Thus, this study focuses on the type and frequency of transition markers in the discussion and conclusion sections of research articles in hard science and soft science written by English writers and Iranian writers of English. The research articles under the present study were selected from three disciplines including applied linguistics from soft applied science as well as computer engineering from hard applied and physics from hard pure science.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the occurrence of TMs in the articles written by Iranian writers as non-native writers and English writers as native writers in computer engineering, physics and applied linguistics fields of study. It is hoped that the results of this study will shed some light on academic writing problems for Iranian researchers and may provide English practitioners with better idea on writing scientific papers through using TMs appropriately and adequately. It is also hoped that the results of the present research will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Metadiscourse markers

For first time, the term metadiscourse was defined by Harris in 1959. Later, a number of researchers such as William (1981) elaborated it more. Harris (1959) defined metadiscourse as “non topical linguistics material”(p. 464). “Metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or communicating”(Hyland, 2005, p. 3). Metadiscourse is discourse about discourse, intended to direct rather than inform readers (William, 1981). Metadiscourse is "discourse about discourse" and refers to the authors or speakers linguistic manifestation in his text to interact with his receivers. Metadiscourse includes linguistic elements which do not refer to aspects of external reality (as propositional or referential elements do). But to the organization of the discourse itself and to aspects of the relationship that develops between the author and the reader (Crismore, 1989).

Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen (1993), define metadiscourse as: "linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given"(p.40). Similarly Hyland (1999) stresses non-propositionality of metadiscourse as follows: One important means by which texts depict the characteristics of an underlying community is through the writer's use of metadiscourse. All academic disciplines have conventions of rhetorical personality which influence the way writers intrude into their texts to organize their arguments and represent themselves, their readers, their attitudes. This is largely accomplished through non propositional material or metadiscourse.

Arguing the importance of metadiscourse devices, Camiciottoli (2003) states that metadiscourse markers produce a desire effect, depending on writer's underlying purposes and perceptions of the reader's expectations. They help writers to presents information in a clear, convincing and interesting to promote acceptance and understanding, as well as reader- writer solidarity. They act

as persuasive devices to affect and influence the reader's reactions to texts according to the values and established rules and conventions of a discourse community.

Hyland (1999) states that "metadiscourse marker relates to the level of personality or the tenor of the discourse and influence such matters as author's intimacy and remoteness expression of attitude, commitment to proposition and the degree of the reader's involvement" (p. 8). Focusing on the importance of context in interpreting metadiscourse, Hyland (1999) further adds that:

To study metadiscourse without appeal to its associated rhetorical environment is to ignore the content which conditions its use and gives it meaning. Focusing only on the surface realizations give the impression that metadiscourse is purely writer-centered phenomenon and either neglect its relationship to a particular audience or unconsciously calls up contexts in an unsystematic way. In other words, the meaning metadiscourse only becomes operative within the particular context, both invoking and reinforcing that context with regard to audience, purpose and situation. Its use, therefore, reflects differences in the various forms of organized cultural communication reorganized and employed by distinct academic discipline for particular purposes (p. 6).

Adel (2006) believes that "metadiscourse is a functional category that can be realized in a great variety of ways" (p.22). She believes that an item which is metadiscursive in some point due to its relation with its co-text may not be met as a discursive feature in another. Vande Kopple (1985) introduced the first model of metadiscourse, divides into two category of textual and interpersonal. In this model, textual metadiscourse includes text connectives, code glosses and narrators markers, and interpersonal metadiscourse consists of validity markers, attitude markers and commentaries. Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen (1993) presented the revised model. In addition, they introduced textual and interpersonal as two main categories of metadiscourse, but they classified textual metadiscourse into two types, textual and interpretive. Textual markers include features which can help the discourse to be organized, and interpretive markers facilitate readers' interpretation and understanding of the writer's intention and writing strategies (Crismore *et al.*, 1993).

Dahl (2004) proposes a taxonomy consisting of two categories of metatextual elements. The first, called *locational metatext*, comprises linguistic elements which refer to the text itself or to parts of it. Dahl's (2004) second category has been termed *rhetorical metatext*. It includes meta elements which assist the reader in the processing of the text by making explicit the rhetorical acts performed by the writer in the argumentation process.

Hyland and Tse (2004, p. 169) propose a model of metadiscourse which distinguishes interactive and interaction dimensions. Interactive Resources are those devices which are used explicitly by writers in an argument. They are used to organize the discourse, help and guide the reader through the text. Readers can get the intended meaning and interpretations of all the text through explicit use of these devices which can be recovered from the text. Interactional resources engage

the readers in the discussion by alerting them to the writer's attitudes and propositional information and readers themselves.

Hyland (1999) studied the use of metadiscourse in texts books and research articles in three disciplines: Biology, Applied linguistics and Marketing. The result of this study showed that applied linguistics use more evidences and relational markers, the writers of biology prefer to use hedges and marketing text books use fewer evidences and endophorics. Hyland stated that the greatest diversity in most types of metadiscourse both across genres and disciplines is found in biology.

Camiciottoli (2003) investigated the effect of metadiscourse on reading comprehension of a group of Italian university of students. In this study, students were divided into two groups, and then they read selected texts from two versions of the same texts which differed in the quantity and type of the texts. Finally each group took a reading comprehension test and their mean scores were compared. The results showed that matadiscourse features have a positive effect on the students' comprehension. She concluded that "the greater presence of some types of metadiscourse (e.g., frame markers, person markers, and hedges) could be linked to the better performance. In some of the comprehension questions (Camiciottoli, 2003).

Mauranen (1993) studied the relationship between matadiscourse and first language and culture written in English by Finnish and Anglo-American native and non- native students. The findings of this study revealed that Anglo-American students used more metadiscourse than Finnish students. In the other hand, Mauranen found that Finnish students tend to guide the readers thorough the text. She concluded that "Anglo-Americans tried to be as explicitness possible in their writing in order to give the reader the feelings of comfort and easiness, while in Finnish culture," saying too obvious things is, as we know, patronizing" (Mauranen, 1993, p. 17).

Zarei and Mansoori (2007) looked at the metdiscursive pattern in research articles written in English and Persian in two fields: Computer engineering and applied linguistics. The findings revealed that both English and Persian texts emphasized text coherence but in Persian texts much of the meaning left to be uncovered by the reader.

Another study was conducted by Zarei and Mansoori (2011), focus on the use of metadiscourse in two disciplines: Applied linguistics versus computer engineering within two languages: Persian and English. The analysis of the data showed that the metadiscourse resources are different in two languages and Humanities focused on the textuality to the detriment of the reader involvement.

Shokohi and Talati Baghsiahi (2009) studied the functions of metadiscourse in sociology research artiles in Persian and English. The results showed that there are a higher number of metadiscourse elements in the English texts. Also, It is found that textual metadiscourse is used more than the interpersonal metadiscourse in both languages. Finally, they conclude that the Persian writers are less interested in explicitly organizing the texts and engaging the readers.

METHODOLOGY

Data

The data used in the present study consist of 180 research articles from three English native disciplines including physics, computer engineering, applied linguistics and the non-native discipline of applied linguistics in English published internationally in prestigious journals. 135 research articles written by native researchers of English and 45 of them written by Iranian researchers as NNRs of English. There are some reasons for this selection. First of all, there is a standard typology for the classification of academic knowledge distinguishing between 'pure' or 'applied' and 'hard' or 'soft' disciplines (Becher & Trowler, 2001). According to this classification of academic discourse, the researcher decided to work on physics as a hard-pure, computer engineering as a hard-applied, and applied linguistics as a soft-applied academic discourse. The reason for which the researcher used applied linguistics is our familiarity with and good command of that.

Moreover, the researcher compiled a non-native data of applied linguistics in English which included RAs written by Iranian writers to see if there is any difference between native and non-native authors in the same discipline of applied linguistics with regard to the transition markers.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The first step involved the collection of 180 research articles across three native disciplines including computer engineering, physics and applied linguistics and a non-native discipline of applied linguistics in order to examine the occurrence of TMs in their discussion and conclusion sections and the difference between native and non-native researchers in the use of TMs in applied linguistics articles. In the next step, all research articles were saved on the computer to form data-based and then, the two sections of the research articles consisting of 253719 words were chosen for the analysis.

The taxonomy of Halliday and Hassan (1976) was extracted for the analysis of the selected sections of RAs regarding the use of TMs. In the next phase, the articles were examined to determine the frequency of TMs. According to Adel (2006), metadiscourse expressions can be multifunctional and context dependent, therefore, determining the frequency of TMs was conducted manually throughout each data. Moreover, this job was done twice for the purpose of accuracy. So, the researcher calculated the inter-rater reliability through the calculation of correlation between the raters based on Spearman formula to make sure whether the analysis was done in the right way.

After the data were obtained, they were summarized by the use of descriptive statistics and presented through frequency table. The frequency and percentage of each TM in each discipline were calculated separately and then computer engineering and physics articles were compared with each other and native applied linguistics with group non-native applied linguistics. Then, Chi-square was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the research articles in the use of TMs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Analysis

A total of 1746 transition markers were identified in all research articles. In computer engineering RAs 517 TMs were used (76985 words), 161 were used in physics RAs (24794 words), 735 were identified in native applied linguistics RAs (97719 words), and 333 in non-native applied linguistics RAs (53821 words).

Frequency and percentage of TMs in RAs

The four groups of RAs investigated in this study were analyzed concerning the frequency of occurrence of transition markers in each of the 5 categories of the taxonomy used in this study. Table 1 shows the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the articles; rows numbered 1-5 represent the taxonomy applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all transition markers in each discipline under the present study are shown in columns under each discipline as well. Total number of TMs is also given.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of transition markers in RAs

Types of TMs	Computer engineering		Physics		Applied linguistics native		Applied linguistics non-native		Total TMs in all the discipline	Percentage of the category
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent.	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent		
Causal	87	16.82	46	28.57	129	17.55	85	25.52	347	19.87%
Adversative	160	30.94	48	29.81	208	28.29	87	26.12	503	28.80%
Sequential	59	11.41	17	10.55	99	13.46	35	10.51	210	12.02%
Conditional	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.90	3	0.17%
Additional	211	40.81	50	31.05	299	40.68	123	36.93	683	39.11%
Total TMs in the discipline	517	0.67	161	0.64	735	0.75	333	0.61	1746	
Total words in the discipline	76985		24794		97719		53821			

Frequency of occurrence of transition markers in RAs

In the following the five categories of the taxonomy of TMs presented are introduced:

1. Causal

The first category in the classification used here represented the causal connectors. Different causal connectors were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers. However, the least number of this category was found in physics articles. The sum of the occurrence of this category in the five groups equaled 347 cases (19.87% of all the TMs) among which causal connectors “*thus*” had the highest frequency while “*hence*” had the lowest.

2. Adversative

The frequent adversative connectors were found in applied linguistics articles written by native researchers. While the least number of this category was found in physics articles, this category had the frequency of 503 cases in all the five groups (28.80% of all the TMs) among which adversative connectors “however” had the highest frequency while “even so” had the least.

3. Sequential

This category occurred 210 times in the four groups (12.02% of all the TMs). The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least number of this category was found in physics articles among which the transition markers “finally” had the highest frequency while “at present” had the least. (For observing the details.

4. Conditional

This category was found to be repeated three times (0.17%) in applied linguistics by non-native writers while the least number of this category was found in computer engineering, physics and native applied linguistics.

5. Additional

The fifth category of transition markers in the classification of TMs in the present study deals with the additional connectors. The overall number occurrence of this category was 683 cases equal to 39.11% of the TMs highlighted in this study. The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles.

Cross-disciplinary variation of transition markers in RA_s

The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between physics and computer engineering articles in terms of using TMs. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X^2 stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:

Table 2: Chi-Square analysis

Categories of TMs	Causal	Adversative	Sequential	Conditional	Additional	df	X^2	p
Disciplines								
Physics articles	46	48	17	0	50	4	12.8	0.012
Computer engineering	87	160	59	0	211			

The difference between physics and computer engineering articles was found to be significant at ($p < 0.05$) since the Observed X^2 (12.8) is greater than the Critical X^2 (9.4) with $df=4$.

Inter-disciplinary variation of transition markers in RA_s

The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers in terms of

using TMs. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X^2 stands for the Chi-square and P shows the level of significance:

Table 4: Chi-Square analysis

Categories of		Causal	Adversative	Sequential	Conditional	Additional	df	X^2	p
TMs	Disciplines								
	Applied native articles	129	208	99	0	299	4	16.7	0.002
	Applied non-native articles	85	87	35	3	123			

The difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers was found to be significant at ($p < 0.05$) since the Observed X^2 (16.7) is greater than the Critical X^2 (9.4) with $df=4$. Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of transition markers in computer engineering articles and physics articles showed significant differences in using TMs in the two groups. In other words, there were no significant differences in the types and frequencies between these two disciplines was rejected and so were articles written on applied linguistics by English and Iranian researchers.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that there are differences and similarities between computer engineering and physics As. In both set of articles, the most frequent types of transition markers were additional connectors, and the least ones were conditional and sequential connectors. Such differences in various disciplines can be explained by regarding the nature of fields of knowledge. For example, the field of physics can be accounted as "hard" sciences in which methods, materials, and procedures can be measured precisely and experiment context is more controlled, whereas Economics as a "soft" science is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative essence. Similarly, Hyland (1998) argues that the control of variables in the soft-knowledge fields is looser and research findings are not streamlined. Thus, the soft disciplines more likely need more strategies and devices such as interactive metadiscourse elements to persuade audiences.

The possible reason for higher occurrence of TMs in computer engineering is that although computer engineering generally represents technological information, it gives information about some issues which are not absolutely technological. So it has some characteristics of "soft" science which is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative nature.

In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure; the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied. So physics and computer engineering can be considered as hard science; therefore, they are expected to have some common characteristics. This can justify similarity between these two disciplines in terms of using same categories of TMs in both disciplines adversative connectors were of the greatest frequency and also both disciplines used conditional connectors equally.

In the view of the second research question, the analysis of the data showed that there were disciplinary similarities and differences in the use of transition markers in applied linguistics RAs written by English and Iranian authors. In both set of articles, the most frequent were additional connectors. Adversative and causal connectors occur in the second and third position respectively. In applied linguistics articles written by native authors there were 735 TMs out of 97719 words whereas in the Iranian ones 333 TMs out of 53821 words. In other words, there was a significant difference between these two disciplines. The results of the study are also to some extent similar to the results of the study conducted by Farrokhi and Ashrafi (2009) which concluded that there is a significant difference in the distribution of textual metadiscourse markers between the writings of native English writers and non-native Persian writers of English. The results of this study confirm Dahl's (2004) claim that language and national writing traditions seem to be the most influential factors in using interactive metadiscourse markers in linguistics texts.

One of the reasons in meaningful differences between the uses of TMs in articles written by native and Iranian non-native writers can be the lack of the non-native writers' mastery of conventions and linguistic rules of academic writing genre. According to Hyland (2009), academic writing, much like any other kind of writing, is only effective when writers use conventions that other members of their community find recognizable and convincing. Moreover, not only the non-native writers needs to master in linguistics rules and conventions of academic texts, but also they require understand higher levels of discourse. Hyland (2004) mention that metadiscourse resources are of great value at higher levels of writing in an academic and at the same time meaningful and appropriate way to a particular disciplinary community.

The other reason can be the influence of linguistic background and culture traditions of non-native writers on the use of metadiscourse markers in the second language. According to Hyland (2004) the writers' cultural and rhetorical preferences can affect the use of metadiscourse markers and the style of discourse organization. So, it can be said that non-native writers must be familiar with the cultural conventions of the use of metadiscourse markers in the target language in order to produce successful texts in a foreign language.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the use of transition markers in discussion and conclusion sections of published articles in the fields of physics, computer, and applied linguistics among English native and Iranian non-native researchers. The results of this study showed the writers of physics articles used more TMs than the writers of computer engineering articles which showed the different nature between these two disciplines. On the other hand, the nature of discipline can influence the frequency of transitional markers in the written text. Another result of this study revealed that Iranian researchers of linguistics slightly use less connector than English native researchers. This underuse problem may be related to the impact of first language and culture of non-native writers on the use of TMs in the second language. Also, these two groups of writers from these two disciplines showed that various preferences in employing TMs types based on their propositional content, argumentation and readers.

Finally, it can be said that even when the non-native writers have a good knowledge of TMs, they will be influenced by their first language and culture. Contrastive studies on the use of metadiscourse markers in different disciplines with different languages help the writers to familiar with the differences between their cultures and the culture of discourse to which they write the text. Also, it shows us that some languages and disciplines are specific and this awareness is important for the development of writers.

Difficulties for those non-native writers and students who want to be considered as member of the academic discourse may be because of the lack of familiarity with the conventions of disciplinary culture and these resources of academic discourse. According to Mauranen (1993), cultural differences in metadiscourse use may result in unintentionally inefficient writing on the part of L2 writers. Therefore, EFL writers need to increase understanding of these resources and rhetorical conventions of their disciplinary community in order to join that community.

The results of this study may be useful for the teachers of English for academic purposes and English for specific purposes in making their learners aware of the ways in which metadiscourse resources including TMs occur in the text in order to achieve the communicative purpose of specific genre. So, it is necessary to pay attention to these resources and teaching them to the foreign language learners of English in ESP, EAP course.

Also, these findings of this study can be used by teachers of EFL learners to aware them the differences which occur in the conventions of metadiscourse use between native and non- native writers.

This study has examined some important questions about the types and frequencies of TMs in English and Persian in the disciplines of applied linguistics, physics, and computer engineering. Further research may be carried onto comparatively studying TMs in other disciplines in English articles written by English and Iranian writers to find if these devices are used differently. It is possible to compare research articles written by authors with other language background; for example, between German writers and English writers. It is also possible to compare other metadiscourse markers such as frame markers in research articles. In this study, the checklist used was based on Halliday and Hassan (1976). In other studies other checklists or combination of different checklists can be used. The present study dealt with discussion and conclusion sections in RAs while other sections in RAs could be studied in terms of TMs and other metadiscourse markers.

REFERENCES

- Adel, A. (2006). *Metadiscourse in L1 and L2 English*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Becher, T., & Trowler, P. (2001). *Academic tribes and territories, intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines* (2nd Ed.). Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education Open University Press.
- Camiciottoli, B.C. (2003). Metadiscourse and ESP reading comprehension: an exploratory study. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 15 (1), 28-39.

- Crismore, A. (1989). *Talking with readers: Metadiscourse as rhetorical act*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Crismore, A. Markkanen, R., & Steffensen, M. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasive writing: A study of texts written by American and Finnish university students. *Writtencommunication*, 10(1), 39-71.
- Crismore, A., & Abdollahzadeh, E. (2010). A review of recent metadiscourse studies: the Iranian context. *NJES*, 9(2), 195-219.
- Dahl, T. (2004). Extual metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discipline. *Journal of Pragmatics* 36, 1807–1825. Retrieved May 12, 2015 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma>.
- Farrokhi, F., & Ashrafi, S. (2009). Textual metadiscourse resources in research articles. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 212, 39-75.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Harlow: Longman group UK Limited.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Harris, Z. (1959). The transformational model of language structure. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 1(1), 27-29.
- Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Metadiscourse in introductory course books. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18 (1), 3-26.
- Hyland, K. (2001). Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 29(3), 207–226. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(00\)00012-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(00)00012-0)
- Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language writing*, 13, 133-151.
- Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25, 156-177.
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. London: Continuum.
- Hyland, K. (2009). Writing in the disciplines: Research evidence for specificity. *Taiwan International ESP Journal*, 1(1), 5-22.
- Mauranen, A. (1993). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish-English economics texts. *English for specific purposes*, 12, 3–22.
- Shokouhi, H., & Talati Baghsiahi, A. (2009). Metadiscourse functions in English and Persian sociology articles: A study in contrastive rhetoric. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 45(4), 549–568.
- VandeKopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36(1), 82-93.
- Vassileva, I. (2001). Commitment and detachment in English and Bulgarian academic writing. *English for Specific Purposes*, 20, 83-102.
- Williams, J. M. (1981). *Style: Ten lessons in clarity and grace*. Glenview: Scott, Foreman, Glenview.

Zarei, G. R., & Mansoori, S. (2007). Metadiscourse in academic prose: A contrastive analysis of English and Persian research articles. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 3(2), 24-40.

Zarei, G. R., & Mansoori, S. (2011). A contrastive study on metadiscourse elements used inhumanities vs. non humanities across Persian and English. *English Language Teaching*, 4(1), 42-50.

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF INDIRECT FOCUS ON FORM THROUGH CORRECTIVE RECAST AND DIRECT FOCUS ON FORMS THROUGH METALINGUISTIC FEEDBACK ON IRANIAN PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC ACCURACY OF ORAL PRODUCTION

Mehdi Shirazi¹, Bahman Gorjian^{*2}

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

²Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine the effect of oral corrective feedback provided by the means of indirect focus on form through corrective recast in comparison with direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of pre-university students' oral production was studying at Mehr School in Khoramshar, Iran. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 40 students were chosen through a Nelson Proficiency Test (series 300D) used to homogenize the participants regarding their language proficiency level. Based on the results of this test, two matched experimental groups, 20 participants as the Indirect Corrective Recast (ICR) and 20 participants as Direct Metalinguistic Feedback (DMF), were formed. After ten sessions of treatment, the two groups were post-tested through another structured interview. The analysis of the data was done through Paired and Independent Samples t-test. While both groups made statistically significant improvement in terms of the average accuracy gains, concerning the general effectiveness of the two feedback techniques to focus on form, the data analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups, though the ICR Group performed slightly better on the post-test than the DMF Group. In sum, this study confirmed that the planned focus on form can be an effective tool for the development of oral accuracy in the EFL situations. It can also be concluded that intensive recasts which are repeatedly focused on a particular structure are not different from direct types of feedback in teaching linguistic accuracy.

KEYWORDS: Corrective recast, Metalinguistic feedback, Accuracy, Oral Production

INTRODUCTION

As indicated by Corder (1967), errors play an essential role in the process of language learning because they show the extent to which the learners have learned the target language as well as the areas in which they still require help. This study aimed at examining the ways through which teachers orally correct learners' errors and the impact of such corrections on learners' English language production. As Shaffer (2008) stated, one of the questions confronting every EFL

(English as a Foreign Language) teacher is how to correct oral errors and how much to correct. Researchers' attitude varies widely on this: from no correction to extensive correction, from immediate to delayed correction, and from indirect to direct correction. Language learners also have their own ideas on how and whether they want to have their oral errors corrected by their teacher in the classroom context.

Corrective feedback as one of the efficient techniques of focus on form and meaning has long been used in second language classrooms. Learning entails feedback. Otherwise, the students have no means of evaluating the extent and appropriateness of their learning. Within the field of second language research, a numerous number of studies are centering on corrective feedback. Feedback is an essential part of language pedagogy because through teacher's feedback learners can be aware of how far they have progressed and how they are doing. All of these techniques are put into a direct-indirect continuum. Metalinguistic and recasts have been recognized as two useful feedback treatments that arise in the course of interaction to deal with communication problems.

While a great many studies have been done to investigate the efficacy of corrective feedback in EFL, there is still debate over what kinds of corrective feedback is more effective. The present study aimed at investigating whether there is any statistically significant difference between groups of Iranian pre-university students receiving indirect feedback on form through corrective recast in comparison with another group receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of oral production at the same level of language proficiency. Nassaji and Swain (2000) maintained the primary issue that exists in the area of corrective feedback is that most of second language teachers are not familiar with the impacts of different types of feedbacks, which feedback is more suitable for which level? They are not aware that whether corrective recasts or metalinguistic feedback has more beneficial effect on students' accuracy.

The purpose of this study was to see whether pre-university school students in Iran benefit more from indirect focus on form through corrective recast or direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback. This study aimed to provide data for English teachers and researchers with better understanding of corrective feedback and which type can be more useful for students' oral accuracy and retention. One of the concerns of teachers, particularly in communicative-focused classes, is that they wonder if students' oral productions should be corrected in terms of indirect or direct corrective feedback. As teachers obtain a better perception of which kind of corrective feedback benefit students, students receive more quality instruction and receive feedback that best contributes to L2 acquisition.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reactive and proactive focus on form has both advantages and disadvantages. An advantage of reactive focus on form is that the natural flow of communication is not interrupted as a teacher should only correct learners' repetitive errors using more indirect techniques such as recast. In addition, "the teacher does not have to pre-select a target form before a class" (Doughty & William, 1998, p. 206). On the other hand, Doughty and Williams (1998) suggest that reactive

focus on form is not practical when the learners are of “different L1s, of different abilities, or of such high ability that errors go unnoticed by the teacher or other learners, since the message is successfully delivered” (p. 206).

Doughty and Williams (1998) respond to these conditions of reactive focus on form by asserting that teachers should “notice and be prepared to handle various learning difficulties as they arise” (p. 206). The proactive focus on form was introduced in order to overcome deficiencies of the reactive stance and can be successfully used to either a large class-size or learners at different levels of ability. In proactive focus on form a teacher must choose a target structure before starting class and design a schedule on the basis of “considerations of individual learner differences, developmental language learning sequences, input quality, formal or functional complexity, and L1 influences on SLA process” (p. 198).

Loschky and Bley-Vromen (1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998) introduced concept of task essentialness regarding the difficulties in proactive focus on form. Thus, Swain (1998) proposed dictogloss which could fulfill the condition of task essentialness to a large extent. In dictogloss for focus on form purpose, the teacher read a text involving the targeted structure to students at normal speed, while the students need to take notes and then reconstruct the text together. Afterwards, at the time of reconstruction and reproduction, the teacher can focus on that specific form.

Direct feedback to focus on form includes explicitly attracting the focus of the learner to the error with or without rule explanation. The two kinds of direct corrective feedback that fall toward the more explicit end of the continuum are determined by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as: (a) ‘direct correction’ when it is overtly stated that an error has been made and the correct form is provided; and (b) ‘metalinguistic feedback’ when a metalinguistic explanation of the underlying grammatical rule is given. Therefore, if a language learner says, “He go to school every day,” the corrective feedback can be supplied directly, for example, “no, not go, you should say goes,.” and may or may not contain metalinguistic information, for instance, “Don’t forget to make the verb agree with the subject” (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, pp. 171-172). Metalinguistic feedback is divided into three subcategories: metalinguistic comments, metalinguistic information and metalinguistic questions (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Metalinguistic comments, the most minimally informative of the three, simply demonstrate the occurrence of an error. The second subcategory of metalinguistic feedback is metalinguistic information which goes beyond simply indicating the occurrence or location of the error and “generally supplies some metalanguage that refers to the nature of the error” (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47). The third subcategory of metalinguistic feedback is metalinguistic questions that refer to the nature of the error but try to extract the information from the student.

Richards, Platt and Platt (1992, p. 141) stated that fluency is mainly used in contrast with accuracy which is “the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently”. Harmer (2001) asserted that non-communicative activities are expected to improve the accuracy of learners. On the other hand, communicative activities are

to enhance the fluency of learners. The common idea is that during accuracy work, the teacher is supposed to point out and correct the errors made by learners. In addition, during communicative activities teachers should not interrupt the flow of the speech of learners to shed light on the grammatical, lexical, or pronunciation errors, for the reason that this act interrupts communication.

Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) in an experimental study investigated the effects of direct and indirect corrective feedback on the acquisition of past tense -ed among low-intermediate learners. The indirect feedback in this study was recast and the direct feedback was metalinguistic feedback. The results of this study indicated that direct feedback containing metalinguistic information was more effective than indirect feedback containing recasts.

Nassaji (2009) investigated the impact of recasts with more direct types of corrective feedback which is called prompt on a series of linguistic features. Despite the fact that these target features were not new to learners in his study either, he came to a reassuring point that the degree of learners' latent knowledge of the target forms may affect the efficacy of recasts and feedback which is called prompt on a series of linguistic features. Despite the fact that these target features were not new to learners in his study either, he came to a reassuring point that the degree of learners' latent knowledge of the target forms may affect the efficacy of recasts and more heavily on learners' latent knowledge of the target form than recasts. He further supposed that recasts could be "more beneficial for learning new forms" than prompts (2009, p.441).

Sheen (2007) investigated the impact of focused corrective feedback on the improvement of 91 adult ESL learners' accuracy in the use of two kinds of articles ('the' and 'a'). This study involved a direct only group (the researcher pointed to errors and provided correct forms), a direct-metalinguistic group (the researcher pointed to errors, provided correct forms, and supplied metalinguistic explanations), and a control group. The efficacy of the corrective feedback was measured on post-tests. Sheen found that both direct corrective feedback groups outperformed the control group. This study also revealed that direct corrective feedback helped upgrade ESL learners' accuracy, particularly when metalinguistic feedback was supplied. She described this result by pointing out that the feedback supplied to the students with the correct form was limited to two linguistic forms (i.e., articles 'the' and 'a'), which made the processing load manageable for them.

Saito and Lyster (2012) compared the impacts of instruction with and without recasts targeting pronunciation errors in the use of English /ɪ/ by Japanese students of English. All students participated in four hours of form-focused tasks designed to improve their argumentative skills in English while attracting their attention to the target forms through typographically enhanced input and providing opportunities for production practice. During these tasks, one group received recasts following their mispronunciation or unclear pronunciation of /ɪ/ while no corrective feedback was provided to the other. The students receiving recasts made considerably more improvement than those not receiving recasts, again revealing that practice in tandem with feedback supplies more support for the restructuring of interlanguage forms than practice alone.

Sometimes with previous studies regarding the effectiveness of indirect and direct feedback, little to no difference occurs between recasts and metalinguistic error correction. A research done by Kim and Mathes (2001) utilized a target structure of dative verbs with 20 Korean adult ESL learners. Their study examined two groups: Group A received metalinguistic feedback and Group B received recasts. Both were presented in two sessions one week apart from each other. Although learners told that they preferred direct feedback, the achievements between the two production tasks were not significant.

Another study done by Sanz (2003) examined 28 first-year university learners of Spanish studying pronouns between the object and verb and placed them into two groups. Group one received metalinguistic feedback and group two received implicit feedback. Sentence completion and written video retelling revealed that both groups significantly enhanced ability to provide the target structure with no difference between the groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions formulated for the purpose of this study were as follows:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test linguistic accuracy of participants' oral production, receiving-indirect focus on form through corrective recast?
2. Is there any statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test linguistic accuracy of participants' oral production, receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference between post-test linguistic accuracy of participants' oral production, receiving-Indirect focus on form through corrective recast and those participants receiving direct focus on form through metalinguistic Feedback?

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study was conducted based on pre-test and post-test design which composed of two independent variables (two techniques of focus on form, i.e., indirect focus on form through corrective recast, and direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback), and a dependent variable (linguistic accuracy). Drawing upon Mackey and Gass (2005), the present study had a between-groups design. More specifically, since the two groups of the study received different treatments, and there was no control group, the design took the form of comparison groups design, one of between-groups design types.

The design of the study included:

Language proficiency test: Nelson English Language Test (series 300D) developed by Fowler and Coe (1976) was used as a means to homogenize the experimental groups' participants.

Pre-test: It was done through a structured interview to measure the accuracy scores of participants on the basis of three mentioned grammatical structures before treatments.

Treatment 1: It was in the form of indirect focus on form through corrective recast.

Treatment 2: It was in the form of direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback.

Post-test: It was done through another structured interview to measure the accuracy scores of participants on the basis of three mentioned grammatical structures after treatments.

Participants

Participants of the study were selected through the random sampling among pre-university students studying at Mehr School in Khoramshar, Iran. Upon administering Nelson Proficiency Test, 40 students whose scores were within one standard deviation above or below the mean score of the whole sample were recognized as eligible participants and included in the study. They were selected out of 52 pre-university students who took this test (i.e. Nelson test). Subsequently, these participants were evenly assigned to one of two experimental groups, one as the Indirect Corrective Recast (ICR) group and the other as the Direct Metalinguistic Feedback (DMF) group, respectively. Each group included 20 participants. Regarding the participants' demographic information, they were all male students and their age ranged between 17 and 19 years old.

Instrumentation

In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, the following instruments were employed: To run the study, first, a Nelson English Language Test was used as a means to homogenize the participants with regard to their language proficiency level. While the Nelson test is standardized and highly reliable, this test was also piloted with a similar group of eight students from the same population to verify its consistency with respect to the context of the present study. Hence, the general English proficiency test was found to be appropriate for the participants performing level. It is worth noting here that the reliability of general English proficiency test estimated by KR-21 method appeared to be ($r=.76$). This test consisted of four parts: cloze tests, structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. All parts were in the form of Multiple-Choice questions. There were, in all, 50 items and the time allotted was 60 minutes.

The second instruments used in this study were two structured interviews including three grammatical structures namely second-conditional sentences, should have + past participle, and the use of four types of conjunction including so, such, too and enough in adverbial clauses in order to elicit the required structure from the participants, in pre-test and post-test. It is important to note that since there was no valid and reliable ready-made test in the market fulfilling the purpose of this research, the pre-test was designed and developed by the researcher based on the grammatical exercises related to these three aimed structures which are commonly used in Pre-University Students' English Workbooks. This test was in the form of structured interview included 20 items and before final administration it was piloted with a smaller group of pre-university students who were similar in English proficiency level to the main participants of the study. An item analysis was done to calculate the level of difficulty of all items. Then, based on the results of this analysis, some items were modified or replaced by some new ones. The reliability of this test which was calculated by KR-21 method and it came out to be satisfactory with an index of .77. Another similar test of 20 items like pre-test was used as the post-test to measure the effectiveness of the instructional approaches. The reliability index for this test was 0.78. It should be noted that in all the interviews, the interviewer read the situation to the

interviewee. Then the interviewee was supposed to start his answers orally with the provided incomplete sentences, with the required structure. Accuracy ratios were computed to score the interviews (by two raters) through dividing the correct uses by the sum of the total number of incorrect and zero uses (White, 1998).

For treatment, three passages for dictogloss purpose were developed for each structure, which were the same for both the ICR and the DMF Group. As noted in Chapter Two, dictogloss (Swain, 1998) was used to meet the condition of task essentialness, that is to say, to provide enough opportunities for the teacher to offer focus on the aimed form (Loschky & Bley-Vromen, 1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998). These passages for dictogloss were selected based on reading comprehension activities of their English Workbooks that students had worked on them during the class activities. Then the researcher included many instances of the specified structure for each passage to fulfill the objective of the study in order to attract the participants' attention to focus on the aimed form.

Procedure

Based on the administration of Nelson Proficiency Test, 40 participants whose test scores were one standard deviation below or above the mean score were included as the eligible participants of the study. Based on the results of this test, two matched experimental groups, 20 participants as the ICR Group and 20 participants as the DMF Group were formed. Further, to make sure the participants, in the two groups, did not possess statistically significantly different abilities in terms of linguistic accuracy, a pre-test was given, requiring the participants in both groups to answer orally the questions of structured interview in order to obtain the accuracy rate of the participants before treatment. It should be noted that the questions of structured interview in pre-test were about three grammatical structures namely second-conditional sentences, should + have + past participle, and the use of four types of conjunction including so, such, too, and enough in adverbial clauses. It is worth mentioning that the participants in this study had a little familiarity with these three grammatical structures based on what they had studied in their English course books.

It should be noted that the ratings of the interviews in the pre-test and post-test were carried out by two raters. The inter-rater reliability was calculated through Person Correlation analysis for the pre-test of accuracy is ($r=.94$) and for post-test of accuracy is ($r=.97$) which shows that there is a high positive relationship between the scores rated by Rater 1 and Rater 2 in both pre-test and post-test for both experimental groups.

Regarding the treatment, this study required the teachers to provide the participants with a kind of task that pushed the participants to use the aimed structures in a way that the completion and fulfillment of the task was not possible without using them. This matter, called task essentialness (Loschky & Bley-Vromen, 1993, cited in Doughty & Williams, 1998), was solved by using dictogloss (Swain, 1998). Three passages were developed for each structure to be presented to participants for dictogloss purpose, in ten sessions that each session lasted for about 45 minutes.

Furthermore, during the dictogloss, the participants took notes about the text which was read aloud by the teacher at normal speed, which also involved many instances of the aimed structures. Then, the participants were to reconstruct the text and supply an oral production of the summary of the text, once in pairs or small groups of three, and once more to the class.

In the ICR Group, the participants were provided with corrective recast, once during the pair or group work by their trained teacher by walking around the class and eavesdropping on them, and once more at the time of the oral production to the class. It should be pointed out that in order to attain the maximum benefit from recasts, the participants were made familiar with the nature of recasts; that is to say, the learners were instructed that the use of recasts by the teacher was not confirmations of meaning but rather reactions to erroneous forms (Nicholas, Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

For the post-test, which was about 30 days after the pre-test, the participants took the post-test through another structured interview, which was again double-rated. It should be pointed out that the scores used for data analysis were resulted from getting the average of two scores given by the two raters, if the scores were ever different at all.

Data Analysis

Taking account of the research questions and the null hypotheses and regarding the fact that all the assumptions for parametric tests were met, to determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the language proficiency levels of the two groups before the experiment began, an Independent-Samples *t*-test was run on the language proficiency level mean scores of the two groups. Moreover, another Independent-Samples *t*-test was used to examine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the pre-test before starting the treatment. Next, to investigate the first and second null hypotheses, two separate Paired-Samples *t*-tests were run, one determined the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the ICR Group and the other determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the DMF Group. Finally, to either confirm or reject the third null hypothesis, an-Independent-Samples *t*-test was used to investigate the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to measure the accuracy scores of two groups on the basis of three aimed grammatical structures before the treatment, a pre-test was administered to the participants. The participants' overall scores on the pre-test were collected through structured interview and are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: ICR and DMF Group's Pre-test Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ICR Group	20	27.66	18.66	4.17
DMF Group	20	29.78	16.61	3.71

The mean was 27.66 and the standard deviation was 18.66 for the ICR Group. In the case of the DMF Group, the mean and standard deviation were 29.78 and 16.61 respectively. As it is noticed, the means and standard deviations of the two groups were approximately similar on the pre-test. The data were put into Independent Samples *t*-test analysis to show any possible difference between the ICR and DMF Groups on the pre-test. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Independent Samples T-test on Pre-test Mean Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.530	.471	.37	38	.70	2.12	5.58	13.43	9.19
Equal variances not assumed			.37	37.49	.70	2.12	5.58	13.43	9.19

As shown in Table 2 the two groups were not significantly different with respect to their variances. ($F=.530$, $p=.471$). T_{observed} value, by degrees of freedom 38, was 0.37. As it can be seen the value of the Sig. (2- tailed) is .70 which was more than 0.05, hence; it can be inferred that both the ICR and the DMF Group performed significantly similar on the pre-test, that is, the participants' oral accuracy concerning the knowledge of three aimed grammatical before treatment was considerably equal.

Further, to investigate the first and second hypotheses, two separate paired-samples *t*-tests were run, one determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the ICR Group, and the other determining the pre-test and post-test mean scores differences of the DMF Group. To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, nevertheless, a paired-samples *t*-test was utilized.

Table 3: ICR Group's Pre-test and Post-test Descriptive Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair	Pre-test ICR	27.66	20	18.66	4.17
	Post-test ICR	60.81	20	21.90	4.89

Table 4: Paired Samples T-test on ICR Group, Pre-test and Post-test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair	Pre ICR –Post ICR	33.15	10.14	2.26	-37.89	28.40	14.6	19	.000

As Table 4 indicates the T_{observed} absolute value, by degree of freedom of 19, -was 14.61. Since the Sig. (2-tailed) was less than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that the difference in mean scores of the pre-test and post-test was statistically significant. This finding was not in conformity with the claim of Null Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis was, consequently, statistically rejected. Therefore, the Paired Samples t -test analysis revealed that the participants in the ICR Group receiving corrective feedback improved significantly in their post-test for their performance on the accuracy of oral production ($p=.000 < 0.05$). The results proved the hypothesis that indirect error correction through corrective recast during oral activities by the means of dictogloss to focus on the aimed form seemed to have a significant overall effect on students' oral accuracy. To determine the existence of any statistically significant difference between the results of the DMF Group's pre-test and post-test, a similar approach was adopted. The relating descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: DMF Group's Pre-test and Post-test Descriptive Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair	Pre-test DMF	29.78	20	16.61	3.71
	Post-test DMF	56.79	20	20.59	4.60

As it is evident in Table 5, the pre-test-mean score of the DMF Group was 29.78, while that of the post-test was 56.79. Although this difference between the two mean scores seemed to be less than the mean scores difference of the ICR Groups' pre-test and post-test, a paired-samples t -test was run to see if this difference in the DMF Group was statistically significant (Table 6).

Table 6: Paired Samples *t*-test on DMF Group, Pre-test and Post-test

		Paired Differences				95% Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean	Error	Lower	Upper			
Pair	Pre DMF–Post DMF	27.01	8.19	1.83		-30.84	-23.17	14.74	19	.000

Regarding the T_{observed} absolute value, by degree of freedom of 19, which was computed to be 14.74, and taking the value of the Sig. (2- tailed) into account, 0.00, it was proved that the difference between the two mean scores was statistically significant. This meant that the participants in the DMF Group had performed significantly better on the post-test; hence, the Null Hypothesis 2 was rejected. On the whole, the paired-samples *t*-test analysis indicated that the learners in the DMF Group receiving metalinguistic feedback also made considerable progress for development of their oral accuracy. That is to say, both types of corrective feedback in this study were effective in facilitating participants' oral linguistic accuracy. An independent-samples *t*-test was used to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test.

Table 7: ICR and DMF Groups' Post-test Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ICR Group	20	60.81	21.90	4.89
DMF Group	20	56.79	20.59	4.60

With respect to the pre-test and post-test mean scores, whereas the ICR participants gained a pre-test mean score of 27.66, which was lower than the pre-test mean score of the DMF participants (29.78), they performed better on the post-test and obtained a mean score of 60.81, as compared to that of the DMF participants (56.79). In other words, the mean gain of the ICR Group was computed to be 33.15, while that of the DMF Group was calculated to be 27.01. In order to analyze the existence of any statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the post-test, an independent samples *t*-test was run.

Table 8: Independent Samples *t*-test on Post-test Mean Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Difference	Error Lower Upper
Equal assumed	variances	.087	.769	.59	38	.55	4.02	6.72	9.59 17.63
Equal	variances not assumed			.59	37.85	.55	4.02	6.72	9.59 17.63

As Table 8 indicates, the Sig. value of the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was more than 0.05, it was concluded that the variability in the two conditions was the same. The T_{observed} value was, therefore, 0.59, by degree of freedom of 38. Moreover, since the Sig. (2-tailed) was more than 0.05, this statistical test confirmed that there was not a statistically significant difference between the oral production's linguistic accuracy performance of the ICR and DMF Groups on the post-test based on the three aimed grammatical structures. The third Null Hypothesis was, therefore, verified.

Discussion

Results of paired-samples *t*-test analysis showed that, in spite of the low performance of the participants in the pre-test, there were significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post mean ranks of the ICR group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview, in favor of the post-test. Thus, the first null hypothesis stating that "There are not significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post-test mean ranks of the ICR group on the three aimed grammatical structures" was rejected. This improvement may be due to the fact that the recasts used in the present study were corrective in nature. This kind of recasts composed of two steps: 1) repetition (generally with rising intonation) to draw the participants' attention accompanied by 2) recasts to supply, contrastively, the necessary target exemplar. This made recasts more salient and easier to notice.

The third reasonable interpretation is that the participants of the ICR Group were already taught grammar explicitly in the context based on what they had studied in their English course book. This enabled them to respond to and benefit from recasts effectively. This supports the conclusions about the positive relationship between explicit knowledge and noticing. These conclusions revealed that learners who tended to respond to recasts had learned grammar rules explicitly. For example, Rhee (2012) concluded that contexts and explicit knowledge interdependently created the cognitive ability that increased the effectiveness of recasts on second/foreign language processing, which then arguably determined subsequent language development.

Results of another paired-samples *t*-test analysis showed that there were significant differences at 0.05 levels between the pre-and-post mean ranks of the DMF Group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview, in favor of the post-test. This indicates that metalinguistic feedback like corrective recast led to significant improvement in the participants' oral grammatical accuracy. It mainly provided the participants with negative evidence explicitly.

The findings of the present study indicated that in spite of the differences between the two experimental groups' means during the ten sessions of oral production and treatment, the results of independent sample *t*-test showed that there were not statistically significant differences at 0.05 levels between the post-test mean ranks of the ICR Group and the DMF Group based on three aimed grammatical structures in the form of structured interview. Indeed, the two feedback types were equally effective in the development of the oral accuracy. Considering these findings, it can be suggested that the intensive recasts focused on a specific forms are not different from direct types of feedback. However, the findings of the current study revealed that recasts seemed to be an effective type of corrective feedback with low level language learners as they were short, one change and accompanied by clues and gestures which empowered the participants to pinpoint their errors and hence bridge the gap between their erroneous utterances and the target utterances (e.g., Sheen, 2004)

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to examine the potential impact of the two feedback techniques to focus on form through corrective recast and metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of Iranian pre-university students in the terms of three aimed grammatical structures. Both theory and research proposed that directing learners' attention to linguistic forms during meaning focused activities can help learners to improve accuracy as well as fluency. This study found that focus on form instruction contributes to the learners' accuracy gains. Results are encouraging as far as the two types of feedback in grammatical accuracy are concerned. They revealed that the two feedback techniques (corrective recasts and metalinguistic feedback) were effective in enhancing the participants' grammatical accuracy in oral production. The findings indicated that in spite of the difference between the two experimental groups' means in the favors of the ICR Group, this means difference were not statistically significant on the post-test. In fact, the two types of feedback were almost equally effective in the development of the oral grammatical accuracy.

This study investigated the two techniques of focus on form, demonstrating higher gains after the application of indirect focus on form through corrective recast and direct focus on form through metalinguistic feedback on linguistic accuracy of oral production of Iranian pre-university students based on three aimed grammatical structures. Since corrective recast led to higher score on post-test, albeit by a relatively small margin, in comparison with metalinguistic feedback, it may be beneficial for a teacher to use indirect error correction when possible. Moreover, this study indicates some support for the use of focus on form rather than the use of traditional focus on formS. Hence, teachers need to be familiarized with the techniques of focus on form,

especially the indirect ones which keep the communicative nature of the language classes. So, it would be logical to allot some time to the training of teachers in this respect.

Since this study was confined in terms of its participants, structures in focus, techniques of focus on form, etc., it appears to be necessary to point out some further research to be done in this regard. Considering the fact that this study was limited to only two techniques of focus on form, it is suggested that similar studies be conducted with other techniques of focus on form whether indirect ones or direct ones, such as clarification request, elicitation, etc. Moreover, more comprehensive studies could be done to investigate the effect of more than two techniques at a time on language acquisition. Since the present study focused on only three structures in English, similar studies could examine the accuracy gains in terms of other structures in English. Similar research could be done regarding written recognition and production of other English structures.

REFERENCES

- Corder, S. (1967). The significance of learners' errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5, 161-170.
- Doughty, C., & Varela, E. (1998). Communicative focus on form. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 114-138). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998). Pedagogical choices in focus on form. In C. J. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp.197-296). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R., Loewen, S., & Erlam, R. (2006). Implicit and explicit corrective feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 339-368.
- Fowler, W. S., & Coe, N. (1976). *Nelson English language texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. Pearson Educational Ltd.p.99.
- Kim, H. & Mathes, G. (2001). Explicit vs. implicit corrective feedback. *The Korea TESOL Journal*, 4, 1-15.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Lyster, R. & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 37-66
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2005). *Second language research methodology and design*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Nassaji, H. (2009). Effects of recasts and elicitations in dyadic interaction and the role of feedback explicitness. *Language Learning*, 59, 411-452.
- Nassaji, H., & Swain, M. (2000). A Vygotskian perspective on corrective feedback in L2: The effect of random versus negotiated help on the learning of English articles. *Language Awareness*, 9(1), 34-51.
- Nicholas, H., Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2001). Recasts as feedback to language learners. *Language Learning*, 51(4), 719-758.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (2nd ed.). Essex: Longman Group.

- Saito, K., & Lyster, R. (2012). Effects of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on L2 pronunciation development of /ɪ/ by Japanese learners of English. *Language Learning* 62: 595-633
- Sanz, C. (2003). Computer delivered implicit vs. explicit feedback in processing instruction. In B. VanPatten (Ed), *Processing instruction: Theory, research, and commentary* (pp. 241-255). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum
- Shaffer, D. (2008). Error correction: student preferences and research findings. Retrieved March 18, 2014. From [http:// www.linref.com/cpp/casp/7/paper 1285. pdf](http://www.linref.com/cpp/casp/7/paper%201285.pdf).
- Sheen, Y. (2004). Corrective feedback and learner uptake in communicative classrooms across instructional settings. *Language Teaching Research*, 8(3), 263-300.
- Sheen, Y. (2007). The effects of corrective feedback, language aptitude, and learner attitudes on the acquisition of English articles. In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational Interaction in Second Language Acquisition: A Collection of Empirical Studies* (301-322). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Swain, M. (1998). Focus on form through conscious reflection. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 64-81). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

EVALUATION OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) FACILITIES IN DEVELOPING EFL AMONG UNIVERSITY MALE AND FEMALE ENGLISH TEACHERS: THE CASE OF COMPUTER LITERACY

Forouzan Moraseli¹, Bahman Gorjian*², Elkhas Veysi³

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

²Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

³Department of TEFL, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to investigate the male and female teachers' attitudes towards computer assisted language learning (CALL) in developing English language teaching in Iranian context. This study was also to examine the MA and PhD teachers' computer literacy and its effects on using CALL facilities in English classrooms. The participants of this study were 35 university teachers who were selected based on non-random convenient sampling method at the universities of Shahid Chamran and Islamic Azad Universities in Ahvaz, Iran. The research instrument was a three-section questionnaire extracted from Shin and Son (2007) which is in multiple-choice, Likert type and open ended items. The data were collected and analyzed through K-S test of normality and Independent Samples t-test. The results of the study showed that the facilities and equipments are poor and universities need to reassess CALL facilities, in the case of computer literacy and skills, teachers were enough competent and they used CALL facilities if they have access to such equipments. Findings showed that there was lack of technological equipments for CALL implementations which may affect English as foreign language (EFL) teachers' motivation in using CALL technology in their teaching career. The implications of study suggest that teachers should keep in mind that they need to be competent both in computer use and language teaching methodologies. Thus they may find new teaching CALL techniques in teaching EFL tasks in their classrooms.

KEYWORDS: Male, female, teachers' attitudes, Computer assisted language learning (CALL)

INTRODUCTION

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) provides an effective environment in which students can practice in an interactive manner using multi-media contents, either with the supervision of teachers or on their own pace in a self study mode. The advancement of speech and language technologies has opened new perspectives on CALL systems. The influence of these powerful technological tools has pervaded all aspects of the educational, business, and economic sectors of our world (Singhal, 2004). There is no doubt that the computer has established itself firmly in the world of business and communication technology; it has also successes in acquiring a fundamental role in the educational process (Albirini, 2006a,

2006b). This role is becoming more powerful as computers become cheaper, smaller in size, more adaptable and easier to handle. Computers are becoming more appealing to teachers because of their huge capabilities and extensive effectiveness (Dhaif, 2004).

Computer and new technologies help students to obtain individual instruction which are designed to meet their specific needs; therefore, teachers should catch up with the new technologies to enhance students' learning. Teachers' tasks are different from the traditional teaching. Recently, teachers are not only instructors but also assistants to students' learning. Teachers should give the students chance of creative and critical thinking, the role of teachers in this modern environment of CALL has become active, creative, and innovative. Since students see a computer as a trendy and useful tool, which enables them to be close to the world, new technologies and web sites are very motivating, offering a wide range of authentic material and promoting development of new learning strategies. English as a foreign language (EFL) learners need to use CALL for sending e-mails, using chat rooms, article, class – conferencing, etc. inside and outside the classroom. All these allow the learner to participate in the target language culture. Besides these positive effects, negative ones such as technical and financial problems, lack of training, inappropriate material, and the huge quantity of information requiring skills and judgment on CALL should be also mentioned. The crucial problem is how teachers use these resources. According to Moras (2001), the use of computers does not constitute a method, but rather, it is a medium in which variety of methods, approaches and pedagogical philosophies may be implemented. Warschaur and Whittaker (1997), suggest that in order to make effective use of new technologies, teachers must take a step back and focus on some pedagogical requirements. Teachers should have self-defined goals in order to use it successfully in the classroom. Some of the reasons could also be that CALL creates perfect conditions for writing because it provides authentic materials, or raises students' motivation and can help to achieve computer literacy which is essential for future work and success.

This study was conducted based on the advantages of CALL which have mentioned in the literature of this research. The motivation behind this study was to uncover teachers' attitudes using CALL in Khuzestan setting, teachers' computer literacy in teaching English, and teachers' knowledge of computer facilities of universities. The present study also intended to investigate and evaluate CALL facilities at Khuzestan universities and also investigated English teachers' CALL knowledge in these universities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Computer-Assisted Language Learning means search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997). CALL means learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies. According to these definitions, computer and new technologies are considered as an essential medium for language teaching and learning. Television, mobiles, iphones, ipads and other technologies could be considered as very modern inventions and become ordinary and essential in daily life. Similarly, computers become ordinary in the life of millions of people around the world (Mahdi, 2013), because of advances in

computer technology teachers are motivated to reassess the computer and consider it a valuable part of daily foreign language learning. Software programs, compact disk technologies, and computer networks are providing teachers with new methods of incorporating culture, grammar, and real language use in the classroom while students gain access to audio, visual, and textual information about the language and the culture of its speakers.

CALL facilities can affect developing EFL in different aspects, they can create authentic learning environment for the learners and give learners constant access to plenty of materials such as newspapers and magazine articles, offer learners the opportunity to take part in activities in the target language, exchange messages with native speakers and interact with them, as part of cultural and social exchange and the outcome being improvement in different skills (Dina & Ciornei, 2013).

With regard to CALL facilities, a few technical issues should be taken into account. It is obvious that availability of a computer room on a regular class is the first thing that teachers need for CALL to be successful. The experiences of many teachers (e.g. Hashemi & Aziznezhad, 2011) have revealed that three students per computer is the maximum for the teaching experience to be effective. Moreover, navigation on the web implies other specific requirements, such as, access to a reliable network environment, use of modern equipment and browser. This may need many newer sites which are designed through the latest Internet technology in order to anticipate potential problems.

According to Liao and Pope (2008), computer literacy is the knowledge and ability a person has to use computers and technology efficiently. Computer literacy can also refer to the comfort level someone has with using computer programs and other applications that are associated with computers. Another valuable component of computer literacy involves the knowledge of how computers work and operate.

Technological tools such as PCs, laptops, or mobiles are used very effectively and frequently in the classroom for instructional purposes. Drills, tutorials, and computer-based tasks are used in the classrooms in order to promote learning of English skills (Beatty & Nunan, 2004). According to Bangs and Cantos (2004), integrating computer technologies efficiently into language teaching require a combined knowledge of foreign language pedagogy, teaching experience and some computer literacy. Language technologies have been sorting through novel technologies evaluating various instructional potentials, researching current educational uses, and sharing findings with educators to help design instructional technology that enhances language learning. New technologies are interested for preparing teaching materials and activities to be used in teaching skills such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking, communication, reading, and writing (Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2011).

The computer as a tool is used in order to facilitate learning of language. It is powerless and has no inborn wisdom; no initiative and inherent ability to learn or to teach and it is totally the servant of the user, and it is dependent on the teacher in many cases. For example, it is impossible to create educational materials without the help of the teacher. All the teaching, linguistic materials and instructions must be specified by the teacher. It is the teacher decides

what degree of control the computer will have in his/her classes (Chapelle, 2005). Being a relatively new and interdisciplinary field of study, CALL draws on quite an amount of diverse disciplines, theories and fields that can be grouped into five categories: psychology, artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, instructional technology and design, and human-computer interaction studies (Levy, 1997).

CALL instruction was a theory of instruction centered on the teaching process; however, with the noticeable shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, second language acquisition (SLA) was of paramount importance. Unfortunately, SLA's reflections on CALL have been far from transparent as there is 'no generally accepted theory of SLA to embrace with confidence' (Fox, 1993, p. 101) and there are at least forty theories, models, perspectives, metaphors, hypotheses, and theoretical claims in the SLA literature (Beretta, 1991). The Internet has also given way to computer-mediated communication in language teaching and learning. According to the definition provided by Herring (1996), Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) is "communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers" (p.1). CMC may be categorized as either synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous CMC requires all participants to be online at the same time where an active exchange of information takes place as the participants read or listen to messages and respond immediately. Synchronous CMC includes, instant messaging and chatting through MSN or Skype programs, classroom discussions, and MOOs (Multi-user domain Object Oriented). In asynchronous CMC, participants can log onto the computer and respond to message whenever it is convenient for them. Asynchronous CMC includes mailing lists, bulletin boards, blogs, and e-mail.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to find out the answers to the following research questions:

RQ₁. Do teachers' educational levels affect the use of CALL in the teaching EFL processes?

RQ₂. Do university colleges prepare adequate CALL facilities for EFL teachers?

RQ₃. Do male and female teachers use CALL facilities similarly in their EFL classrooms?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study was conducted in both governmental and non-governmental universities of Khuzestan where English is taught by university teachers. The EFL university teachers who participated in filling in the questionnaires were selected based on non-random convenient sampling method from Shahid Chamran, Payam-e-noor, Jahad Daneshgahi as governmental universities in Ahvaz, Iran and Islamic Azad Universities of Ahvaz, Abadan, Masjid Suleiman, and Khuzestan Science and Research Branch in Khuzestan province in Iran as non-governmental universities. They taught EFL at the levels of BA, MA, and PhD courses. The numbers of the participants were 20 males and 15 females. Also 19 of the participants hold MA degree and 16 of them hold PhD degree. The age range of the participants was from 26 to 60 with a mean age of 35. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants of the Study

Gender		Age				Degree			
Male	Female	Male		Female		Male		Female	
20 (57%)	15 (43%)	Under 50	Above 50	Under50	Above 50	MA	PhD	MA	PhD
		19(95%)	1(5%)	14(95%)	1(5%)	10(50%)	10 (50%)	9 (60%)	6(40%)

Instrumentation

In this study a three-section questionnaire was extracted from Shin and Son (2007) and administrated in order to collect data among EFL university teachers. It was used to collect male and female teachers' perceptions and perspectives on the use of CALL as a new tool for better implementation of EFL teaching. The questionnaire consisted of three sections; the first section includes 16 personal and educational items aimed to collect the profile of the participants' background such as their age, gender, degree, teaching experience, using CALL at home and classroom, and reasons for using it, and their level of familiarity with CALL.

The second section includes 15 items of four-point Likert scale including the choices of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4), intended to explore teachers' perceptions and perspectives on the use of CALL, the first five items related to CALL and its characteristics in providing appropriate teaching and learning materials, the second five items relate to students and their attitudes toward CALL and motivation in learning English via CALL, and the third five items relate to the teachers attitude and ability in utilizing CALL as a teaching tool.

The third section of the questionnaire includes three open-ended questions the advantages, disadvantages of CALL, and teachers' comments in using CALL for teaching purposes. These items investigated EFL university teachers' general opinions and comments on the use of the CALL for teaching purposes in the classroom.

The questionnaire was used as an instrument to analyze the features and the numbers in a scale and to differentiate the levels of participants' answers. The items are grouped according to the concepts of responses as a whole. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated through Pearson correlation analysis on the two occurrences of piloting the questionnaire among a group of 8 MA and PhD university teachers in two occasions of a two-week interval. The participants in the pilot test were supposed to have the same level of knowledge of the research sample. The questionnaire was revised and modified after the pilot test and its reliability coefficient was analyzed through Pearson Correlation analysis as ($r=.762$).

Procedure

The questionnaire was extracted from Shin and Son (2007) with some modifications. Their questionnaire was designed to assess the use of the Internet in the classrooms; however, we modified it to be adjusted in the research of the effect of CALL on teaching EFL. Then it was

distributed to EFL teachers of governmental and non-governmental universities in Khuzestan (where English is taught at BA and MA levels) in the first semester of 2013-2014 academic year and they returned it within two weeks.

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of 16 items of personal data and 15 items of four-point Likert rated from 1 to 4 and 3 open-ended questions about teachers' attitudes toward the use of CALL in teaching EFL. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive studies aimed to describe and to interpret the mean, standard deviation (SD) and the variance of each group. Accordingly descriptive statistics was concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views or attitudes that were held; processes that were being felt; or trends that were developing. In sum descriptive statistics in the present research was concerned with how and what existed among the respondents.

The rationale behind the use of descriptive statistics in this study was to obtain complete and detailed perceptions of teachers in regard to computer-assisted language learning. In descriptive statistics, summary statistics are used to summarize a set of observations in order to communicate the largest amount as simply as possible.

In section one items 1 to 4 of the questionnaire asked the participants' gender (i.e., male and female), education degree (i.e., MA and PhD), age (i.e., under 50 and above 50), teaching experiences (i.e., under 15 and above 15) and their access to CALL (Table 1). The items 5, 6, 10, 14, and 16 were yes /no questions on the use of CALL in the classroom. Items 8 and 9 asked the type of CALL and reasons of using it in teaching EFL. Items 7 and 11 asked the time allocating to use CALL for teaching and items 12, 13, and 15 asked the main reasons for searching webs. Items 11, 12, 13 and 15 were in multiple-choice formats.

The second section included 15 four-point Likert scale items. The main theme of the items was the role of CALL used for teaching EFL. The necessity of CALL was also mentioned in these items. The items were scored based on 1 to 4.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data were analyzed through K-S test of normality and Independent Samples t-test analyses to find any different between MA and PhD teachers' perspectives in general and male and female teachers, in particular. The effects of teachers' experiences were also assessed to find any significant difference among the participants.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Females' Attitudes toward CALL

Female group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	15	.00	3.00	.2000	.77460
Disagree	15	.00	7.00	1.9333	2.01660
Agree	15	4.00	10.00	7.1333	1.59762
Strongly Agree	15	3.00	8.00	5.6000	1.59463

Table 2 shows mean and Std. Deviations of each item in female's group. The mean of each item showed that disagree had the least and agree had the most attention, therefore, the results of this part showed that female group had positive view toward the use of CALL but not same to the male group. Results are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test (Items)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Number		15	15	15	15
Normal Parameters	Mean	.2000	1.9333	7.1333	5.6000
	Std. Deviation				
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.77460	2.01660	1.59762	1.59463
	Positive				
	Negative	.535	.278	.200	.175
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z					
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.535	.278	.160	.175
		-.398	-.169	-.200	-.143
		2.073	1.078	.775	.680
		.000	.196	.585	.745

Test distribution is normal.

Table 3 is the K-S test of the female group which is used to determine that whether the test is normal and according to K-S test it was normal; therefore, Independent Samples *t*-test can be used to calculate the data. Results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' attitudes toward CALL (Males vs. Females)

Groups	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Males	15	61.9333	9.09840	2.34920
Females	15	47.0667	3.86313	.99764

Table 4 compares two male and female groups and the result showed that mean of the male group is greater than the females. It means that male group had more positive view toward the use of CALL and since descriptive statistics cannot show the significant difference therefore, Independent Samples *t*-test is used to show the significant difference of the test. It is shown as the following. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Independent Samples *t*-test of Using CALL (Males vs. Females)

<i>t</i> – test for Equality of Means								
							95% Confidence interval of the difference	
	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	5.82	28	.000	14.86	2.55		9.63	20.09
Equal variances not assumed	5.82	18.88	.000	14.86	2.55		9.52	20.21

Table 5 shows that the critical $t=2.04$ is less than the observed $t=5.82$, thus the difference between the groups is significant at ($p<0.05$). Males and females' attitudes toward using CALL are analyzed through the Independent Samples *t*-test to calculate the difference between male and female teachers' perceptions.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Gender and Using CALL

Groups	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	20	50.3500	8.05426	1.80099
Female	15	41.6000	13.31916	3.43899

Table 6 showed that the mean of the male group is higher than the females which means that males more positive view toward the use of CALL. Both groups had positive attitude towards computer integration and technology use but males due to some factors including more effects of computer in their daily routines, since they are using more computerized facilities and Internet cafés in the society.

Table 7: Independent Samples *t*-test of Participants' Gender and Using CALL

<i>t</i> – test for Equality of Means								
							95% Confidence interval of the difference	
	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
Male Equal variances assumed	2.41	33	.021	8.75	3.62		1.37	16.12
Female Equal variances not assumed	2.25	21.53	.035	8.75	3.88		.68	16.81

Table 7 shows that the critical $t=2.04$ is less than the observed $t=2.41$, thus the difference between the groups is significant at ($p<0.05$).

Discussion

This section concerns with discussing the results of the study through referring the research questions were raised earlier. Results of the study showed that using technology is known as one the recent techniques to enhance desirable learning and studies showed that both learners and teachers are interested in technology especially, new ones including CALL. In line with the progress of the society and technology teachers should start to adapt these new instructional tasks in order to motivate their learners for better learning. Since the young generation is so adapted to CALL technology and it is an inseparable part of their lives; therefore, teachers should start using this positive attitude of learners toward using CALL for language teaching. It may be stated that teachers who are interested in CALL agree on the effectiveness of CALL in teaching EFL. With regard to the first question, it should be stated that EFL teachers' educational levels do not affect on the use of CALL in teaching EFL. Both male and female university EFL teachers tend to use CALL during their teaching processes. In other words, both MA and PhD teachers face the problems including lack of CALL equipments, financial problems, slow Internet, etc. This may affect their computer literacy in using appropriate programs in teaching EFL. Results also showed that CALL literacy is common among male teachers rather than female teachers. This may be due to the availability of such facilities in the society which are used by males rather than females. These facilities are internet cafes, game nets, computer games, etc.

According to the results of this study, CALL may improve language learning which may motivate teachers to teach EFL effectively. Computer and new technologies including CALL facilities which are common among young teachers since this new generation could be called digital natives. In most of the previous studies in CALL, several factors were mentioned as the barriers to the implementation of CALL (e.g. Park & Son, 2009) including external factors such as insufficient computer facilities, lack of administrative support, lack of time, etc. Therefore, it seems that these factors are common problems in most contexts like the setting of Iran. However, it is necessary to use CALL in higher educational settings for teaching EFL. Moreover, language learning centers need to be equipped with these facilities for teaching foreign languages. The participants of this study agreed that CALL facilities at their university are poor and they do not access to new technology in the classroom due to the factors which were mentioned in the previous section. It is also shown that one of the main reasons CALL manipulations is that these facilities are rare due to their expenses. Therefore, as it is agreed by the majority of teachers, these facilities are not used due to EFL classrooms which run in traditional methods such as using blackboards and pen and paper methods.

It is also clear that the teachers' attitudes toward CALL are dramatically affecting learners' judgment of using technology. The teachers need to be competent in using computers and enthusiastic about using them. They should have positive attitudes on using computerized equipment if they want their students to work with CALL (Hubbard, 2010). Teachers' attitudes towards computers define their attitude towards CALL. The teachers who consider themselves to be proficient and integrated with computers have positive attitudes towards CALL. The study proved providing computer literacy classes for teachers who have problems with computer and new technologies. Computer literacy in classes may be highly beneficial. When the teachers are confident enough to work with computers, they have positive attitude towards using computers in

order to teach a foreign language and then their students are likely to have higher motivation and eventually higher achievement. CALL has much to offer when it is integrated into the curriculum with a well-organized fashion. Students have positive attitudes towards it. As Gardner (1985) suggests, when students have positive attitudes they will be more motivated and they more likely to perform better and achieve higher levels of acquisition.

Teachers should keep in mind that students in higher education would need to be proficient both in computers and language. They need to research, write reports, present them, and communicate in English via computers. Therefore, it is not only the question of technology for learning English, but also the urge to assist them in developing CALL.

CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to investigate the teachers' attitudes toward using CALL in developing EFL among MA and PhD and also male and female teachers. The participants of this study were two male and female groups with respectively 20 and 15 EFL university teachers. A questionnaire on the use of CALL was given to the participants; the questionnaire consisted of three parts which asked the participants' views toward using the CALL. The results of the study showed that the facilities and equipments at the universities are so poor and they need to reassess their CALL facilities (Zamani, 2010). In the case of computer literacy and skills, teachers were enough competent and they almost used computer and new technologies to search for teaching materials. Since one of the research questions was about the role of gender in CALL use, the findings of the study showed that male teachers were more interested in computer use than the females and younger teachers were more integrated in technology use than the traditional ones. Although the survey showed positive views on the use of CALL in teaching EFL, the integration of CALL into classroom was very limited and this problem was due to large numbers of students in the classrooms, limited time to finish the textbooks, lack of technical and pedagogical training of using CALL, lack of computer facilities, and slow Internet. According to Machtmes (2005), the use of CALL technology in the classroom needs substantial investments of time, financial support, equipment, personal commitment and courage in order to explore teaching innovation in the EFL classrooms.

There are some implications for language teachers, learners, and college administrators. It is highly recommended these implications as new ideas for further studies about CALL. The findings of the study showed that EFL teachers have positive view toward technology use and its effect on learners' language proficiency and motivation in language learning (Cooper & Self, 1990). According to the participants' view, using the CALL and technology help to access to the new and up to date materials which lead to better education.

The study also revealed those students' language skills, especially listening, speaking, and writing will be improved through using technology. The students are also interested in using CALL when teachers can use these facilities in the classroom. Thus providing students with web sites or CALL approaches is believed to be highly constructive (Inan & Lowther, 2010). The results of this study implied that male teachers are more proficient in using CALL tasks.

Technology will not weaken the teachers' role, since it is revealed that there will be necessary to offer technology and computer literacy courses to both teachers. University colleges are advised to prepare and develop CALL facilities for better language learning and teaching. Most teachers in this study believed that CALL approaches can be an effective tool for teaching a foreign or second language because they can find authentic, up to date, and various materials, as students are motivated in learning with computers. However, there seems to be some obstacles in using CALL and technology in EFL classrooms including limited computer facilities, limited technical support, slow Internet, and even no access to Internet in classes, etc (Alkahtani, 2007). Therefore, universities need to pay more attention to this issue of language learning and teaching.

REFERENCES

- Albirini, A. (2006a). Teachers' attitudes toward information and communication technologies: The case of Syrian teachers. *Computers & Education*, 47(4), 373-398.
- Albirini, A. (2006b). Cultural perceptions: The missing element in the implementation of ICT in Developing countries. *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology (IJEDICT)*, 2(1), 49-65.
- Alkahtani, S. (2007). CALL integration: A proposal for in-service CALL training program for EFL faculty at Saudi Arabian Universities.
- Beatty, K., & Nunan, D. (2004). Computer-mediated collaborative learning. *System* 32(2), 165-183.
- Beretta, A. (1991). Theory construction in SLA: Complementarity and opposition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13 (4), 493-511.
- Chapelle, C. A. (2005). Interactionist SLA theory in CALL research. In J. Egbert and G. Petrie, (Eds.), *Research perspectives on CALL*, (pp. 53-64). Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cooper, M., & Self, C. (1990). Computer conferences and learning: Authority, Resistance, Internally Persuasive Resources. *College English*, 52 (8) 845-873.
- Dhaif, H. (2004). Computer assisted language learning: A client's view. *Computer Journal Assisted Language Instruction Consortium*, 7(2), 467-469.
- Dina, A.T., & Ciornei, S. I. (2013). The advantages and disadvantages of computer assisted language learning and teaching for foreign languages. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 76, 248-252.
- Fox, J. (1993). EC Research in Language Learning and IT-Some Experiences with LINGUA, *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 9, 100-106.
- Hashemi, M., & Aziznezhad, M. (2011). Computer assisted language learning Freedom or Submission to Machines? *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 28, 832-835.
- Herring, S. (Ed.) (1996) *Computer-mediated communication: Linguistic, social, and cross-cultural perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin's.
- Hubbard, P. (2010). An Invitation to CALL foundations of computer-assisted language learning. Retrieved May 2014 from <http://www.stanford.edu/~efs/callcourse2>
- Inan, F.A., & Lowther, D. L. (2010). Factors affecting technology integration in K-12 classrooms: a path model. *Education Tech Research Dev*, 58(2), 37-154.
- Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-assisted language learning: Context and conceptualization*. Oxford

: Oxford University Press.

- Liao, L., & Pope, J.W. (2008). Computer Literacy for Everyone. *Journal of Computing Sciences in Colleges*, 23(6), 231-238.
- Machtmes, K. (2005). An ethnographic case study of beliefs, context factors, and practices of teachers integrating technology. *The Qualitative Report*, 10, 771-794.
- Mahdi, H.S. (2013). Issues of computer assisted language learning normalization in EFL Contexts. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 5(1), 191-203.
- Moras, S. (2001). Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and the internet. *Karen's Linguistic Issues*, 25-30.
- Rahimi, M., & Yadollahi, S. (2011). Success in learning English as a foreign language as a predictor of computer anxiety. *Procedia Computer Science*, 3, 175-182.
- Shin, H.J., & Son, J. B. (2007). EFL teachers' perceptions and perspectives on internet-assisted language teaching. *CALL-EJ Online*, 8(2), 1-13.
- Singhal, M. (2004). The internet and foreign language education: benefits and challenges, *teaching English as a Second Language Journal*, 53 (3), 241-267.
- Warschauer, M., & Whittaker, P.F. (1997). The internet for English teaching: Guidelines for teachers, *TESL Reporter*, 30(1) 27-33.
- Zamani, B. E. (2010). Successful implementation factors for using computer in Iranian schools during one decade (1995-2005). *Computers & Education*, 54(1), 59-68.

SEMANTIC VERSUS THEMATIC LEXICAL TEACHING METHODS AND VOCABULARY ACQUISITION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Shima Rostam Shirazi

*Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
E-Mail: shirazi.shima@yahoo.com*

Mohammad Reza Talebinezhad

*Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza, Iran
E-Mail: rtalebinezhad@yahoo.com*

Sajad Shafiee (Corresponding author)

*Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran
Email: shafiee_sajad@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of three various types of clustering (i.e., semantic, thematic, and haphazard clustering) in the vocabulary acquisition and recall of English as a foreign language (EFL) students as well as the putative role of gender in this regard. To achieve these aims, 50 Iranian native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females, whose linguistic homogeneity had been confirmed through the Oxford Placement Test were selected as the participants of this study. To make sure that the participants had no prior knowledge of the targeted words, the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993) was also administrated. Three separate lists of vocabulary based on their clustering type were then prepared and employed each of which included eight new English words along with their Persian equivalents. These lists were given to the participants in three steps separately. In each step, the participants were required to read the new words along with their Persian equivalents for a specific amount of time and then be immediately tested on them. Each correctly guessed answer received one point. The obtained data were then subjected to an analysis of variance and an independent samples t-test to see if the observed differences were meaningful. A Post hoc Scheffe test was later run to shed more light on these differences. The results demonstrated a statistically significant difference in the immediate posttest in favor of thematic clustering over haphazard and semantic clustering. That is, the performance of participants (both males and females) was improved when vocabulary was presented in thematic cluster. The present study could have implications for language teachers, materials developers, and educators in general: thematic clustering of lexical items ought to be prioritized over semantic or haphazard clustering of the vocabulary items chosen to be taught to L2 learners.

KEYWORDS: Thematic clustering, Semantic clustering, Haphazard clustering, Vocabulary acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Learning vocabulary, as the most unmanageable component in the process of language learning and particularly in the process of second language learning, is really a demanding task which according to Montrul (2001) “involves much more than learning sound-meaning pairings; it also involves learning how lexical information is morphologically expressed and syntactically constrained” (p. 145). Therefore, language learners should experience various tasks such as extensive reading as well as explicit instruction (Schmitt, 2008) in order to enhance their vocabulary knowledge. Through explicit instruction, teachers provide students with lists of words or pictures that are most related to particular situations or topics. Introducing words in groups is among the strategies or techniques used by teachers for direct vocabulary instruction and it seems to enhance vocabulary learning. In this method, which is called clustering, words are grouped in various ways. Words within a cluster share a common super-ordinate concept and can be grouped or related to each other semantically or thematically.

Most English textbooks in use in the context of Iran introduce lexical items in semantic clusters and curriculum writers attempt to select, for each lesson, a set of semantically clustered words that fit specific situations and tasks or that express different notions. It seems that curriculum writers along with EFL program designers assume that this way of organizing and presenting new vocabulary items will benefit learners as it will help them to build semantic networks and relationships and consequently will facilitate and accelerate learning including both acquisition and recall. Whether words can be learned better, stored deeper, and remembered easier when presented semantically, thematically, or even unrelated is the concern of many researchers and remain still controversial.

The present study was an attempt to compare the effects of two different methods of teaching vocabulary items including semantically-related or thematically-related vocabulary presentation on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners to find out which one facilitates vocabulary learning more. Additionally, this study investigated to what extent short-term memory and long-term memory can reserve the words of different sets. Since gender appears to have an effect on the retention and recall of the learned words, the study also aimed to investigate its role in this regard, that is, to see whether these ways of presenting lexical items have a statistically significant relationship with gender's retention of vocabulary items.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Vocabulary learning has a key role in second language acquisition (SLA). It is quite necessary for second language (SL) learners to acquire at least hundreds of words in order to be able to communicate in the target language at the most basic level. Second language learners should be able to communicate more effectively and comprehend a broader range of input from the target language through learning a good range of new vocabulary. Bogaards (2001) reminds that for many learners, language learning is the same as knowing a large number of words by heart. So it should not be denied that words constitute a major part of a language. With this in mind, it is necessary to help learners to effectively store and retrieve words in the target language (Sokmen, 1997), and this compels the use of effective pedagogical methods in teaching vocabulary.

Semantic clustering as a vocabulary learning strategy

Semantic field theory is based on the assumption that vocabulary is cognitively organized by interrelationships and networks between words. In a sense that the mind classifies vocabulary by making connections in meaning; these connections in meaning are called semantic fields (Channell, 1981). He interprets this to mean that words that are close in meaning are literally located closer to each other in the mental lexicon. Based on this theory since vocabulary is organized in the mind into groups of words that are linked in meaning, it should be presented to students in groups of semantically related words to facilitate learning (Channell, 1981). Jullian's (2000) article supports this notion as an effective method of classroom presentation for second learners. Semantic categories are linguistically based and thematic clusters are cognitively based. Although these two types of clusters will not be mutually exclusive, the slight difference between them is still apparent. Variable word class can be considered as one other defining characteristic of a thematic cluster.

Tinkham (1994) claims that authors and planners of ESL programs who are following a more learner-centered approach select vocabulary items based on the communicative needs of the learners, and then organize their programs into units to reflect situations in which students have to use English. In this approach, the vocabulary items needed to express notions, functions and to fit tasks tend to be presented as they are in the structure-centered approach that is they are grouped into semantic clusters.

Channell (1981) suggests using semantic field theory (Lehrer, 1974) and componential analysis (Nida, 1975) in order to facilitate vocabulary acquisition. Semantic field theory describes the vocabulary of language as existing in interrelating networks and relationships that is semantic fields as opposed to long lists of random words. She suggests that since the mind seems to categorize vocabulary based on semantic similarity, categorizing vocabulary into semantic fields will help the learner acquire it more easily. While semantic clusters fall into categories like nouns and verbs, thematic clusters contain a mixture of verbs, adjectives, adverbs and nouns.

Thematic clustering as a vocabulary learning strategy

Based on psychological union, thematic clustering is intended to make an association between a set of related words and a shared thematic concept. Both the interference theory and the distinctiveness hypothesis fail to predict the impact of thematic clustering. Despite the fact that researchers are interested in similar words in a number of studies in relation to interference, there are some conflicting issues. For example, a cluster of words like frog, green, swim, and slipper has not been their interest when they probe for evidence for interference. On the other hand, clusters of words like car, raceway, team, champion, and drive which are not similar have not attracted the researchers, favoring the distinctiveness hypothesis.

Al-Jabri (2005) expressed that "lexical semanticists, when investigating the way speakers organize words in their mental lexicons, propose that speakers subconsciously organize words in frames or schemas with reference to the speaker's background knowledge rather than in semantic fields" (p.48). On the basis of associative strength, clustering of this kind are cognitively rather than linguistically derived, and therefore would seem fit most easily into learning centered

second language acquisition programs which are most interested in learning process than with linguistic analysis. Within frame semantics as labeled by Fillmore (1985), “speakers can be said to know the meaning of the word only by first understanding the background frames that motivate the concept that the word encodes. Within such an approach, words or word senses are not related to each other directly, word to word, but only by way of their links to common background frames and indications of the manner in which their meanings highlight particular elements of such frames” (cited in Fillmore & Atkins, 1992, p. 77).

According to Brewer and Nakamura (1984), schema theory explains how old information possessed by the learner influences the learning of new information. It aims to explain the way different types of knowledge are learned and people’s interpretation of the world from a psychological. This theory is among the most intellectually exciting areas in cognitive psychology. Brewer and Nakamura (1984) remark that the idea that schemas are unconscious was rejected by psychologists and philosophers who claim that psychology data are restricted only to conscious rather than unconscious phenomena. Behaviorists also rejected the same idea. They claim that the data of psychology are restricted to observations of overt behaviors. But after much discussion, the idea has now been universally accepted.

Generally speaking, schemas help us by organizing our knowledge, assisting with recall, and guiding our behavior. They help us make sense of current experiences and interpret situations. Much research has been done studying the schema theory to show that information which is schema-related is recalled better than schema-unrelated information.

Since there are still contradicting conclusions with regards to the best type of clustering, the current study was set up as an attempt to uncover the superiority of three different clustering techniques (i.e. semantic, thematic, and haphazard), and to examine the role of gender in this regard.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study, hence, was set up to answer the following research questions:

1. Does semantic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does thematic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
3. Is there any difference between semantic and thematic clustering of English vocabulary in their effectiveness on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?
4. Is there any difference between males and females with respect to the type of vocabulary clustering?

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted as an experimental and quantitative hypothesis testing study to investigate the effectiveness of thematic versus semantic clustering of L2 vocabulary on lexical

acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners. Additionally, this study investigated to what extent males and females behaved differently regarding understanding and retrieving of semantically-oriented or thematically-oriented vocabulary items. That is, it compared the performance of male and female language learners in terms of these different ways of clustering of words.

Participants

The participants of this experiment were 50 native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females, aged 18 to 30. Based on the central limit theorem (CLT), contemplating this number of participants led into obtaining normal distribution; therefore, it was possible to conduct different types of parametric tests with 25 participants in each group. The participants were selected from among the students who were studying English as a foreign language at Jahad Daneshgahi English Language Center based on the results of the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The OPT (2007) was employed as a homogenizing tool for the sake of the linguistic homogeneity of the participants.

Materials and instrumentation

Since the aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of three types of vocabulary clustering techniques in vocabulary acquisition and recall of EFL learners, three lists of words as the materials of the study were prepared each of which represented a particular clustering. The selected words for the first list were semantically related and included eight coordinate English words under the headword 'occupations' and shared a common semantic relationship. Given the nature of semantic classes, the words in the semantic set shared the same word class, with all eight terms being noun. They were also accompanied by the Persian equivalents.

The second list contained eight semantically unrelated words in English accompanied by the Persian equivalents. The word class of these words was not held constant. The third list was arranged based on eight English words related thematically and accompanied by their Persian equivalents. These words were categorized under the theme of marriage-related terms and included words of various syntactic classes.

The study also adopted three instruments for data collection. The first one was the Oxford Placement Test (2007) to check the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their language proficiency. The widely used placement test, the reliability of which has been reported in a colossal number of studies, contained 50 items in multiple choice formats assessing students' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. It also included an optimal writing task estimating students' ability regarding productive skills. The whole test was designed to be administered in 65 minutes. The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) developed by Paribakht and Wesche (1993) as the second instrument in this study was administrated as the pretest to make sure that the participants had no prior knowledge of the targeted words. The internal consistency measure of the reliability of the test was calculated to be .84. Three short gap filling exercises as the last instrument were also taken from Intermediate Vocabulary by Thomas (1986) and employed as the posttest in this study.

Procedure

To achieve the aims of the study, some steps were taken. To have a homogeneous group, the OPT was firstly administrated at Jahad Daneshgahi English Language Center and 50 native speakers of Persian, including 25 males and 25 females whose linguistic homogeneity was confirmed on the basis of the test result, were selected from among the intermediate students who were studying English as a foreign Language there. Following the guidelines in the test booklet, those learners whose score was above 47 were confirmed as intermediate learners and were selected for the purpose of the study.

The second step was administrating the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale Test (VKS) as a subsidiary assessment tool. This test, containing eighty vocabulary words, was employed as the pretest and presented to the participants to find out which vocabulary items the learners did not know. The scores obtained from this test were not included in the study since they did not affect its process. Each participant was then given six pages having the list of semantically-related, thematically-related, and haphazard English words accompanied by their Persian equivalents and the short gap filling exercises. This step was undertaken in two phases including studying phase and recall phase. In the first phase, the participants were required to study the first page consisting of the list of eight semantically-related English words accompanied by their Persian equivalents for a total of four minutes, that is, 30 seconds per item. They were advised to study carefully using every possible strategy to learn new lexical items in the list. The participants were also informed that they would be having an immediate recall test on the same vocabulary items. After four minutes, the students had to stop studying and then, the immediate recall phase began in which each participant was required to turn to the following page that included a short gap filling exercise.

In this stage, the participants were required to fill in the gaps of the short reading by applying the appropriate words from the previous page they had studied some minutes ago. In order to eliminate any chance of memorizing the list as a whole rather than learning them, the participants were informed that the required words in the short reading had been arranged in a different sequence. Exactly the same was done for thematic and haphazard English clusters. The researchers afterwards identified, scored, and calculated all the answers given by the students to the short gap filling exercises in a sense that each correct answer of a lexical item was considered as one point. Since there were eight lexical items in each type of clustering list, the total score in every list was 8 points. The data gathered through this procedure were later subjected to the statistical procedure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the first research question

The first addressed research question in this study was:

1. Does semantic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

To find an acceptable answer for this question, the researcher identified, calculated, and scored all the correct answers given by the students in the short gap filling exercises prepared for estimating the participants' knowledge of semantically related words. These exercises were

selected from the Intermediate Vocabulary by Thomas (1986). Each given correct answer was considered as one point so the total score in each list was 8.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Semantically-Clustered Words

N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Mean		3.10
Std. Error of Mean		.132
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		.931
Variance		.867
Range		3
Minimum		2
Maximum		5

As it is shown in the above table, the mean of the scores for the short gap filling exercises on semantically clustered words was 3.10. That is, most of the participants provided just less than half of the required words. The participants guessed at maximum 5 words correctly and at minimum 2 words. This indicated that they were not able to work as successfully as expected in this part. The following table provides some extra information in this regard.

Table 2: Frequency Table: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Semantically-Clustered Words

		Valid		Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent
Valid	2	14	28.0	28.0
	3	22	44.0	72.0
	4	9	18.0	90.0
	5	5	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

According to the above table, out of 50, 14 participants had two correct answers, 22 participants had three correct answers, nine participants had four correct answers, and five participants had five correct answers.

Results of the second research question

The second research question that was posed in the study was:

2. Does thematic clustering of vocabulary items affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

To obtain an answer to this question, the frequency of correct answers in the short gap filling exercises was calculated for each student separately. For every correct answer that the students provided, one point was given to them. The points were then added and the final score was given. The average of all scores was thereafter determined. The required words were thematically oriented.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: *The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Thematically-Clustered Words*

N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Mean		4.90
Std. Error of Mean		.186
Mode		4 ^a
Std. Deviation		1.313
Variance		1.724
Range		5
Minimum		3
Maximum		8

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

Based on the above table, the participants approximately provided 5 correct answers for the 8 existing blanks in the exercises organized thematically. To be specific, the mean of all provided correct answers was equal to 4.90 which was above the mean score obtained in the semantically related set of words. Here, the maximum and the minimum number of given correct answers were 8 and 3 respectively, that is, there were some exercises which were filled in by the students completely correct. It seems that the students acquired and recalled more words when the lexical items were presented to them in thematic cluster and therefore worked more successfully.

Table 4: Frequency Table: *The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Thematically-Clustered Words*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	8	16.0	16.0	16.0
	4	14	28.0	28.0	44.0
	5	9	18.0	18.0	62.0
	6	14	28.0	28.0	90.0
	7	4	8.0	8.0	98.0
	8	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total		50	100.0	100.0	

The next tables pertain to what the participants did in the haphazard list of words.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics: The Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Unrelated-Clustered Words

N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Mean		3.12
Std. Error of Mean		.142
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		1.003
Variance		1.006
Range		4
Minimum		1
Maximum		5

Regarding the unrelated set of lexical items, as shown above, the participants at most filled in four intended blanks and at least one blank correctly. The mean score was 3.12 which was slightly above that in the semantically related group and still below that in the thematically related group.

Table 6: Frequency Table: the Immediate Posttest Results Relating to the Unrelated-Clustered Words

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	4.0	4.0	4.0
	2	11	22.0	22.0	26.0
	3	21	42.0	42.0	68.0
	4	11	22.0	22.0	90.0
	5	5	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Regarding the above table which has a detailed look on the distribution of unrelated words guesses by the participants correctly, one correct answer goes to two students and five correct answers go to five answers. The same number of students ($n = 11$) recalled 2 and 4 answers respectively and the rest ($n = 21$) remembered three correct answers.

Results of the third research question

The next research question that the researchers addressed in this study was:

3. Is there any difference between semantic and thematic clustering of English vocabulary in their effectiveness on lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners?

For this question, the means of scores that were achieved by the participants in the three groups of semantic, thematic, and haphazard texts were compared to see if there was any statistically significant difference among them.

Table 7: One-Sample Statistics: The Means in the Three Types of Cluster

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Semantic	50	3.10	.931	.132	2.83	3.41	1	5
Thematic	50	4.90	1.313	.186	4.53	5.27	3	8
Unrelated	50	3.12	1.003	.142	2.83	3.41	1	5
Total	150	3.71	1.392	.114	3.49	3.94	1	8

After comparing the means, it was found that the participants had different reactions towards the three types of clustering of vocabulary. According to the table, the largest deviation and mean refers to the time when the participants were examined on the thematically oriented words. That is, the participants had the best achievement and recalled more words when lexical items were thematically organized and presented. When examined semantically, the participants had the lowest recall and achievement. That is, the semantically related group seemed to be the least effective technique.

The variation was clear among the participants when they were tested on the effect of the three types of clustering and this could be assessed for more accurate results by another inferential test. That is, in order to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference among the three groups or to explore the impact of type of clustering on the vocabulary acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run based on which the existing differences among the three groups were revealed to be statistically significant.

Table 8: ANOVA: Results of the Immediate Posttest

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	105.613	2	52.807	42.405	.000
Within Groups	183.060	147	1.245		
Total	288.673	149			

To be specific, there was a statistically main effect for the clustering types (semantic, thematic, or unrelated) that had been used for estimating the acquisition and recall of new lexical items. In other words, the observed differences were meaningful at 0.05 level of significance and one can be 95% sure that these differences were not obtained accidentally. In order to test which type of clustering had the most important effect on the acquisition and recall scores, post-hoc comparisons were employed to identify the detailed difference among the three types. The following table revealed the main location causing this effect.

Table 9: Multiple Comparisons: Dependent Variable: Results of the Immediate Posttests

		Mean Difference (I-J)		Std. Error	Sig.
(I) groups	(J) groups				
Turkey HSD	semantic	thematic	-1.800*	.219	.000
		unrelated	-.020	.219	.995
	thematic	semantic	1.800*	.219	.000
		unrelated	1.780*	.219	.000
	unrelated	semantic	.020	.219	.995
		thematic	-1.780*	.219	.000

The findings of the post-hoc test indicated, in multiple paired comparisons, that the differences were at the highest level when comparing the participants' scores in the thematic and the semantic lists and in the thematic and the haphazard lists. In other words, there was a statistically significant difference between the gained scores in the thematic and the semantic lists as well as in the thematic and the haphazard lists. This led to the conclusion that the thematic clustering was the most effective strategy for vocabulary presentation to the EFL learners.

Results of the fourth research question

The last investigated research question in this study was:

4. Is there any difference between males and females with respect to the type of vocabulary clustering?

To detect the relationship between the gender and the type of vocabulary clustering, the performance of both males and females in the exercises examining the learners' knowledge of words that had been presented to them in semantic, thematic, and haphazard clusters were separately considered.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics: Female Performance on Tests

		Semantic	Thematic	Unrelated words
N	Valid	25	25	25
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3.32	5.56	3.08
Std. Error of Mean		.206	.201	.223
Median		3.00	6.00	3.00
Mode		3	6	3
Std. Deviation		1.030	1.003	1.115
Variance		1.060	1.007	1.243
Minimum		2	4	1
Maximum		5	7	5

a. Gender = female

As shown in the above table, the females ($n = 25$) acquired and recalled the most when words had been presented to them in thematic cluster. The score means of females in semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of lexical items were 3.32, 5.56, and 3.08 respectively. The most number of words were acquired and recalled when presented thematically, less when presented semantically, and the least when presented in a haphazard manner. The females at least remembered one word (in unrelated set of words) and at most 7 words (in thematic set of lexical items). None of them could fill in all the blanks correctly.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics: Male Performance on Tests

		Semantic	Thematic	Unrelated words
N	Valid	25	25	25
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.88	4.24	3.16
Std. Error of Mean		.156	.254	.180
Median		3.00	4.00	3.00
Mode		3	4	3
Std. Deviation		.781	1.268	.898
Variance		.610	1.607	.807
Minimum		2	3	2
Maximum		4	8	5

a. Gender = male

Considering males, they had the best performance in the exercises organized thematically and the worst in the exercises organized semantically. Both males and females worked successfully in the thematically-oriented set of lexical items. They at least guessed and remembered two correct answers and there was a case in which males even completed the text completely correctly. The score means obtained for the semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of words were 2.88, 4.24, and 3.16 respectively. The results revealed that males and females performed quite reverse in the exercises including the semantic and haphazard sets of lexical items. The females' knowledge of the words organized semantically was more than the males' and on the other hand, the males' knowledge of the words organized haphazardly was more than the males'. After investigating the males' and females' performance separately, their score means from the three different groups of exercises needed to be compared to detect whether the males differ from the females in this regard and whether this difference (if any) was statistically significant.

Table 12: Group Statistics: Males' and Females' Mean Scores

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Semantic	female	25	3.32	1.030	.206
	male	25	2.88	.781	.156
Thematic	female	25	5.56	1.003	.201
	male	25	4.24	1.268	.254
Unrelated words	Female	25	3.08	1.115	.223
	Male	25	3.16	.898	.180

Considering semantic clustering of vocabulary, the data included in the table indicated that the female participants acquired and recalled more words than the male participants and their mean scores therefore differed from each other. In terms of another type of vocabulary clustering, that is, thematic clustering, there was again difference in the performance of both genders. In this case, females worked more successfully and their final achieved points were therefore higher than those of males. The last group of clustering relates to the haphazard lexical items and the findings in this case were quite reverse and indicated that the achieved scores by the females were lower than the males. The mean scores of males and females were here 3.16 and 3.08 respectively. To see the meaningfulness of these differences, an independent t-test was conducted.

Table 13: Independent Sample Test: Males' and Females' Mean Scores

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the Difference
							Lower	Upper
Semantic	Equal variances assumed	1.702	48	.095	.440	.258	-.080	.960
Thematic		4.083	48	.000	1.320	.323	.670	1.970
Unrelated		-.279	48	.781	-.080	.286	-.656	.496

As the above table shows, although there was a difference between males and females in terms of their mean scores from both the exercises with required semantically-oriented words and unrelated words, this difference did not reach statistical significance. In other words, the females and males did approximately have the same memory of words thought to them beforehand. Considering thematically-oriented words, this difference did however reach statistical significance.

In the remaining part of the current section, the obtained results are discussed and compared with the results of previous studies. The results obtained for the first research question revealed that the means of the semantically related words was 3.10. To be specific most of the participants provided just less than half of the required words. Consequently, the first hypothesis which was semantic clustering of vocabulary items does not affect lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners was supported in this study.

Based on the result achieved for the second research question concerning with thematically related words, the mean was equal to 4.90, which was above the mean score obtained in the semantically related set of words. Besides, there were also some exercises which were filled in by the students completely correct. Therefore, the results showed thematic clustering of vocabulary items affected lexical acquisition and recall of Iranian EFL learners. Considering the result achieved in the analysis of haphazard set of lexical items, the mean score was 3.12, which was slightly above that in the semantically related group and still below that in the thematically related

group. To be more specific, the participants at most filled in four intended blanks and at least one blank correctly.

The results obtained from the third research question indicated that among the means of scores achieved by the participants in the three groups of semantic, thematic, and haphazard texts, the largest deviation and mean refer to the time when the participants were examined on the thematically oriented words, that is, the participants had the best achievement and recalled more words when lexical items were thematically organized and presented. When examined semantically, the participants had the lowest recall and achievement in a sense that the semantically related group seemed to be the least effective. Based on a one-way ANOVA, the observed differences among the three groups were meaningful at 0.05 level of significance and one can be 95% sure that these differences were not obtained accidentally. The results of this study generally proved that those exposed to thematically related sets of words outperformed those exposed to semantically related words which is in line with Tinkham's (1993, 1997) point of view when he claimed that providing learners' vocabulary with thematic clusters was a more effective method of instruction than semantically clustered sets. Learners can learn words that belong to the particular topic or theme better than those vocabularies that are semantically clustered.

The findings of this research determined that learning new words in semantic clusters required more time to be learned completely and it also needed more learning trials which is in total agreement with many researchers (Finkbeiner & Nicol, 2003; Higa, 1963; Laufer, 1989; Nation, 2000; Tinkham, 1993, 1997; Waring, 1997) who argue that learning similar words which share numerous common elements and a super-ordinate concept are difficult because these words will interfere with each other and have a negative impact on their retention.

There are different reasons why words presented in unrelated clusters were retained more efficiently than those presented in semantically related sets. According to Aitchison (1996), McCarthy (1990), and Meara (1983), although vocabulary items appear to be organized in the mental lexicon around semantic bonds, learning of new vocabulary items might pursue a different path of mental processing. McLaughlin (1990) also claims that semantic fields are the final outcomes of the learning process while they represent aspects and features of what is already known. Additionally, the findings of the study confirm the empirical studies by Iranian researchers such as Marashi and Azarmi (2012) who showed that presenting words in semantically unrelated clusters and in an intentional learning method were more effective for students' vocabulary achievement compared to the other methods and Mirjalili et al. (2012) who indicated that the students generally recalled the highest number of words from the unrelated clusters.

Moreover, the results of the present study are in line with two psychological theories including theory of interference and the distinctive hypothesis discussed earlier (Finkbeiner & Nicol, 2003; Tinkham, 1993, 1997; Waring, 1997). It can be argued that presenting L2 learners with vocabulary items grouped in semantic clusters actually impedes vocabulary learning.

The most surprising result gained from the data in this study showed that gender can be considered as an effective variable in this respect as there was difference between two groups of males and females in the retention and recall of vocabulary items. The score means of females in semantic, thematic, and haphazard sets of lexical items were 3.32, 5.56, and 3.08 and of males were 2.88, 4.24, and 3.16 respectively, that is, they both had the best performance on the thematically-clustered words tests.

Considering semantic and unrelated clustering of vocabulary, although there was a difference between males and females in terms of their score means, this difference did not reach statistical significance. In terms of thematic clustering of vocabulary, the results revealed that there was significant difference between the males' and females' scores. In the end, the researchers came to this conclusion that in the process of different types of vocabulary learning clustering, female students excelled male students and the last hypothesis which stated that there was a statistically significant relationship between gender and the type of vocabulary clustering was consequently supported in this study. In theory, this finding of present study is in line with that of Zhuanglin (1989) and of Larsen-Freeman (2000) and in practice, with conclusions by some researchers such as Wu Yi'an, Liu Runqing, (1996) who believed that female students obviously acted better than male students in terms of language learning.

CONCLUSION

Since any language emerges first as words, using various effectual strategies and techniques for better and more rapid acquisition and recall of new lexical items are then of crucial importance. Presenting vocabulary in groups and clusters has been proved to be among the factors or strategies that lead to better acquisition of words.

The results and the statistical analysis of the data in the immediate posttests of this study indicated that there were statistically significant differences among the three types of vocabulary clustering techniques and this led to the assumption that vocabulary clustering in presentation of new words had an effect on vocabulary acquisition and immediate recall of foreign language learners of English. To be specific, the findings revealed that all the three vocabulary instruction techniques which were used in this study were effective in the learners' vocabulary acquisition and recall, but since thematic clustering for presenting new words to the learners of foreign/second language had the most positive effect compared to semantic clustering and haphazard grouping of the words, it can be concluded that it was the most effective method for Persian-speaking EFL learners' (both males and females) vocabulary knowledge. Semantic clustering of the lexical items was shown to be on the other hand the least effective.

As the classroom has been the most important context, or sometimes the only one, for foreign language learners to acquire a new language where a large portion of input is expected to be available, providing enough comprehensible input providing learners with thematically clustered words can be of great importance. Reading and listening to appropriate texts can serve as the supportive techniques in this regard and can give great insight to the language learners.

What could perhaps impose limitations on the results obtained in this study include the limited number of words in each word list (i.e. eight words), the limited number of participants in each group, and the idiosyncratic learning styles of the learners which could not be under the control of the researchers. Yet, the results might be applied (though by caution) in many language learning settings in Iran.

REFERENCES

- Aitchison, J. (1996). Taming the wilderness: Words in the mental lexicon. In G.M. Anderman & M.A. Rogers (Eds.), *Words, words, words: The translator and the language learner* (pp. 15-26). Great Britain: Multilingual Matters.
- Al-Jabri, S.S. (2005). *The effects of semantic and thematic clustering on learning English vocabulary by Saudi students*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
- Bogaards, P. (2001). Lexical units and the learning of foreign language vocabulary. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 23, 321-343.
- Brewer, W. F., & Nakamura, G. V. (1984). The nature and functions of schemas. In R. S. Wyer & T. K. Srull (Eds.), *Handbook of social cognition* (vol. 1) (p 119-160). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Channell, J. (1981). Applying semantic theory to vocabulary teaching. *ELT Journal*, 35(2), 115-22.
- Fillmore, C. J. (1985). Semantic fields and semantic frames. *Quaderni di Semantica*, 6(2), 222-254.
- Fillmore, C. J., & Atkins, B. T. (1992). Toward a frame-based lexicon: The semantics of RISK and its neighbors. In A. Lehrer & E. F. Kittay (Eds.), *Frames, Fields, and Contrasts* (pp. 75-102). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Finkbeiner, M., & Nicol, J. (2003). Semantic category effects in second language word learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 24(03), 369-383.
- Higa, M. (1963). Interference effects of intralist word relationships in verbal learning. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 2(2), 170-175.
- Jullian, P. (2000). Creating word-meaning awareness. *ELT Journal*, 54(1), 37-46.
- Klein, S. (2007). *Achieving gender equity in technical education through education*. New York: Sage Publications.
- Laufer, B. (1989). A factor of difficulty in vocabulary learning: Deceptive transparency. *AILA Review*, 6, 10-20.
- Lehrer, A. (1974). *Semantic fields and lexical structure*. Amsterdam: North Holland.
- Marashi, H., & Azarmi, A. (2012.) The comparative effect of presenting words in semantically related and unrelated sets in intentional and incidental learning contexts on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. *Journal of Second Language Teaching and Research*, 1 (2), 71-89
- McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- McLaughlin, B. (1990). Restructuring. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, pp.113-128.
- Meara, P. (1983). *Vocabulary in a second language: Volume 1*. London: CILT.

- Mirjalili, F., Jabbari, A. A., & Rezaei, M. J. (2012). The effect of semantic and thematic clustering of words on Iranians vocabulary learning. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(2), 214-222.
- Montrul, S. (2001). Introduction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 23, 145-151.
- Nation, I. S. P. (1997). L1 and L2 use in the classroom: A systematic approach. *TESL Reporter*, 30, 19-27.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2000). Learning vocabulary in lexical sets: Dangers and guidelines. *TESOL Journal*, 9(2), 6-10.
- Nida, E. A. (1975). *Componential analysis of meaning*. Mouton: The Hague.
- Paribakht, T.S., & Wesche, M.B. (1993). Reading comprehension and second language development in a comprehension-based ESL program. *TESL Canada Journal*, 2(1), 9-29.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language teaching research*, 12 (3), 329-363.
- Sokmen, J. A. (1997). Current trends in teaching second language vocabulary. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary description, acquisition and pedagogy* (pp. 237-257). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tinkham, T. (1993). The effect of semantic clustering on the learning of second language vocabulary. *System*, 21(3), 371-380.
- Tinkham, T. N. (1994). *The effects of semantic and thematic clustering on the learning of second language vocabulary*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Illinois.
- Tinkham, T. (1997). The effects of semantic and thematic clustering on the learning of second language vocabulary. *Second Language Research*, 13(2), 138-163.
- Thomas, B. J. (1986). *Intermediate vocabulary*. England: Longman Group Limited.
- Waring, R. (1997). The negative effects of learning words in semantic sets: A replication. *System*, 25(2), 261-274.
- Wu, D. Yi'an, Zh., Liu, Zh., & Runqing, L. et al. (1996). *Learner factors and learning achievement: A study of the effect of factors affecting English language learning*. Beijing: Foreign Language teaching and Research Press.
- Zhuanglin, H. (1989). *Linguistics: An introduction*. Beijing: Peking University Press.

POLITENESS USE IN SELOKO CUSTOM WEDDING CEREMONY “ULUR ANTAR SERAH TERIMA PENGANTIN” IN THE BOOK *JAMBINESSE TRADITIONAL CEREMONY 4TH* VOLUME

Wennyta

Lecturer, Batanghari University, Jambi, Indonesia
wennytaadjis@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research is intended to give the description about politeness in the text Jambinese Seloko custom in “Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin” in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume. The research method is qualitative which is written descriptively. The data in this research is consisted of primary and secondary data. Population and sample in this research are texts of Jambinese Seloko custom that is published by Traditional Institutions Jambi Province Indonesia. The technique of data analysis that is used is content analysis. From the result and discussion, it could be concluded that there are six uses of politeness maxims in Jambinese Seloko custom texts (wedding ceremony) especially back and forth handover the bride in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume; they are the use (1) tact maxim, (2) generosity maxim, (3) approbation maxim, (4) modesty maxim, (5) agreement maxim, and (6) sympathy maxim.

KEYWORDS: politeness, seloko custom, *ulur antar serah terima pengantin*, Jambinese

INTRODUCTION

Indonesians should be proud because they have various language and literature inheritance from their ancestors that are invaluable. This variety of languages creates hundreds of regional literature. This various literature colors and enriches the literary work of Indonesia. Literature is a creative art of human that involves all aspects of human life. “Literature is used in communication situation which controlled by a particular culture environment” (Luxemburt, in Nurgiyantoro, 2008:16). Generally, Indonesians in the pre-modern period did not have written tradition. Although some have had written tradition, it is still rarely used to create literary work. Literary during that pre-modern period is usually given orally and also passed orally. For some regional literature, that tradition is still developing beside the effort for recording and writing.

Seloko is a traditional poem in the same group as mantra, verse, aphorism in two lines, proverb, etc. “*Seloko* is a traditional Indonesian poem which aphorism or proverb which contains advising aphorism or views and guidance for good life. Almost in all regions of Jambi province, there is seloko tradition (Syam, 2001:7).”

Jambi province as one of the provinces in Indonesia has many regional literature, one of them is seloko custom. Seloko custom, as other regional literature, contains positive values from the society as its proponent. It was said like that because seloko custom of Jambi is the outcome of the act of expressing the humanity essence of Malay society in Jambi. Because of that, the effort to reveal those values is required as a form of preservation of those noble values in the culture of Jambinese Malay society.

The opinion of Saphir (in Wahab, 1995) tells that there is some truth in the expression that says language determines behavior of human custom. People that use good choice of words, sentence structures, and idioms when speaking shows that the personality of that person is indeed good. On the contrary, if someone did not have good behavior, even though they have tried to communicate correctly and well-mannered in front of other people, there will come a time in which they are not able to cover their inherent bad behavior which then shows in their bad choice of words, sentence structures, idioms and impoliteness. Politeness is an aspect of language behavior that could increase the emotional intelligence of its speaker because in communication, speaker and hearer are required not only to deliver truth, but also to maintain commitment and harmony of the relation. The harmony of the relation between speaker and hearer would be maintained if both sides keep refrain on embarrassing each other.

Ethics in language behavior is what is called as politeness. If this is connected with seloko custom as a form literature which is delivered using language as its media, there must be a lot of politeness values contained in its every saying. Therefore, the study about how the realization of politeness behavior in Traditional Ceremony of Handover the Bride “*Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin*” which is contained in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume is necessary.

RESEARCH QUESTION

From the explanation that are mentioned before, this study is meant to answer how the form of tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim in Jambinese Seloko wedding custom “*Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin*” in the Book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume.

METHODOLOGY

The method that is used in this research is qualitative. The data are taken from seloko custom of Jambinese Malay which has been documented by Traditional Institution Jambi Province Indonesia in Jambinese Custom History book year 2001. The technique of collecting data that is used in this research is library study.

JAMBIANESE CULTURE

Language is a tool to transmit culture from a generation to the next one. Extinction, decline, and weakening of the function of one particular language implied the decline or extinction of one

cultural wealth. The everlasting of language, especially the regional language will strengthen the longevity of regional culture which contains oral literature and oral tradition. Using the potential of regional culture like oral literature and oral tradition as the source of character education is a revitalization of youth personality which is made by culture-based education.

One of the forms of the language own by Jambi province is a form of literature which is known as seloko culture of Jambi. Karim (2007:14) said that “Seloko in Indonesian language often called Seloka or proverb or with other words also often called as cultural advice”. Seloko word comes from Sanskrit word *Seloka* which means a form of classical Malay poem which contains idioms in which there are jokes, limericks, dreams, imaginations, teases, or insults. In Jambinese Malay language, seloko is a poem that consists of four lines which each line consisting of 8-11 words. The verse rhythm a-a-a-a, Karim (2007:14) gives an example of seloko as follows:

Ada seekor burung pelatuk
Cari makan di kayu buruk
Tuan umpama ayam pungguk
Ayam mencakar, rajin mematuk

In some areas in Indonesia, some seloko rules are unused. In Jambi region, the number of lines in seloko is inconsistent. The verses are also irregular, but the rhythm is easy-listened which contains rules or norms of customs that apply in Jambinese culture (Karim, 20017:15).

SELOKO AS A FORM OF TRADITIONAL POEM

Jambinese seloko custom is an idiom that contains messages or advices that have ethics and moral values, also used as a tool to enforce and supervise society norms to make sure it is always abided. The content of Jambinese seloko are the behavior rules in everyday life of the society and principles of law and norms which always be abided by the society because it has sanction. One of the examples of Jambinese seloko is about how decisions are made in a government, jambinese seoloko said that “*Berjenjang naik betanggo turun, turun dari takak nan di atas, naik dari takak nan di bawah*”, which means that during decision making there are levels of decision making. The highest level of decision making is for example: the highest level decision making which is Alam Nan Barajo, up until the lowest level of decision making which is Anak nan Berbapak, Kemenakan nan Bermamak.

ULUR ANTAR PENGANTIN (HANDOVER OF THE BRIDE)

The ceremony of back and forth handover the bride is conducted after the groom has arrived in the yard of the home of the bride. Usually, the groom is accompanied by uncles and elders and also children escort to the house of the bride. The ceremony of back and forth handover the bride could only be completed and accepted by both party after the discussion is decided by the mediator. After that, the bride and groom are met and sat down on their place, and then chieftain gives them advices. This ceremony is called Labuh Lek ceremony. It could be said that this ceremony is obligatory that has to be conducted during wedding ceremony of Handover the Bride

“*Ulur Antar Serah Terima Pengantin*” in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume published by Traditional Institution Jambi Province Indonesia.

SOCIOPRAGMATICS

Sociopragmatics is a study that highlights the use of language in a society culture within particular social situation like what Leech 1983 said sociopragmatics is one of two sides of pragmatics which the other part is pragmalinguistic. Sociopragmatic study involves two theory which are speech act theory and politeness theory. Austin (in Levinson,1985:236). Austin stated, “In uttering sentence, one is also doing something.” A speech act is created when a speaker or a writer makes an utterance to a hearer or a reader in a context. In other words, speech act is an action performed by the use of an utterance to communicate. Speech act theory is related to three acts in pragmatic which is locutionary act, illocutionary, and perlocutionary act. While politeness in language behavior like what is said by Lakoff that there are three things that should be considered to maintain politeness as follows:

MAXIMS OF POLITENESS

According to Leech (1983), “the politeness principles are divided into six maxims”. Maxim is the principle of language in lingual interaction; principles that control the act, language use, and its interpretation to actions and utterances of the opposite. Besides that, maxim also called as a form of pragmatic based on mutual principle and politeness principle. The examples of politeness maxim can be seen as follows:

Tact Maxim

Leech (1983: 132) “Minimize the benefit to self” and “Maximize cost to self”. If every person conducts the core of generosity maxim in their everyday utterances and daily interactions, envy, jealousy and heartache between people would be avoided.

Generosity Maxim

Generosity maxim involves minimizing the benefit to self and maximizing the cost to self (Leech, 1983: 132). Within generosity maxim, it is explained that people would be considered as polite if they are always trying to give award to other people in their utterances. With this maxim, it is hoped that participants of utterances would not insult, scorn, or humiliate each other.

Approbation Maxim

This maxim involves minimizing dispraise and maximizing praise for others (Leech, 1983:132). In approbation maxim, the speaker and hearer are expected to act humble by reducing compliment to their ownself. People would be said as arrogant and haughty if they are always praise and give credit to their ownself during utterances. In Indonesian culture and language society, modesty and courtesy are often used as a parameter to determine the politeness of people.

Modesty Maxim

This maxim requires the speaker to minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. In this maxim, it is expected that the speaker shows modesty by minimizing praise upon own self.

Agreement Maxim

This maxim involves minimizing disagreement and maximizing agreement between self and other. There is a tendency to increase an agreement and to minimize a disagreement by declaring a regret or partial agreement when someone speaks with other.

Sympathy Maxim

This maxim is divided into two sub maxims they are “minimize antipathy between self and other” and “maximize sympathy between self and other” (Leech, 1983:132). In sympathy maxim, the speaker and hearer are expected to maximize sympathy between each other. Having no sympathy to one utterance participant would be considered as impolite. Indonesians hold sympathy to other people in daily communication in high-esteem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The use of Tact Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
Yang datang Barangkali kami iko kok bejalan lah sampai ke batas, berlayar lah sampai polo ke pulau. Kalau bejalan lah sampai ke batas kok berlayar lah sampai polo ke pulau, ia boleh kami ko berkato agak sepatah berunding agak sebaris, sebab bak pantun nak mudo”	People who come “Maybe if we were walking we have arrived to the borders of sailing, we have arrived to the island, if we were walking we have arrived to the borders of sailing, we have arrived to the island. Let us speak a little discuss a few lines like a youth poem.
Yang menerima Ooo.....macam itu maksudnyo, maeko datuk kato-kato petuah orang tuo-tuo kito, idak elok, becakap di tengah laman, ko berunding sepanjang jalan, apo bunyi petuah orang-orang tuo-tuo kito yang sebagaimano dalam pantun seloko. Batang belimbing di tengah laman Uratnyo menyuruk ke bawah rumah Idak elok kito berunding di tengah laman Elok kito naik ke atas rumah <i>Hendak duo pantun seiring</i> <i>Batang cempedak di tengah laman</i> <i>Uratnyo susun betindih</i> <i>Idak elok kito tegak di tengah laman</i> <i>Elok kito naik makan sirih</i> <i>Tanggolah kami tegakkan, kok lawang lah kami bukak</i> <i>Tikarlah kami bentangkan pulak, silohkan datuk-datuk segalonyo naik kerumah!</i>	“Ooo..... That is the intention, like what elders and our ancestors said, it’s not good, to speak in the middle of the yard to discuss along the road, like the advices given by our elders like what is mentioned in seloko poem. <i>Star fruit tree in the middle of the yard</i> <i>The root hides under the house</i> <i>It’s not good to discuss in the middle of the yard</i> <i>It’s better to go up into the house</i> It’s better for two poems to go along Jackfruit tree in the middle of the yard The roots are overlapping each other It’s not good to stand in the middle of the yard It’s better if we go up and eat betel leaf. We have put up ladders, we have opened the door, we have spread the mat, and we invite elders to get in to the house.

Seloko examples above shows the use of tact maxim which are conducted by the host. The host clearly tries to act wise by asking the guests to immediately come into the house because it is not

good to be seen discussing in the house yard by other people. That seloko shows that the house asks the guests to come inside the house to discuss; this is the part that shows that there is a tact maxim in that part of seloko.

The Use of Modesty Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
Yang dating Macam iko datuk, kami nan sebanyak iko takut kalau cepat kaki salah langkah, cepat tangan salah limbac, cepat mulut salah kato, elok jago kami betanyo, kalau naik kerumah datuk-datuk ado idak larang kedengan pantangnyo.	People who come “It’s like this elders all of us are afraid if we walks too fast and missteps, hands too fast and took the wrong thing, speaks too fast and misspeak. It’s better for us to ask whether there are some taboos in walking into fellow elders’ house.

That seloko mentioned by the guests show the use of modesty maxim. That utterance displays the courtesy of the guests, before they are being allowed to come in, they asked humbly about things they need to do, whether there are some taboos they have to abide.

The Use of Generosity Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
Yang menerima Baiklah kalau macam itu kato Datuk-datuk, sesat di ujung tali balik ke pangkal tali, sesat di ujung jalan balik ke pangkal jalan. Tidak keruh yang tidak jernih dan idak kusut yang tidak selesai, silang yang tidak patut. Jadi macam mano kito serahkan kepada Datuk-datuk penengah sajo, kok keruh mintak dijernihkan, silang mintak di patut	People who accept All right then if that’s what fellow elders say, lost the tip of a rope get back to the beginning of the road, lost in the end of the road back to the beginning of the road. There is no cloudy that is not clear and there is no tangle that is not finished, crossed there are not appropriate. So what if we just give this to the mediator elders, if couled we asked to be cleared, if crossed we asked to be appropriated.

The seloko above exhibits the use of generosity maxim that is said by the host in the utterance **Datuk-datuk penengah sajo, kok keruh mintak dijernihkan, silang mintak di patut**. In that utterance, they asked with their generosity that if there are some conflicts later, the conflicts are to be returned to the mediator elders.

The Use of Agreement Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
Yang menerima Datuk-datuk nenek mamak yang kami muliokan. Sesuai dengan adat yang tereco tepakai, kok betanyo lepas litak kalu nak berunding tentu lepas makan, kareno kami iko tadi ado membawak sirih nan sekapur, rokok nan sebatang, elok jago kito makan sirih sekapur mengisap rokok nan sebatang bak pantun anak mudo	People who accept “Venerable elders and uncles. In accordance to the customs that is good to use, if we were to ask it’s after stopped being hungry, if we were to discuss of course after we finished eating, because we did bring betel and lime, a cigarette, it is better for us to eat betel while puffing a cigarette, like a youth poem.

The seloko above contains agreement maxim, in the utterance **Sesuai dengan adat yang tereco tepakai, kok betanyo lepas litak kalu nak berunding tentu lepas makan, kareno kami iko tadi ado membawak sirih nan sekapur, rokok nan sebatang, elok jago kito makan sirih sekapur mengisap rokok nan sebatang bak pantun anak mudo**. That utterance shows that the host

clearly states the condition to begin the ceremony. Because the guest has brought betel and cigarettes, the host asks the guests to eat betel and smoke cigarettes before starting the ceremony, this would be an agreement from both sides.

The Use of Sympathy Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
<i>Kalau macam itu kato Datu-datur, itu namonyo serah patah arang</i> atau serah patah umbut-umbut, atau serah kumbang putus tali, kami bukan mengelak, segan keno ba-sengecek segan jatuh.	If that's what elders said, it is called surrender broken charcoal, surrender broken shoot, or surrender broken thread beetle, we are not avoiding unwilling because afraid of falling when we are talking.

The sympathy maxim is showed by the words of the host that say that they support the intention of the guests because they don't want any misunderstanding. It can be seen from ***Kalau macam itu kato Datu-datur, itu namonyo serah patah arang***. Therefore agreement is made for that.

The Use of Aprobation Maxim

Seloko	Meaning
<i>Yang dating</i> Datur-datur, Nenek-Mamak, Tuo-Tuo Tenggana Alim Ulama, Cerdik Pandai, <i>yang gedang begelar, yang kecil benamo kok gedang idak diimbau gelarnya, nan kecil idak polo disebut namonyo.</i>	<i>People who come</i> Elders and uncles, clergy and cunning ones, the great ones have titles the small ones have names, the great ones are not called by their titles, the small ones also called by their names. Women with jingling bracelets, with shining rings on their fingers, clothed with sarong, pandanus fold hair bun. We are nothing, we arrange our fingers which are ten, we bow our heads which is one. Asking for forgiveness from the elders, requesting apology from the many.

The utterance ***yang kecil benamo kok gedang idak diimbau gelarnya, nan kecil idak polo disebut namonyo*** shows approbation maxim. That utterance displays appreciation that is given to everyone (with their age irrelevant) because everyone has the same position in the customs that apply.

CONCLUSION

This research investigates the indication of maxims proposed by Leech in Jambinese seloko wedding custom *ulur antar serah terima pengantin* in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume. Based on the result and discussion, it is found out that there are five types of maxims used in that book. They are tact maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, sympathy maxim, and approbation maxim. It is concluded that the types of maxim mostly used in Jambinese seloko wedding custom *ulur antar serah terima pengantin* in the book Jambinese Traditional Ceremony 4th Volume is tact maxim which is occurred for four times. Moreover, modesty maxim is used for two times while agreement maxim, sympathy maxim, and approbation maxim are only used for one time.

Limitations of the study

This research is limited to the use of Maxims which are proposed by Leech (1993). Those maxims are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. Furthermore, the aspects of politeness and context are needed in supporting data analysis.

REFERENCES

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S.C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Karim. (2010). *Nilai Pendidikan dalam Seloko Adat Jambi*. Skripsi Universitas Jambi. Unpublished.
- Leech, G.N. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. Newyork: Longman
- Levinson, S.C. (1985). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nurdiyanto. (2008). *Apresiasi Kesusasteraan*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Syam, H. K., & Syukur, M. (2001). *Pokok-pokok Adat Sepucuk Jambi Sembilan Lurah, Jilid III, Sastra Adat*. Jambi: Lembaga Adat Provinsi Jambi.
- Somad, K. (2003). *Mengenal Adat Jambi dalam Perspektif Modern*. Jambi: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Jambi.
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Hawaii: Oxford University Press.

TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ROLE OF LITERATURE IN EFL CLASSES

Safoora Kheirabadi

Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran
S.kheirabadi1988@gmail.com

Vahid Gholami, Ph.D

Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to obtain qualitative results from a sample of 20 Iranian English as a foreign language EFL teachers regarding their attitude towards the role of literature in EFL classes, and consequently follow up with some interviews to probe or explore how well they practically employ this issue in their classrooms. The participants were twenty male and female Iranian EFL teachers, teaching in different private language centers in Sanandaj, Iran. Generally, the participants were from two main categories; literature-graduated and TEFL-graduated teachers. The results of participants' interviews indicated that teachers should be encouraged to make adequate use of literature genres in classrooms, also, the participants considered short stories useful in language classes. Most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. For some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand some others said it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed that literature can go further and it can be connected to the learners' lives.

KEYWORDS: EFL teachers; Literature; Attitude, Literary genres

INTRODUCTION

Attitudes toward the role of English literature and its potential influence on the expanded area of teaching and methodology, which seek learning at the long turn, are extremely complex and vary from teacher to teacher. The past three decades have witnessed a national and still an international debate over this matter, particularly in developing countries such as Iran. "It has only been since the 1980s that this area has attracted more interest among EFL teachers" (Clanfield, 2011). The debate is still of great enthusiasm and a sea of differences is to be met and it is generally because of voices supporting and those criticizing literature along with teaching process. Literature-based instruction in EFL/ESL classes had been abandoned for justified and still questionable reasons in various methodologies.

However, with the presence of so many literary critics and controversies, literature could honorably climb the teaching pedestal in the recent years. One of the most common complaints is that teachers and curriculum supervisors find literary texts difficult, hard to understand and not relevant to the students' lives. Literature which once was the main teaching material in language teaching approaches became less popular when language teaching and learning started to put its pivotal emphasis on the functional use of language and its audio/oral role in teaching classes. However, the role of literature in the ELT classroom has been regained and nowadays many teachers view literature and literary materials as providing rich linguistic input, and a considerably affluent source of learner motivation. This change in approaches might be better referred to as what Marckwardt (1972) considered "changing winds and shifting sands" (as cited in Brown, 2002, p. 17) and the cyclical nature of teaching methodology patterns.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literacy was and still is the ability to read and write one's own name and further for knowledge and interest, write coherently, and think critically about the written word. In the previous centuries and even ages before that such ability was found in the ability of literary texts comprehension and in its new term literature competence; thus literature was once a core unit of English language classrooms. When Grammar Translation Method was in its heydays during the previous century, using literary texts in the language classes was abundant due to the rudimentary definition of literacy. On those days literature was an end in itself.

Role of Literature in Language Learning

The teacher in classroom plays a significant role in making students understand the value of literature and literary texts. Empirical studies consider various reasons for the teachers to use literary texts in their classes. Keshavarzi (2012) suggests as English teachers, specifically, are always concerned with the various kind of material they are going to present to their students, literature can solve their problems. He believes as language learning requires acquiring the language four skills of reading comprehension, writing, listening and speaking. Literary sources provide materials that can meet some of these abilities thus literature has proved a good source that fulfills these four skills. He goes further than just the language skills fulfillment and claims as: "language learning deals with culture, and hence with social understanding. It is this feature of language that demands materials dealing with culture.

Related Empirical Studies

There is a plethora of research that has been carried out internationally to investigate learners' motivation and attitudes towards the English language. In Malaysia, for example, Vijchulata and Lee (1985) reported on a study that investigated the students' motivation for learning English in University Putra Malaysia (UPM). Based on Gardner and Lambert's research (1972), the researchers developed a questionnaire to elicit the data required. The questionnaire was administered on approximately a thousand students from all the different faculties in UPM. The findings revealed that UPM students are both integratively and instrumentally oriented towards learning the English language.

Another study by Sarjit (1993) attempted to explore the language needs of consultants at a company. The name of the organization was not mentioned as the consultants did not allow the researcher to expose their identities. Learners' motivation was of concern in the study. The research sample consisted of 26 consultants, 4 directors and one instructor. In her study, Sarjit (1993) employed different techniques to gather information, such as questionnaire, interviews and field observation. For the subjects' motivation, the study found that instrumental motivation was the main reason for learning the language followed by personal motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study the researcher tries to find answers to following questions:

1. How do English language teachers perceive the effectiveness of English literature in their English classes?
2. What literary genre is assumed to be the most useful and practical one in language teaching classes based on teachers' perceptions?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the study were English teachers who had teaching experience from one to ten years. This sample was composed of 20 English teachers, both males and females, who worked during summer 2013 semester in private language institutes in Sanandaj. Generally, the participants were from two main categories; literature-graduated and TEFL-graduated teachers. It was strictly desired that these participants would be among those teachers who were teaching English in different levels of English classrooms as a part of their regular daily schedule. A more insightful description of each participant is presented in table 1

Table 1: participants' characteristics

Participant's number	Age	Gender	Degree	major	Experience (years)	Levels taught	Willing to teach
1	24	M	M.A.	Literature	2	Elementary	Yes
2	27	M	B.A.	Teaching	4	Intermediate	Yes
3	22	F	B.A.	Teaching	1	Elementary	Yes
4	29	F	B.A.	Literature	6	Elementary Intermediate	Yes
5	30	F	B.A.	Literature	7	Elementary Intermediate	Yes
6	27	M	M.A.	Teaching	7	Elementary Intermediate	Yes
7	26	F	M.A.	Literature	5	Elementary	Yes
8	26	M	B.A.	Teaching	5	Elementary Intermediate Upper-inter	Yes
9	25	M	B.A.	Literature	4	Intermediate Upper-inter Advanced	Yes
10	30	F	M.A.	Teaching	8	Intermediate Upper-inter Advanced Elementary	Yes

Instrumentation

The instruments for data collection in this study were a form of demography and semi-structural interviews conducted by the researcher. The form and its content do not affect the results of the study. It is just used to collect information about the qualifications and background of the participants. The main instrument to collect data for the study was face-to-face interview. Each of these instruments is described below:

Demographic Forms

A demographic form was given to each participant to be filled in before the interview. This form gives participants information about the study and how it is conducted and asks for their names, major, years of experience in teaching and the level of teaching. It also asks them if they are willing to take part in the study. The information in this form is not analyzed to gain a result for the study. That is, the researcher does not differentiate and discern attitudes of participants based on the information provided in this form. It can just help us categorize the participants and make sure that all of them are graduated teachers with real identities to get more insights into the study.

Semi-structured Interviews

One of the most famous data gathering instruments in research methodology area is semi-structured interview (Keats, 2001). According to Keats (2001) recording the interview helps improve the reliability. Such interviews have an exploratory nature since the interviewer provides orientation for interviewee. The interviews were conducted one by one in a relaxed atmosphere. Interviews used in this study consisted of eight questions and were constructed in order to gather information for this study. The interview questions were all developed by the researcher shared and edited by two judges to ensure their relevance, feasibility and validation. The judges were two experienced university professors holding Ph.D. degree in TEFL with five and six years of experience. Each interview lasted for about 15 minutes and was recorded and transcribed later for further analysis. Since the participants of the study are English teachers the interviews have been done in English.

Procedure

As mentioned earlier this research was conducted in a qualitative approach. According to Nunan (1997) qualitative information gained through interviews is crucial and of great importance since it can provide reliable outcomes. For this reason, qualitative data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were used to identify the participants' perceptions of literature role in English classes. Accomplishing a qualitative study necessitates a precise procedure fulfillment. So, a clear definition of these terms and the procedures helps us manage the study correctly.

Data Collection Procedure

A random list of 20 participants was gathered from teachers from different English language institutes, and with different trends in teaching and different university majors, literature and TEFL. This was done through cluster sampling by written confirmation and demographic forms which were given to participants before the interviews. Through these forms they were asked about their willingness to participate in the study. Then the interviews were held and questions

were directed to each participant in a face-to-face interview in a relaxed environment to collect information on their attitudes. They were asked to answer a set of eight free-response questions on the topic of literature inclusion.

Data Analysis of Qualitative Approach

Each learner was interviewed individually. They answered the questions about their knowledge and feeling about literature and their attitudes toward it. In an interview study the term reliability refers to the degree of consistency that the interview has for the respondents. The content analysis approach is based on Keats (2001). According to Keats (2001) recording the interview helps improve the reliability. Teachers' oral performances were recorded to measure the reliability of the measuring instruments.

The data was analyzed using a version of the grounded theory approach in which the researcher tried to look for multiple themes. In order to do the content analysis, the researcher decided to deal with sentence units of analysis in interviews. The participants' sentences were selected due to perceiving and finding a general and basic perspective regarding the implied ideas for the persecuted issue. The explicit sentences and explanations of participants to the questions were considered as the scale of judgment in our analysis.

As an example, the sentence "it's a little bit time-consuming to cover all the literary texts in the classes." simply declares its meaning and implication. So, there is no need to analyze and interpret its words and sub-sections.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The present study was interested in probing whether English teachers are aware of literature competence or not, besides; how the 20 participants, who were all English teachers, perceive literature role in their classroom methodologies for learning English in English private schools of Sanandaj in Iran. In this chapter qualitative data analysis is presented. The unit of analysis consists of participants' utterances which contain material related to the research questions.

The main research questions for this qualitative study were:

1. How do English teachers in Sanandaj define the effectiveness of English literature in their classes? And what are their views toward instructional value of English literature in EFL classes?
2. What literary genre is assumed to be the most useful and practical one in language teaching classes based on teachers' perceptions?

The analysis of the data was based on the grounded theory approach in which the researcher tried to look for multiple themes while scrutinizing each uttered sentence. The researcher highlighted three important patterns to be investigated during the analysis of interviews. A) The effectiveness and usage of literature; B) Importance of literature and C) The important literature genres.

Patterns A and B are included in answers to the first research question and are elicited from interview questions 3, 4, 5 and 6. Pattern C is dealt with while answering the second research

question and is elicited from interview questions 7 and 8. Most of the stated sentences from participants are quoted directly in order to let easier analysis.

Qualitative Data Analysis for Question Number 1

(Q 1) How do English teachers in Sanandaj understand the effectiveness of English literature in their classes? And what are the most valuable literary sources according to teachers' views in English literature in EFL classes?

PATTERN A: Literature effectiveness and usage

Based on the conducted interviews the researcher searched for sentences in which she could possibly see a relationship with the justifications of literature effectiveness according to the teachers' ideas emerged in the interviews conducted by the researcher. Regarding the effectiveness of literature, the teachers presented the effectiveness of literature the same ideas. Most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. In order to see whether it was effective the participants were asked in third question of interview: Do you consider English literature as an important teaching resource? In other word, does literature foster learning a language? If your answer is possibly positive or even negative please elaborate. The teachers participated in this research claimed two views for application of literature usage in their classes. Firstly, for some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. Secondly, on the other hand some others said it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed literature can go more and it can be connected to the learners' lives. For instance participant number 10 said:

"Ok for sure! Actually my answer to this question is yes! I do consider it as an important resource. Because, you know, English literature is an authentic source, and whatever you find in a literary text is something authentic. So I consider it for sure a positive resource".

Participant number 4 even went further and said:

"Yes I consider it important and it has to be taught even here in the institutes in addition to universities. Because you know even if the teachers are really familiarized with teaching methods they have to be able to know about literature world and it is somehow possible. It is really essential to have literature and literary materials in classes".

This was while Participant number 4 said:

"You know literature is the life itself and it is the mirror to life and I always tell my students about it. So it is really a complete source and it includes whatever you call it instructional materials because you can find different dimensions of life and the learners can have those experiences by reading literature. Then my students can have the same experience by presenting them some literary genres. They will learn indirectly how to live not only just learn the language.

Participant number 6 said: "the most important one (usage) that I can say now, is changing perspectives and thoughts of humans towards life. It is very important that the students can chase the mind of characters and learn how other people think about different matters in life."

Furthermore, regarding the effectiveness of literature participant number 6 said:

"Definitely yes because my BA was in literature I pushed myself very interested in it. Although my MA was English teaching I am still interested in literature. When I want to teach, in most of my classes stories are one of the most important resources. I think that teaching through literature helps you have an open mind and think in new ways. So, I definitely use literature. It is important in my classes".

This was, however, neglected by some others like participant number 2 who said:

"Ok, my role in the class is just facilitating communicative processes. Ok? My students just want to learn how to speak and how to understand English, so they don't need to learn something about English literature, so I think it is not something necessary. Yeah! So in my classes, only communication is so important for them not literature".

Additionally, participant number 3 said:

"How and when you use literature depends on the situation and the classes. Sometimes we use but the most important point of this answer is to use literature indirectly, not directly in our teaching.

Participant number 5 claimed:

"Since I am not an expert (in literature) I think it can only help improve vocabulary in a narrow view and for the broad view it can give the learners some philosophy of life. Normally we never teach literature and some literary material like poems in original forms. But as I said some teachers use story books but I never use them directly in my classes, students read them and they are supposed to understand the meanings or paraphrase the sentences and the structures or something like that. Since my learners are teenagers I think it is hard for them to understand some points of philosophy and social norms, in such cases it even causes paradoxical situations for them and it could be baffling for them".

PATTERN B: Importance of literature

The teachers were also asked to see if they personally thought it was important for the learners to get familiar with English literature or not. Again two different views were found. On the one side for some of the participants the learners had to be familiarized with the world of literatures and for some others only literature was considered as a tool for learning more and thus they would not have taught literature with a meticulous attention. Participant number 1 said:

"Of course yes, they should be familiar (with literature) because literature contains culture and the learners must know something about the culture of the target language they are learning. They also should be exposed to authentic reading materials and sources. Of course I should say for us communication is important, and because of that they may never need pure literary texts".

Participant number 10 said:

".....some of my learners knew nothing about literature, when they first came to my classes, they got familiar with what literature is. And somehow it was from my classes or from my colleagues' classes that they learn more about it or they got a desire and are encouraged to continue their study in the field".

Participant number 3 suggested"

"It is based on our idea about literature that is, how we perceive the literature. For example as I said in my classes most of the students come to learn speaking, Listening and sometimes writing, but we do not pay attention to different literary materials in special in a broad sense, and so we may never need to tell them in details about the literature....."

Participant number 2 said:

"I think it is not necessary to have literature in our syllabus! So yeah I think it is enjoyable for me but it is not necessary since our students do not need to learn so much about literature they come here to learn how to communicate in English. So they only come here for leaning some conversations to be helpful for them when they go abroad so that they are able to interact with foreigners. That is their main reason for joining my classes. But I don't mean it is not useful..... Only in some of my classes I teach short stories. I want them to memorize some idioms and vocabularies. By the stories they can learn lots of things".

Participant number 11 suggested

".....as I said we use literature in our classes indirectly, for example we do not ask our students what literature is, because the aim of our classes is to teach them how to connect and how to communicate to the other students and other people in other countries. It is the first aim that we want to follow in our class".

Qualitative Data Analysis for Question Number 2

In another section of the interview session the participants were asked to state which kind of literary material was their favorite in order to use it in their classes. This was done through question number 8 of the interview. Unanimously all of the participants considered short stories useful in language classes, but not the full text ones. The samples are brought in what follows.

PATTERN C: the best literary Materials

In order to answer second question of the research, participants presented following responses:

Participant number 3 said:

"All genres are useful but they have to be presented in an abridged form. All of them are good. The novels are really suitable for classes but poems are a little difficult and boring".

Participant number 5, however, said:

"I believe the story books will be the best sources. Because they are rich in vocabulary and it is good for reading comprehension. That will result in fluency in reading and story books should be graded for them"

Participant number 11 suggested:

"Well I think for me the most important genre is story books not the poets or the plays".

Participant number 2 said "I think story is good. Using stories, learners can improve their grammar and vocabulary too".

Participant number 1 also said:

"Well I think for me the most important genre is story books not the poets or the plays".

Almost all of the participants believed in the story books as the best literary material among the existing genres.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study make us conclude that most of the participants considered literary materials as an important source for learning English. For some teachers literature could only be presented in order to improve reading skill and sub skills such as vocabulary and grammar. And for others it is a "narrow usage" and they claimed literature can go more and it can be connected to the learners' lives. On the one side for some of the participants the learners had to be familiarized with the world of literatures and for some others only literature was considered as a tool for learning more and thus they would not have taught literature with a meticulous attention. Also, all of the participants considered short stories useful in language teaching.

As Obediat (1997) claims, literature helps students acquire a native-like competence in English, express their ideas in good English, learn how the English linguistic system is used for communication, see how idiomatic expressions are used, speak clearly, precisely, and concisely, and become more proficient in English, as well as become creative, critical, and analytical learners. The participants of this study generally agreed that literature can help learning English. They were aware about the merits of literary materials in English classes. In fact they believed that literature can be effective in different ways. Firstly, it can help learners to foster their vocabulary competence. This might be due to the fact that there are a plenty of vocabularies in literary texts. The text can give this chance to learners to be exposed to a large number of efficient words. Secondly, they said that grammar could be taught through the literature.

Apart from grammar and vocabulary improvement and according to the result of interviews another perception of the study was that literature could provide learners with a lot of experiences and world views all could be found in literary materials. Some teachers interpret literature as a mirror in which the learners could see many realities consistent with their lives. Furthermore, Custodial and Sutton (1998 p, 20) explain that literature can open horizons of possibility, allowing students to question, interpret, connect, and explore lives realities. Elliot (1990, p, 198) suggests when students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, then they can effectively internalize the language at a high level. Finally, participants considered literature as a tool which equips students with rich source of authentic material. Literature is the genuine representative of any language. It can be claimed that the literature is the language soul itself.

Limitations of the Study

Any study has some limitations that make generalization of its findings to other contexts a little difficult. The important limitation in this study was that the researcher only focused on Iranian teachers. So, the results may be different in any other context with teachers from socio-cultural backgrounds different from the one of participants in this study. Then, there are limitations of the

beliefs of different gender and age on the study. Taking the context and the participants of the study into consideration, any further generalization from this study should be done with caution. Furthermore, self-reported data collected through interviews has its limitations, since it presents the teachers' perception of the issue rather than the observable facts. Moreover, teachers' L1 background (Persian, Kurdish) are not considered as variables in this study.

Last, although this study had a qualitative design, the number of participants in this study was limited to 20 teachers. Thus, the findings of this study might be generalized to other societies with caution.

REFERENCES

- Brown, D. H. (2002). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Longman.
- Clandfield, L. (2011). *Using literature in the EFL/ ESL classroom: thoughts on Lindsay Clandfield's article*. Submitted by Admin on 9 February. Online article.
- Custodio, B. & Sutton, M. (1998). Literature-based ESL for secondary school. *Students in TESOL Journal*, 7 (5), 19-23.
- Elliot, R. (1990). Encouraging reader-response to literature in ESL situations. *ELT journal*, 44(3), 191-198.
- Gardner, R. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitude and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Keats, D. M. (2001). *Interviewing: A practical guide for students & professionals*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Keshavarzi, A. (2012). Use of literature in teaching English. Published by Elsevier Ltd. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46 (2012), 554 – 559
- Nunan, D. (1997). *Research methods in language learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Obediat, M. (1997). *Language vs. literature in English departments in Arab world in English Teaching Forum*.
- Sarjit Kaur. (1993). *Analysis of the English language needs of consultants at NCVC*. M.A thesis, University of South Australia.
- Vijchulata, B., & Lee, G. (1985). A survey of students' motivation for learning English. *RELC Journal*, 16 (1), 68-81.

BEYOND A “WHAT WORKS” TECHNIQUE: THE CASE OF SEMANTIC MAPPING

Reza Nejati, Assistant Professor

*Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University, Tehran, Iran
Email: Nejati.reza1@yahoo.com*

Akram Pejman Asl, MA Student

*Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University, Tehran, Iran
Email: Akram.pj@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study intended to assess the effect of semantic mapping on pre-university students' reading comprehension. For this purpose, a pretest-posttest intact groups study was developed. Sixty Iranian high school girls took part in the study. At the outset of the study, a reading comprehension test, composed of six reading comprehension, was administered to the participants to make sure that the two groups were homogeneous. The students were recruited in two groups, namely, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning. Eight passages of the students' textbook were used as the treatment material. The semantic group was taught how to make semantic maps for each text and the other group was taught how to make questions about the texts. After the treatment, a posttest was administered to both groups. The results, analyzed through an independent samples t-test revealed that the semantic group did better than the other group, $t(58) = 2.54, p < .01, d = .10, 95\% CI [.52, 4.41]$. The results from the present study can be used by teachers to improve the learners' reading comprehension.

KEYWORDS: reading comprehension, semantic mapping, pre-reading questioning, schemata

INTRODUCTION

Reading is perhaps the major language skill that most EFL learners need. Reading is central to life. There are many reasons for this; such as reading for pleasure or reading textbooks, scientific books and articles. Reading skills become more important as students advance through the educational system. Teachers normally ask students to read different materials to locate information relevant to their course in schools.

Reading is believed to be a very complex activity. Too many processes are involved in reading for meaning. It involves the rapid coordination of visual, phonological, semantic, and linguistic processes (Plaut, 2005). Furthermore, it is necessary to remember and manipulate information, to know what individual words mean and to be motivated to work on the text to understand its content (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme & Snowling, 2014). Hence, readers may spend a lot of time to read and comprehend a text. However, good readers try to find ways that help them not only understand a text but also enjoy reading.

Understanding a text usually involves activating background knowledge or otherwise known as knowledge of the world. This knowledge is stored in the mind in the form of schemata. People associate an entity or concept with a set of interrelated features. These set of features are called schemata (Field, 2003). According to schema theory, in order to help readers comprehend a text at a normal speed, they should be guided to activate their prior knowledge before they start reading and therefore, one of the teachers' responsibilities in reading classrooms is to design activities that help students activate their background knowledge.

Pre-reading strategies can help teachers activate students' schematic knowledge thereby promote their reading comprehension ability. Semantic mapping, also known as 'mind mapping' (Zadina, Smilkstein, Daiek & Anter, 2014), question and answer, brainstorming, free discussion, predicting, skimming, attending to pictures, graphics and headers are some pre-reading techniques that teachers can use for the purpose of activating background knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Long & Doughty, 2009).

According to Pearson (2000) semantic mapping was effective with junior high school students in the context of regular classroom instruction. Asking student to formulate questions about a text, inter alia, is an effective strategy of reading comprehension (Long & Doughty, 2009).

The present study attempts to put semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning strategies into action and see which one can better improve the learners' reading comprehension ability. The expectation is that the results from the present study can be used by teachers to improve the students' reading comprehension.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension and its Importance

Reading comprehension may be defined as a continuous activity that should be done by the reader so that he or she could comprehend a text in a normal speed and it is not necessary for the reader to vocalize what he or she is reading (Rivers, 1968). A writer tries to create meaning by activating his or her background and linguistic knowledge and the reader should use the same knowledge in order to understand the writer's meaning (Chastain, 1988). Anderson (1999) asserts that readers are constantly busy with building meaning while reading a text because reading is an active and fluent process. He believes it is not right to think that meaning of reading passages should be just searched in the mind of the reader or in the printed page. It resides in both the mind of the reader and in the text itself. Mcknight (2000) believes that through the complex and dynamic process of reading comprehension, readers try to decode the printed words and use their past experiences and knowledge to recreate the intended meaning of the writer. Pearson et al. (2002) describe good readers while they are reading in this way:

- Good readers are *active* readers.
- Good readers typically *look over* the text before they read, noting such things as the *structure* of the text and text sections that might be most relevant to their reading goals.
- As they read, good readers frequently *make predictions* about what is to come.
- Good readers *construct, revise, and question* the meanings they make as they read.

- Good readers try to determine the meaning of *unfamiliar words and concepts* in the text, and they deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed.
- They draw from, compare, and *integrate their prior knowledge* with material in the text.
- They *monitor their understanding* of the text, making adjustments in their reading as necessary.
- They *evaluate the text's quality and value*, and react to the text in a range of ways, both intellectually and emotionally
- Comprehension is a consuming, continuous, and complex activity, but one that, for good readers, is both *satisfying and productive* (p.1).

Models of Reading Process

Three kinds of reading processing models have generally been distinguished; namely, bottom-up model, top-down model and interactive model.

In the bottom-up model, the reader begins with the smallest unit of language, the letter, and develops the largest unit, the overall meaning. Reutzel and Cooter (2013) define bottom-up model as:

Bottom-up theories hypothesize that learning to read progresses from children learning the parts of language (letters) to understanding whole text (meaning). Much like solving a jigsaw puzzle, bottom-up models of the reading process say that the reading puzzle is solved by beginning with an examination of each piece of the puzzle and then putting pieces together to make a picture (p.1).

In the top- down model, the reader begins with the overall meaning and then relates the content of what s/he reads to her/his own experiences to construct meaning. Chastain (1988) defines top-down processing as "it operates from a knowledge base to work on specific pieces of information"(p.36). During top-down processing, readers try to predict the meaning of the text by activating their background knowledge. Sometimes this expectation is justified and sometimes it is rejected as the reader is progressing reading the text.

It is suggested that both reading processes, top-down and bottom-up, happen at the same time and efficient readers comprehend texts by paying attention to linguistic information of the reading texts and also using their background knowledge, simultaneously (Rumelhart, 1977, 1980). The interactive approaches to reading comprehension involve using different kinds of knowledge so that the reader can extract the meaning from a text. The reader sometimes focuses on the linguistic variables of the text and sometimes relies on his or her own mental knowledge in order to interact with the text and comprehend it at a reasonable rate (Grabe, 1991).

Schema Theory and the Activation of Schemas in L2 Readers

Schemata play a key role in comprehension. Readers regularly use their schema to make sense of what they read According to schema theory, readers use the linguistic information of the reading text and their past experiences and information that are stored in their mind so as to build a meaningful understanding of the content of a text. In other words, both bottom-up and top-down processing are employed during reading comprehension activity. In the process of reading,

"*comprehension* of a message entails drawing information from both the message and the internal schemata until sets are reconciled as a single schema or message" (Hudson, 1982:182).

Goodman (1967) believes that skilled readers try to find the most meaningful elements of a text to comprehend it instead of going through all the details (cited in Chastain, 1988). Grellet (1981; cited in Chastain, 1988) concludes that proficient readers use a top-down processing in reading comprehension; that is, they start understanding the whole and then working toward comprehension of detailed aspects of the reading. Wixson and Peters (1984) proposed efficient readers use their background knowledge, the written text itself and the context by which the topic has been described in order to produce the intended meaning of the writer.

Grabe (2009) defined reading comprehension "Reading is also an interaction between the reader and the text" (p. 15). Efficient reading is achieved when previous knowledge interacts with new information. Reading different texts, readers are required to adjust their own schemata with the content of the text and build pieces of information that are compatible with their own experiences. The readers comprehend so much beyond the basic meaning of the text. A writer cannot control the readers' prediction of a text. The reader's different attitudes towards texts can have a stronger effect on him or her than the writer's real intention.

Ajideh (2006) believes that:

In most cases a common problem students experience in reading classes is the feeling that they know absolutely nothing about the subject they are reading about. However, this feeling may be more complex than generally thought. The problem may not be the lack of background knowledge, but rather the failure to activate that knowledge (p.1).

It is believed that schema theory is a process through which readers combine their own background knowledge with the information in a text to understand it better. The closer the match between the reader's schema and the text, the more comprehension occurs (Wallace, 1992; Brown, 2001). The goal of pre-reading activities is to activate schemata (background knowledge) and they are very important for EFL/ESL readers (Ajideh, 2003).

Several studies (Taglieber et al., 1988; Ajideh, 2006; Pan & Pan, 2009; Thongyon and Thanyapa, 2011; Mihara, 2012) have been conducted to investigate the effects of pre-reading strategies as a means of providing and triggering off background information prior to the reading task. These studies suggest that pre-reading strategies have a facilitative effect in text comprehension, and that teachers can use them to provide and/or activate necessary background knowledge relevant to understanding the new text. Pre-reading strategies are intended to activate appropriate knowledge structures or provide the knowledge that the reader lacks. Pre-reading strategies "prepare native speakers for the concepts that follow, make the reading task easier, connect the new content more meaningfully to prior knowledge, and make reading more enjoyable" (Taglieber et al., 1988, p. 456).

Reading Comprehension Strategies

In order to become efficient readers, reading comprehension strategies are the ways by which teachers can help students monitor their comprehension of texts. These strategies are divided into two major categories: cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. Williams and Burden (1997) state that cognitive strategies are seen as "mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, that is for obtaining, storage, retrieval or use of information" (p. 148). They include repetition, organizing new language, summarizing, guessing meaning from context, using imagery for memorization, etc. On the other hand, metacognitive strategies include thinking, planning and monitoring of learning process, comprehension and production during language learning. They involve self-evaluation after the language activity is completed. There are three skill techniques in metacognitive strategies: planning, monitoring and evaluation (Cross & Paris, 1988; cited in Senay Sen, 2009).

Semantic Mapping

Johnson and Pearson (1978), developers of semantic mapping technique, believe semantic mapping is a graphic arrangement of words and it shows how new words and ideas related to each other within text. Students should be helped to build semantic maps. Using their prior knowledge, they deepen their understanding of the topics and as a result they construct graphic representations of the relationships and associations of meanings or concepts to the target word (Schwartz & Raphael, 1985).

Semantic mapping is one of the examples of cognitive strategies (Buchard, 2005). Semantic mapping has three applications: general vocabulary development, pre and post reading strategy and a study skill technique (Heimlich & Pittelman, 1986). To clarify the meaning of semantic maps, Heimlich and Pittleman (1986) described them as "semantic maps are diagrams that help students see how words are related to one another"(p.3). Grabe (2009) states that "semantic mapping typically emerges from a reading text and a topic"(p.277). Asking students to fill in a semantic map or create one, the teacher measures their comprehension of a text. Semantic maps can be an aid for students to understand the outlines and details of complex reading materials. It helps students "generate a range of associated words that can then be grouped in relation to the information actually presented in the text" (Grabe, 2009, p.277). Building semantic maps can be done by students individually or in groups and it depends on the complexity of the passages.

Some practical researches (Margosein et al. 1982, Chang et al. 2002, Canas et al. 2004, Onachukwu et al. 2007, Keshavarz et al. 2007 and Thuy 2013) have been done on the effect of different kinds of mapping on reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, etc. The researchers concluded that semantic mapping enhances reading comprehension, it can be used for complex learning tasks, students' retention of word meanings has been increased and they gained positive attitudes toward semantic mapping.

Pre-reading Questioning

One of the examples of metacognitive strategies is pre-reading questioning. Pearson et al. (2002) state that asking questions has an important effect on students' comprehension, but the teacher should help students to generate their own questions about the text. By helping students increase

their responsibility to generate questions, Raphael and her colleagues improved students' reading comprehension; taught them how to ask questions about their reading and where to find the answers to them; helped them to think about the text they are reading and beyond it; and finally inspired them to think creatively and work cooperatively while challenging them to use higher-level thinking skills (Raphael 1982, 1984, 1986; cited in Chien, 2013).

Therefore, re-reading questioning is one of the useful metacognitive strategies that teachers should introduce to students. Some researches (Peng et al. 2007, Kinniburgh et al. 2010, Thongyon & Thanyapa 2011, Yeh et al. 2012 & Supandeni et al. 2013) have been conducted on the effect of pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension. The research results indicated that the pre-reading questioning strategy, if implemented effectively, can increase comprehension of students and provide a strong foundation for reading comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research question: Is there any statistically significant difference between the effect of semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores?

In line with the above research question, the following null hypothesis was formulated:

Null Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant difference between semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were sixty female high school students studying in Gharchak, Tehran. They were in grade four. The average age of the participants was 17.5 years. The participants were homogenized by the pretest based on their language proficiency. These participants, then, were assigned to two groups, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning. Thirty participants were in each group.

Instruments

In this study, an instrument was used: University Entrance Exam and the students' textbook, Learning to Read, English for Pre-University Students (Birjandi, et al., 2013) was used as the treatment material.

University Entrance Exam. In order to homogenize the participants and examine the effect of two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, on their reading comprehension; the researcher used two parallel tests of reading comprehension, one as the pretest and one as the posttest. Each test included six texts selected from the University Entrance Exams. To choose the appropriate texts, the readability of the texts used for the treatment was estimated through SMOG index. The readability of the textbook passages were 7 to 12.

Therefore, the texts whose readability were 7 to 10 were selected for the pretest and posttest. Each test consisted of 30 multiple choice items, 5 items for each passage. The time allocated for the test was 30 minutes. One point was awarded to each item. The whole score was 30.

Students' Textbook. The researcher used students' textbook (Learning to Read, English for Pre-University Students) as instructional material. This book includes 8 reading comprehension passages. The passages were taught through the two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, in two fourth grade classes by the researcher, semantic mapping for one class and pre-reading questioning for the other. Meanwhile, eight blank semantic maps were prepared by the researcher for the first class. The maps were checked by the thesis advisor. The pre-reading questioning class, guided by the researcher, prepared a list including two columns of the things and questions related to the topic for each lesson and used them to comprehend the text.

Procedure

Pre-test. One week before the start of the study, the piloted University Entrance test was administered to 70 students in the fourth grade of high school in Gharchak in order to check the homogeneity of the sample. After scoring the test papers, sixty of the participants were selected as target participants of the research. The results of the pre-test, analyzed through independent samples t-test, showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups. In order to provide an indication of the magnitude of the differences between two groups, the effect size was calculated through eta squared formula. Its magnitude was .1. The guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988; cited in Pallent, 2007) show that .1 is very small. It is safe to claim that the two groups are homogeneous. Then, the participants were divided into two groups, 30 participants in each group.

Treatment. In the semantic mapping class, the researcher began teaching the text by introducing the content words that had been made bold in their textbook. This was done by using the semantic map and guided discussion. The researcher drew the word map on the blackboard so that it was visible to the students. She wrote the topic or main concept in the center of the map. Then she distributed the blank semantic maps among the students and began the pre-reading discussion that focused on the content words. As the students responded to the concept-related questions, the researcher wrote the words, students' responses on the map and directed the students to complete the blank maps in the same way. A sample figure is provided below. When students failed to respond to the concept-related questions, the researcher offered a contextual definition of the word that facilitated understanding of the text. The probable contextualized definitions could be prepared by the teacher in advance. Then the maps were completed and the students were ready to read the passage. While reading, they used their semantic word maps to add to the meaning of words.

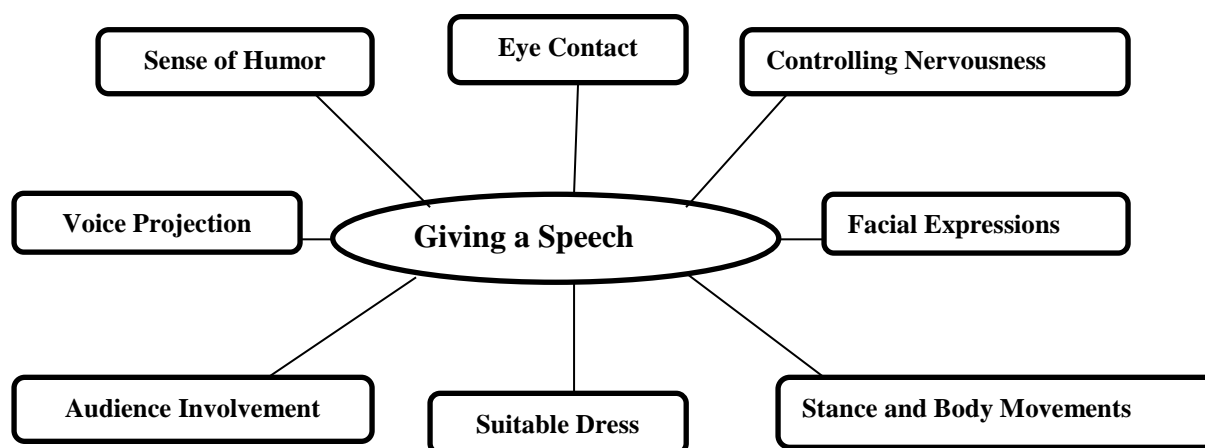


Figure 1: A Sample of Semantic Mapping

In the pre-reading questioning class, the researcher began teaching by introducing the topic of the passage that students were going to read. Once the topic was presented, the students were asked to work in groups and prepare a list of two columns. The first column was supposed to be the list of things about the topic that they were sure of, and the second lists the things that they were not sure/didn't know. Afterwards, the researcher asked one student from each group to write one or two items from their lists on the blackboard, so that interesting items which other groups might not have thought of could be included. Then students were ready to read the passage.

Posttest. A piloted posttest, University Entrance Exam, was used. The University Entrance test was administered after the treatment sessions finished. In order to pilot the posttest, the researcher administered the test to a sample of 30 students who shared the same characteristics as the main participants in the research. The reliability of the University Entrance Exam was .86 which seems to be acceptable. Then, the University Entrance Exam was administered to both groups after the treatment sessions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To achieve the purpose of the study, a pretest-posttest intact groups study was developed. Based on the results of pre-test (Table 1 below), there was no significant difference between the two groups, $t(58) = 1.32, p > .18$. In other words, the groups are homogeneous in terms of reading ability at the start of the research experiment. Therefore, the results of the post-test can safely be attributed to the treatment effect.

Table 1: Independent Samples Test for the pre-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
pretest	Equal variances assumed	.334	.565	1.328	58	.189	1.16667	.87872	-.59228	2.92561
	Equal variances not assumed			1.328	57.776	.190	1.16667	.87872	-.59242	2.92576

One week after the end of the treatment, the posttest was administered to the participants. Since the content and form of the pre-test and post-test were identical, the reliability of the test was checked through test-retest method. To do so, the correlation between the two administrations was estimated. The results, presented in Table 2, indicate that test is highly reliable, $r(60) = .94$.

Table 2: Correlations between pre-test and post-test

		pretest	Posttest
test		1	.941
			.000
		60	60

To examine the effect of the treatment, the results of the post-test were subjected to an independent samples t-test. The results, displayed in Table 3, help reject the null hypothesis, $t(58) = 2.54$, $p < .01$. The mean difference is in favor of the semantic mapping group. Therefore, the researcher can claim that semantic mapping technique has been more effective than question pre-reading questioning.

Table 3: Independent Samples Test for the post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.253	.617	2.541	58	.014	2.46667	.97092	.52316	4.41017
	Equal variances not assumed			2.541	57.590	.014	2.46667	.97092	.52287	4.41047

The aim of this section is to explain the effects of two pre-reading strategies, semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning, on fourth graders' reading comprehension. The results indicated that the semantic mapping strategy improved the participants' reading comprehension better than the pre-reading questioning strategy. In addition to the finding mentioned above, other important findings from the study are summarized below.

First, good readers try to make connections between what they read and what they already know. When teachers help students make those connections before, during and after reading, they are teaching them one of the most important strategies that proficient readers use unconsciously. The pre-reading strategy, semantic mapping, used in this study guided students to activate their prior knowledge or schemata to better comprehend the texts. Moreover, students who took part in this study as the semantic mapping group had to build semantic maps. They had to identify the main idea first, and then they had to analyze the content and find the second categories, the supporting details and finally they had to organize the map. This proves that reading is an interactive process during which readers try to use their background knowledge in order to interact with the text (Carrel, 1988; Pearson et al., 2002). Sheorey et al. (2001) emphasize the role of metacognitive awareness in reading comprehension. They believe "the consensus view is that strategic awareness and monitoring of the comprehension process are critically important aspects of skilled reading"(p.432). This kind of awareness and monitoring (metacognition) is "the knowledge of the readers' cognition relative to the reading process and the self-control mechanisms they use to monitor and enhance comprehension"(p.432). Therefore, semantic mapping is a metacognitive strategy (Buchard, 2005) which can help students control and improve their learning before, while and after reading a text.

Second, on the importance of reading comprehension strategies, Grabe (2009) believes that "when reading new information, challenging information, or information for complex and difficult tasks, strategic awareness comes strongly into play" (p.225). This study helped students learn and practice the pre-reading strategy, semantic mapping, that made them achieve independent readers in using strategies. Building semantic maps about a text helps students organize a visual framework of what they know and what they do not know about a topic. Therefore, they may try to think and fill the gaps.

Third, students were made to form groups in order to do the activities. Hence, the results should be interpreted within the framework of cooperative learning. When students are appropriately arranged in groups (both good and weak students are in the groups and their roles are made clear) by the teacher, they know that they should support one another. They should use their personal knowledge and experiences in order to communicate meaningfully in groups. As the teacher has to supervise all the groups and guide them, his or her controlling role is decreased. Therefore, students are left to depend on one another in order to learn the new lesson. They face different people's opinions, reflections, experiences and feedback in group work. Each of these can help the group create a product that reflects a wide range of different views and is thus more complete and comprehensive. In this way, students understand that the responsibility of learning rests on

them. When students interact with people who are close to their own level of understanding, they feel more relaxed. It is the duty of each group member to help others to solve their learning problems and answer the probable questions. As a result, they feel a kind of belonging to the group and are motivated to help their teammates as much as they can. Shy students are encouraged to speak in the presence of their classmates and a kind of warm and close atmosphere is created that help more learning (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Fourth, one of the characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching is that students use the language for meaningful purposes and "teachers to be in general control" (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 48). In Communicative Language Teaching, classroom activities are guided in a way that students participate in a learner-centered, meaningful and real communication. The participants of this study expressed that they experienced a learning situation in which learning was under their control not the teacher's; their background knowledge and experiences helped them interact meaningfully; and they did not repeat teacher's words but said their own words.

Fifth, when students are arranged in groups and are asked to do group activities, they assume some responsibilities and have to obey some rules. This helps good classroom management which is a priority for teachers. The researcher of this study observed a calm, controlled and positive climate in classrooms where group work was running. Students were busy with their responsibilities and in fact they did not have time to disturb others.

CONCLUSION

The research question of this study focuses on the effects of the two pre-reading strategies on students' reading comprehension. Namely, is there any statistically significant difference between the effect of semantic mapping and pre-reading questioning on reading comprehension while controlling for the pre-test scores? The result of the comparison between the mean scores of two groups through the posttest revealed the semantic mapping group developed their reading comprehension skill more than the pre-reading questioning group. It should be mentioned that the results would hold for a special range of age and a particular social/economical class. Whether the participants of this study had used other strategies to comprehend the texts was out of the control of the researcher.

REFERENCES

- Ajideh, P. (2003). Schema Theory-Based pre-Reading Tasks: A Neglected Essential in the ESL Reading Class. *The Reading Matrix*, 3(1), 1-14.
- Ajideh, P. (2006). Schema-theory Based Considerations on Pre-reading Activities in ESP Textbooks. *The Asian EFL Journal. Teaching Articles*, 16, 1-19
- Anderson, N. J. (1999). *Exploring second language reading: Issues and strategies*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Birjandi, P., Ananisarab, M., & Samimi, D. (2013). *Learning to Read, English for Pre-University Students*, Iran Textbook Publishers.

- Bouchard, M. (2005). *Comprehension Strategies for English Language Learners*. Scholastics.
- Canas, J.D. et al. (2004). *Text Concept Mapping: The Contribution of Mapping Characteristics to Learning from Texts*. Pamplona, Spain.
- Carrel, P. L. (1998). *Can reading strategies be successfully taught* [Electronic Version]. Retrieved March 21, 2011, from <http://www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/files/98/mar/carrell.htm>
- Chang, K. E. et al. (2002). *The Effect of Concept Mapping to Enhance Reading Comprehension and Summarization*. The Journal of Experimental Education 71(1), 5-23.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). Chicago: HBJ.
- Chien, C.W. (2013). Using Raphael's QARs as Differentiated Instruction with Picture Books. *English Teaching Forum*, 3, 20-27.
- Clarke, P. J, Truelove, E., Hulme, C., & Snowling, M. J. (2014). *Developing Reading Comprehension*: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd
- Field, J. (2003). *Psycholinguistics*. Routledge English Language Introductions.
- Goodman, K. (1967). Reading: A psycholinguistic guess game. *Journal of the Reading Specialist*, May, 126-135.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F., L. (2011). *Teaching and Researching Reading*: Routledge.
- Heimlich, J. E., & Pittelman, S. D. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications*. Newark: DE: International Reading Association.
- Hudson, T. (1982). The effects of induced schemata on the "short circuit" in L2 reading nondecoding factors in L2 performances. *Language Learning*, 32, 1-31.
- Johnson, D., & Pearson, P.D. (1978). *Teaching Reading Vocabulary*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
- Keshavarz, M. H., Atai, M. R., & Mossaebi Mohammadi, S. (2007). The Effect of Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction on Vocabulary Learning of Intermediate EFL Students. *Journal of Faculty of Letters and Humanities*, 198, 149-176.
- Kinniburgh, L. H., & Prew, S. S. (2010). Question Answer Relationship (QAR) in the Primary Grades: Laying the Foundation for Reading Comprehension. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education (INT-JECSE)*, June 2010, 2: 1.
- Long, M., H., & Doughty, C., J. (2009). *The Handbook of Language Teaching*: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Margosein, C. M., Pascarella, E. T., & Pflaum S. W. (1982). The Effects of Instruction Using Semantic Mapping on Vocabulary and Comprehension. *The Journal of Early Adolescence Summer*, 2, 185-194.
- Mcknight, M. W. (2000). *Overview of reading comprehension*. Retrieved January 15, 2007, from <http://www.onlineacademy.org>
- Mihara, K. (2011). Effects of Pre-Reading Strategies on EFL/ESL Reading Comprehension. *TESL Canada Journal*, 28(2), 51-73.
- Onachukwu, I., Boon, R., Fore, C., & Bender, W. (2007). *Use of a story mapping procedure in middle school language arts instruction to improve the comprehension skills for students with learning disabilities*. Insights on Learning Disabilities, 2(2), 27-48.
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS Survival Manual*. Mc Graw Hill.

- Pan, Y., & Pan, Y. (2009). The effect of pictures on the reading comprehension of low proficiency Taiwanese English foreign language college students: An action research study. *VUN Journal of Science, Foreign Language*, 25, 186-198.
- Pearson, P. D.(2000). Handbook of Reading Research. Vol. 3 (Eds). Kamil,M.,L. Mosenthal, P.B., Pearson,P. D. & Barr,R.,: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Pearson, P. D., & Nell, K. D. (2002). *Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension*. International Reading Association.
- Peng, R. G. S., Hoon, T. L., Khoo, S. F. K., & Joseph, I. M. (2007). *Impact of Question-Answer-Relationships on Reading Comprehension*. Ministry of Education, Singapore.
- Plaut,D.C. (2005). The science of reading : a handbook (Eds) Margaret J. Snowling and Charles Hulme. Blackwell Publishing Ltd
- Reutzel, D. R., & Cooter, R. B. (2013). *The Essentials of Teaching Children to Read: What Every Teacher Should Know!* Third Edition, Boston, MA: Pearson Education
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W.A. (eds.). (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of current Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rivers, W.M. (1968). *Teaching Foreign Language Skills*. Chicago : The University of Chicago Press.
- Rumelhart, D. E., & Ortony, A. (1997). *The Representation of Knowledge in Memory*. In R. C.Anderson, R. J. Spiro of WiE. Montague (Eds.), schooling and acquisition of knowledge (pp.99-135). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawerance Erlbaum.
- Rumelhart, D. (1980). *Schemata: The Building Blocks of Cognition*. In: R. J. Spiro, B. C. Bruce & W. F. Brewer. (Eds.), Theoretical issues in reading comprehension. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Senay Sen, H. (2009). The Relationship between the Use of Metacognitive Strategies and Reading Comprehension. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences 1* (2009), 2301–2305.
- Schwartz, R. M., & Raphael, T. E. (1985). Concept of Definition: A Key to Improving Students' Vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 39, 198–205.
- Sheorey, R., & Mokhtari, K. (2001). Differences in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among native and non-native readers. *System*, 29 (2001), 431–449.
- Supandeni, P. W., Sudiana, N., & Putra, N.A. J. (2013). *Comparative Effect between Question Answer Relationship and Directed Reading Thinking Activity Techniques on Reading Comprehension*. Jurnal Penelitan.
- SMOG Formula (2014) retrieved from www.readabilityformulas.com/smog-readability-formula.php.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Taglieber, L.K., Johnson, L.L., & Yarbrough, D.B. (1988). Effects of Prereadi Activities on EFL Reading by Brazilian College Students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22, 455-472.
- Thongyon P., & Thanyapa C. (2011). *The Effects of Pre-Reading Activities on Reading Comprehension*. The 3rd International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences April 2, 2011. Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University Proceedings-Teaching Techniques.
- Thuy, N. N. (2013). *The Effects of Semantic Mapping on Vocabulary Memorizing*. From www.Filt2013.org/private_folder/.

- Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. (1993). *Psychology for Language Teachers*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wixon, K. K., & Peters, C. W. (1984). *Reading redefined*: A Michigan Reading Association position paper.
- Yeh, H. C., & Lai, P. Y. (2012). Implementing online question generation to foster reading comprehension. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 28 (7), 1152-1175.
- Zadina, J.N., Smilkstein, R., Daiek, D. B., & Anter, N.M. (2014). *College Reading: The Science and Strategies of Expert Readers*. Cengage Learning.

SLA RESEARCH NOURISHING LANGUAGE TEACHING PRACTICE

Marzieh Mehrnoush*

Sima Sayadian

Department of English, Maybod Branch, Islamic Azad University, Maybod, Iran

*Corresponding author:

E-mail: marziehmehnoush@yahoo.com

sima.sayadian@maybodiau.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at providing an overview of some researchers' viewpoints about the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and language teaching. Research into language learning and teaching can provide useful input for L2 teaching. SLA research has made relevant contributions to language pedagogy (Long 1990). Lightbown (2000) argues that SLA research is not the only source of information teachers should draw on and offers teachers' guidance. To this end, this review attempted to highlight the supportive link of SLA to language teaching practice with regard to the researchers' viewpoints about its application in English as a foreign language (EFL) pedagogy.

KEYWORDS: Second Language Acquisition; Language Teaching Profession; Researchers' ideas.

INTRODUCTION

SLA research provides a thorough and in-depth basis for language teaching practice and practitioners. Over the past decades a number of groundbreaking theories have been formed to explain how language learning takes place, discover the variables which contribute to second language acquisition and to provide assistance to second language teachers. These theories of SLA which account for language acquisition from different standpoints, have revolutionized our views of teaching and learning. This review introduces some of the most significant theories of second language acquisition which have contributed to classroom pedagogy.

ROUTE AND RATE OF ACQUISITION

The basic findings of SLA research during the past few decades indicate two main results that firstly second language acquisition is highly systematic, and secondly second language acquisition is highly variable.

Although these two major findings might seem to be conflicting, they are more complementary. The first one primarily refers to the route of development (the nature of the stages all learners go through when acquiring the second language - L2). This route remains largely independent of both the learner's mother tongue (L1) and the context of learning (e.g. whether instructed in a

classroom or acquired naturally by exposure). The second statement usually refers to either the rate of the learning process (the speed at which learners are learning the L2), or the outcome of the learning process (how proficient learners become), or both. We all know that both speed of learning and range of outcomes are highly variable from learner to learner: some do much better much more quickly than others. Such findings had invaluable pedagogical implications for language teaching profession in the sense that if we understand what makes learners learn faster and progress ahead, then we can be better teachers or learners. However, these two research lines are supportive and complementary to our insight of how learners learn. In fact, understanding the route learners follow, and the rate they have, give us a clear expectations of what learners can achieve at given points on the developmental scale; a point which is important for both learners and teachers during the learning and teaching process. In addition, such findings lead us, for example, to a better understanding of the significance of errors in the learning process. Producing them need not be seen as necessarily problematic, but can be regarded to as indication of progress.

Many researchers in the discipline have conducted numerous exploratory and confirmatory research studies to draw the above mentioned conclusions. These two findings have been the basis of many teaching methodologies and teaching practices in the profession.

INTERLANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND LANGUAGE TRANSFER

The term interlanguage (IL) was introduced by Selinker (1969). It refers to the linguistic system an adult second language learner uses to express meanings in the target language. It refers to a dynamic linguistic system that has been made and utilized by a language learner who is not fully proficient but is approximating the target language by maintaining some features of their first language or overgeneralizing target language forms in their language productions.

The interlanguage is viewed as a separate linguistic system which is different from both the learner's mother tongue and the target language. One main feature of any interlanguage is that it stops to develop at some point. Thus, the adult second-language learner never achieves a level of capacity in the use of the target comparable to that achievable by any child acquiring the target as a native language.

Another basic feature of the interlanguage system is transfer. Odlin (1989, p. 27) defines transfer as the influence of similarities and differences between the target language and the first language. Language transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language learning (Odlin, 1989). IL was the origin of a change in second language acquisition, the theory of language transfer was challenged and reconsidered several times. In 1950s, transfer was considered the most important factor that related to errors. In the 1960s, the study of transfer diminished with Chomsky's criticism of behaviorist learning theory which justified that learners' errors were not indication of language transfer but the creative construction process.

UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR THEORIES

Universal Grammar (UG) theories are based on Chomsky's idea that there are certain principles that are foundations of language development. These principles are biologically determined and specialized for language learning (Chomsky, 1969, 1980, 1986). Originally, UG theory did not involve itself with second language learning. It was basically a theory concerning the first language learner. Its principles were later utilized by second language researchers and were applied in the field of second language acquisition. UG was used in order to justify the existence of developmental sequences in interlanguage and to support the view of interlanguage as a natural language which is subject to the constraints of the Universal Grammar (Hilles, 1986:45). The use of UG for language transfer, fossilization and L2 pedagogy was also discussed. Evidence was provided that adults have some sort of access to knowledge of UG, and this knowledge is used in the development of foreign language competence (Bley-Vroman, Felix, & Ioup, 1988).

Generally speaking, UG theories of second language acquisition were generated in order to provide justifications for empirical evidence. UG was basically concerned with the internal mechanisms that lead to the acquisition of the formal aspects of the target language and the similarities and differences between acquiring a particular language as a first or a second language. Although researchers have used UG to generate a number of interesting hypotheses about second language acquisition, and generative theorists regard UG as the best theory of grammar because of its descriptive and explanatory adequacy (Ellis, 1994:429), empirical evidence has been restricted to the acquisition of a small set of syntactic phenomena. A general theory of second language acquisition needs to cover a wider range of phenomena (McLaughlin, 1987:108).

COGNITIVE THEORIES

Psychologists and psycholinguists considered second language learning as the acquisition of a complex cognitive skill. Some of the sub-skills involved in the language learning process are the application of grammatical rules, proper vocabulary selection, and the pragmatic conventions which govern the use of a specific language (McLaughlin, 1987:134). These sub-skills become automatic with practice (Posner & Snyder, 1975). During this process of automatization, the learner organizes and restructures new information that is acquired. Through this process of restructuring the learner links new information to old information and achieves increasing degrees of mastery in the second language (McLaughlin, 1987, 1990a).

From the cognitivist's point of view language acquisition is dependent "in both content and developmental sequencing on prior cognitive abilities" and language is viewed as a function of "more general nonlinguistic abilities" (Berman, 1987:4).

The language acquisition theories based on a cognitive view of language development view language acquisition as the gradual automatization of skills through stages of restructuring and linking new information to old knowledge. However, the differences between the various

cognitive models makes it impossible to construct a comprehensive cognitive theory of second language acquisition and furthermore, as Schimdt (1992) believes:

“there is little theoretical support from psychology on the common belief that the development of fluency in a second language is almost exclusively a matter of the increasingly skillful application of rules” (Schmidt, 1992:377).

MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL

In the Multidimensional Model, the learner's stage of acquisition of the target language is determined firstly by the learner's developmental stage and secondly the learner's social-psychological direction.

The Multidimensional Model has both explanatory and predictive power in that it not only identifies stages of linguistic development but it also explains why learners experience these developmental stages and it predicts when other grammatical structures will be acquired (Ellis, 1994:384). Although the Multidimensional Model has made important contributions to second language acquisition research, there are some problems with the “falsifiability” of its predictive framework, such as explaining how it is that learners learn whatever they manage to produce despite the processing constraints (see also Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991:285; McLaughlin, 1987:114-115). Furthermore, the Multidimensional Model does not explain the process through which learners obtain intake from input and how they use this intake to reconstruct internal grammars (Ellis, 1994:388). In this respect the Multidimensional Model is limited.

ACCULTURATION THEORY

Schumann (1978) maintains that:

“second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target-language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language.”

Based on Schuman's standpoint, second language acquisition is greatly affected by the degree of social and psychological distance between the learner and the target-language culture. Social distance refers to the learner belonging to a certain social group that is in contact with another social group with a different language. Psychological distance results from a number of different affective factors that involve the learner as an individual, such as language shock, culture shock, culture stress, etc. If the social and psychological distance is great then acculturation is ceased and the learner does not progress beyond the early stages of language acquisition. As a result his target language will stay pidginized. Pidginization is characterized by simplifications and reductions occurring in the learner's interlanguage which lead to fossilization when the learner's interlanguage system does not progress in the direction of the target language (for a review see McLaughlin, 1987:110-112).

Schumann's theory received limited empirical support. Among some of the criticisms that the acculturation theory received was that social factors are assumed to have a direct impact on second language acquisition while they are more likely to have an indirect one (Ellis, 1994:233). Also, pidginization is a group phenomenon, while language acquisition is an individual phenomenon. Finally, the acculturation model fails to explain how the social factors influence the quality of contact the learners experience (Ellis, 1994:234).

OUTPUT HYPOTHESIS

The extent to which learners learn by processing linguistic input or by actually producing (i.e. speaking or writing) the language is an issue of debate in SLA research. Opposed to Krashen's claim that acquisition is completely based on comprehensible input, most researchers now acknowledge that learner output also plays a role. Skehan (1998) based on Swain (1995) enlists the contributions of output as follow:

First, the learner production serves to generate better input through the feedback that learners' efforts at production elicit. Second, it forces syntactic processing and forces learners to pay attention to grammar. Third, it allows learners to testify hypotheses about the target language grammar through the feedback they obtain when they make errors. Forth, it helps to automatize existing knowledge. Fifth, it provides opportunities for learners to develop discourse skills. And sixth, it is important for helping learners to develop a 'personal voice' by directing conversation on to topics they are interested in.

The importance of creating opportunities for output, including what Swain (1985) has called pushed output (i.e. output where the learner is stretched to express messages clearly and explicitly), constitutes one of the main reasons for incorporating tasks into a language program. Exercises result in output that is limited in terms of length and complexity. It does not afford students opportunities for the kind of sustained output that theorists argue is necessary for interlanguage development. Research (e.g. Allen, Swain, Harley, & Cummins, 1990) has shown that extended talk of a clause or more in a classroom context is more likely to occur when students initiate interactions in the classroom and when they have to find their own words. This is best achieved by asking learners to perform tasks that require both oral and written language.

LEARNING AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Although there are particular universal aspects of L2 acquisition, there is also considerable variability in the rate of learning and in the ultimate level of achievement. Learning will be more successful when the instruction is matched to students' particular aptitude for learning, and also when the students are motivated.

It is probably beyond the abilities of most teachers to design lessons involving the kind of matching instruction employed in Wesche's study. However, teachers can cater to variation in the nature of their students' aptitude by adopting a flexible teaching approach involving a variety of learning activities. They can also make use of simple learner-training materials (e.g. Ellis &

Sinclair, 1989) designed to make students more aware of their own approaches to learning and to develop awareness of alternative approaches. The good language learner studies suggest that successful language learning requires a flexible approach to learning.

Thus, increasing the range of learning strategies at learners' disposal is one way in which teachers can help them to learn. Such strategy training needs to foster an understanding that language learning requires both an experiential and an analytical approach and to demonstrate the kinds of strategies related to both approaches.

Teachers need to accept that is their responsibility to ensure that their students are motivated and stay motivated and not complain about the fact that students lack motivation. While it is probably true that teachers can do little to influence students' extrinsic motivation, there is a lot they can do to enhance their intrinsic motivation.

CONCLUSION

This paper has reviewed a number of influential second language acquisition theories with varying emphasis on different aspects of the second language acquisition process. What all these theories have in common is the fact that second language acquisition is an ongoing process. Whether language learners use strategies, cognitive or innate mechanisms, they still have to progress towards the target language going through various stages of development.

SLA theories are all concerned with providing explanations about how languages are acquired. Yet, no single theory can offer a comprehensive explanation about the whole process of second language acquisition. Each theory offers a different insight in the complex process of second language acquisition. However based on these theories of second language acquisition and also their explanations and justifications, invaluable pedagogical uses have been drawn by researchers and applied linguists.

The findings of research studies in SLA has nourished ELT pedagogy and classroom practice in essence. The emergence of each theory in psychology accompanied the appearance of one or more teaching methodologies along with specific techniques which were aimed at enhancing learning.

REFERENCES

- Berman, R. (1987). Cognitive principles and language acquisition. In C. Pfaff (Ed.), *First and second language acquisition processes*, pp. 3-27. Cambridge, Mass.: Newbury House.
- Bley-Vroman, R., Felix, S., & Ioup, G. (1988). The accessibility of universal grammar in adult language learning. *Second Language Research*, 4(1), 1-32.
- Chomsky, N. (1969). Linguistics and philosophy. In S. Hook, (Ed.), *Language and philosophy*. New York: New York University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1980). *Rules and representations*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1986). *Knowledge of language: Its nature, origin and use*. New York: Praeg.

- Elley, W. (1991). Acquiring literacy in a second language: The effect of book-based programs. *Language Learning*, 41, 375-411.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2005). *Instructed second language acquisition: A literature review*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Ministry of Education. Retrieved on November 3, 2014.
- Ellis, R., & Wells, G. (1980). Enabling factors in adult-child discourse. *First Language*, 1, 46-82.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981) *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. (1976). Formal and informal linguistic environments in language acquisition and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10, 157-168.
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. London: Longman.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M.H. (1991). *An introduction to second language acquisition research*. London: Longman.
- Lightbown, P. M. (2000). Anniversary article: Classroom SLA research and second language teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(4), 431-462.
- Lightbown, P., Spada, N., & Wallace, R. (1980). Some effects of instruction on child and adolescent ESL learners. In R. Scarcella & S. Krashen (Eds.), *Research in second language acquisition*, pp. 162-172. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.
- Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. Ritchie & T. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413-468). San Diego: Academic Press.
- McLaughlin, B. (1987). *Theories of second language learning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Odlin T. (1989), *Language Transfer, Cross-Linguistic Influence in Language Learning*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Posner, M.I., & Snyder, C.R.R. (1975). Attention and cognitive control. In R.L. Solso, (Ed.), *Information processing and cognition: The Loyola symposium*. Hillsdale. N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Schmidt, R. (1992). Psychological mechanisms underlying second language fluency. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14, 357-385.
- Schumann, J. (1978). Social and psychological factors in second language acquisition. In J. Richards (Ed.), *Understanding second and foreign language learning: issues and approaches*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Selinker, L. (1969). Language transfer. *General Linguistics*, 9, 67-92.

THE EFFECT OF SEMANTIC RELATION STRATEGIES ON IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY RECALL AND RETENTION

Parnian Borza

*Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian

*Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran
Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of semantic relation strategies (semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial) on Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) learners' vocabulary recall and retention. 90 pre-intermediate level students took part in a homogeneity test to determine their homogeneity level. Then they were randomly divided into three groups, 20 learners each: two experimental groups (i.e., semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial) and a control group. Then, three groups were given a pre-test before treatment to determine how well the participants knew the vocabularies of the materials. During an eleven-session course, the three groups covered eight passages selected by the researcher. The experimental group of semantic-concept received instructions on why, when, and how these strategies were used. The experimental group of semantic-pictorial received instructions to classify the words or concepts under pictorial concept determined by the teacher based on the topic, their background knowledge and experience. The control group received traditional vocabulary instructions of using synonyms and definitions or even translation. After the treatment sessions, the participants sat for an immediate vocabulary post-test for the short-term effect, retention, of the vocabularies. Finally, after an interval of three weeks, the participants took the vocabulary delayed post-test as an indicator of the long-term effect, recall, of the vocabularies. Data were analyzed through One-way ANOVA and findings showed significant difference between the groups. The semantic-pictorial group outperformed the other groups in both vocabulary recall and retention. Implications of the study for teaching vocabulary suggest that using semantic-pictorial strategy could be more effective than other strategies in teaching vocabulary to EFL pre-intermediate learners.

KEYWORDS: Semantic Relation Strategies, EFL Learners, Vocabulary Recall, Retention

INTRODUCTION

The outstanding developments in technology and communications have made learning foreign languages in general and English language in particular essential for every individual. English

language has become an international language and a means of communication among people all over the world. In learning a language, there are four skills that we need to improve for complete communication. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Obviously vocabulary size influences the four skills. Indeed vocabularies are the building blocks of every language without which one is quite speechless Mostaan (2013). Ellis (1997) believes that vocabulary knowledge can assist grammar acquisition because knowing the words in a text or conversation aids learners to get the meaning of the discourse, which in turn help them to acquire the grammatical patterns. Zhan-Xiang (2004) believed that vocabularies are just like bricks of a high building; despite quite small pieces, they are vital to the great structure. In fact, vocabulary is the most fundamental component, without which communication is not feasible. Comprehension is also important for second language acquisition. If second language learners cannot isolate words from the oral utterances and cannot use lexical information to predict the meaning of the speech, they will not be able to comprehend the utterances. As a result, comprehension of the input depends on vocabulary depth and knowledge (Alnasir, 2012).

Vocabulary knowledge is not only important for oral comprehension, but also for reading comprehension. For instance, learners cannot understand a reading passage if they do not have an adequate vocabulary and do not have the skills to guess meaning from context. In summary, vocabulary knowledge is an essential component of learning a second language for several reasons. Both native speakers and learners recognize the importance of getting the words right because lexical errors are numerous and disruptive. Thus, it is important for learners to have good lexical skills in order to produce sentences and to understand them correctly.

Akbari (2008) suggested that in Iran the method most frequently used in English classes is to consult a bilingual dictionary or the teacher for the meaning of unfamiliar words. Too much dictionary work makes learners bored and reluctant to read, and decreases their comprehension. Also EFL learners often complain about forgetting words quickly and ask about efficient ways for improving long-term retention of words. Therefore, it seems necessary for teachers to make use of some rather innovative strategies for teaching vocabulary. One of the strategies which can be very effective in improving the knowledge of vocabulary and seems to be neglected in the case of Iranian EFL learners is semantic- relation. Thus, there is an urgent need to study this aspect in order to see if vocabulary recall and retention will be influenced by the use of semantic-relation strategy in Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The main reason behind learning a second language in general and vocabulary in specific is to achieve the ultimate goal, which is to know and understand information similar to that of native speakers of a language. As a consequence, that would lead to the need to know the vocabulary size of native speakers. Nation and Waring (1997, as cited in Schmitt, 2000), in their literature review of vocabulary size studies, concluded that a native speaker's vocabulary size is around 20,000 word families, and it is anticipated that a native speaker will add around 1,000 word families every year to his or her vocabulary size. A person will continue to learn new vocabulary throughout his or her lifetime. Furthermore, Nation (2006) claims that second language learners

need to know around 98% of the written or spoken words in discourse in order to understand it very well. In order to reach this percentage in written texts, learners need to know around 8,000 to 9,000 word families. On the other hand, learners need to know around 5,000 to 7,000 in order to understand a spoken discourse. However, Nation and Waring (1997, as cited in Schmitt, 2000) argued that learners can cope with small vocabulary size of 2,000 to 3,000, but if they want to function in English without any unknown vocabulary, the vocabulary sizes which were stated above are necessary.

The concept of a word is rather difficult to explain and there are several different views concerning what a word really is. Singleton (1999) emphasizes that words have a rather privileged status in the popular understanding of what a language is since they are vital to linguistic communication. Indeed, without vocabulary there is no tool to communicate and everybody realizes it. However, different people see words and vocabulary differently and therefore defining a word has its problems.

Words can also have different forms but the forms are not necessarily seen as different words. Furthermore, words can have similar forms but convey different meanings. In addition, idioms cause more confusion in the definition of a word since they function as separate entities even though they consist of several words (Carter, 1998). Carter (1998) summarizes that orthographic, phonological, grammatical and semantic properties of a word are best captured using the term lexical item since it overcomes some problems which the term word encounters.

Sometimes the term vocabulary item is used instead of lexical item. Lexemes are the basic contrasting units in a language. For example, when looking up words in a dictionary, one is often looking for lexemes instead of words. For instance, different tenses of a verb are actually lexemes; different word forms (Carter, 1998). Cook (2001) emphasizes that a word is more than its meaning. Each word has certain forms of the word; a certain pronunciation and spelling which are linked to the pronunciation and spelling rules of the language.

Semantic relationship (SR) skills include recognizing and using knowledge about the relationships among words based on their meanings (as opposed to their phonological or orthographic forms (Berends & Reitsma, 2006). This is achieved by focusing on semantic features of words, the minimal contrastive elements of meaning. In other words, this teaching draws attention to the most fundamental similarities and differences among word meanings in order to develop and strengthen semantic networks. This type of teaching requires teachers and students to go much deeper into their understanding of words, and talk about multiple meanings and connotations. For example, teachers may use a semantic feature analysis to teach a group of related concepts by creating a matrix. On the left is a list of words that share some features but not others. Across the top are words that are features of the words on the left.

Since 1976 that Novak proposed concept mapping, concept maps have been used widely in different fields. The studies have shown the significant effect of concept mapping on meaningful learning (Novak, 2010). Most of the conducted studies have been on first language. But a few studies have been done on second language which some of them are presented below. Chularut

and DeBacker (2004) studied the effect of concept mapping on academic achievement; self-efficacy and self-regulation of students in English classes as a second language have been investigated. The subjects of the study were college and high school students that enrolled for English classes. The findings of the study showed that a group of students that used concept mapping, achieved higher scores in English achievement, self-efficacy and self-regulation in comparison to control group.

Ojima (2006) in a case study investigated the impact of concept map strategy as a pre-task planning on writing skill of three Japanese students. The results showed that concept mapping improved writing skills of English learners on the basis of its complexity and reflectivity in which English was L2. It should be mentioned that most of the studies in the field of concept map strategy have been done by academic researchers and these studies have been their academic projects. In the present study the concept maps in official classes of teachers have been used.

Concept maps represent the relationships among concepts (Novak, 2010). With the visual representation of key words, students can identify main issues of a text and organize these key issues in a meaningful way. Marashi and Azarmi (2012) compared the effect of presenting words in semantically related and unrelated sets in intentional and incidental learning contexts on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. 120 female EFL learners were randomly put into four experimental groups. In the first group, vocabulary was taught in semantically related sets and in an incidental learning mode. The second group received them in the same sets but in an intentional learning mode. The third experimental group experienced semantically unrelated sets and in an intentional learning mode, while the fourth group was taught the vocabulary in semantically unrelated sets but in an incidental learning mode. The findings revealed that presenting words in semantically unrelated sets and in an intentional learning mode was more effective on students' vocabulary achievement compared to the other modes. Waring (1997) replicated the study of Tinkham (1997).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research questions to be pursued in this study are as follows:

RQ1: Do semantic-pictorial and semantic-concept strategies improve pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary short and long retention?

RQ2: Is there any significant difference between the use of semantic-pictorial, semantic-concept strategies and conventional ways of teaching vocabulary to pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary short and long retention?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In the present study, the population was 90 female students who studied English as a foreign language in Esmatie high school in Ahvaz, Iran. They were all in pre- intermediate level. Non-random sampling method was used for the selection of these participants. They took part in a proficiency test, (Richards, 2007) which was used as a homogeneity test and sixty students whose

scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were chosen as the participants of the present study. They were randomly divided into three groups, two experimental and one control. Each group included twenty subjects. Two experimental groups received semantic-concept and semantic-pictorial strategies while the traditional group received the placebos. The participants were within the age range of 16 to 17.

Instrumentation

In order to accomplish the objective of the present study, the following instruments were employed:

1. Homogeneity test: Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy and Zukowsk (2008) test was used to determine the homogeneity of subjects in terms of language proficiency level and divide the sample population into three groups. This test featured 50 multiple choice items covering only grammar items. The allotted time was 50 minutes. To estimate the reliability of the test, the Kuder-Richardson formula (KR-21) was used and a value of 0.814 was obtained as reliability which indicated that the test was satisfactorily reliable.

2. Pre-test: A pre-test containing the actual test items was administered i.e., based on the classroom materials to the subjects before treatment in order to determine how well the subjects knew the contents before treatment. The subjects were asked to answer 40 multiple-choice vocabulary questions selected from the course passages in 40 minutes. The reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 formula. To ensure that students did not give more attention than they should to the words appearing in the pre-test, no mention was made of the subsequent learning lessons and the immediate post-test or delayed post-test. The reliability of the pre-test was 0.728.

3. Immediate post-test: To determine the effect of pictorial-concept and semantic-concept strategy on vocabulary retention, after each session of instruction where students had done the strategies in the experimental group and covered the passage given to them to be read there was a 5 minutes rest and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice question quiz asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. The reliability of the immediate post-test was 0.899.

4. Delayed Post-test: Following the treatment, three weeks later after the end of the course, the instructor showed up in the class to administer the post-test. The sudden, without notice presence of the instructor in the class was to test the retention of words in a longer period to see the real effect of the treatment. All characteristics of the post-test were the same as those of the pre-test in terms of time and the number of items. The only difference of this test to the pre-test was that the order of questions and alternatives was changed to wipe out the probable recall of pre-test answers. Both the pre-test and the post-test were performed as part of the classroom evaluation activities under the supervision of the instructor. The reliability value of these tests was also calculated through KR-21 formula. It was 0.903.

Materials

The material used in this study, reading passages, were the same for the three groups and had been selected from the following source:

1. Top Notch 2A, Second edition (Saslow & Ascher, 2011): It consists of ten units.

Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study, first 90 female were selected from Esmatie high school in Ahvaz in district three, then a homogeneity test was administered to the subjects under study to determine their homogeneity and to divide the sample population into three groups. The three groups, 20 learners each, were selected randomly: two experimental and one control group. They met for two and a half hours, once a week.

In the second session of the course, a pre-test containing the actual test items was administered to the subjects before treatment in order to determine how well the subjects know the contents before treatment. The actual vocabulary instruction began from the third session. In each session, the first hour was allotted to vocabulary instruction and the rest to teaching the course book. The whole research took place in a natural language school classroom circumstance. To motivate and encourage the subjects to pay enough attention and to play more active role in the research program, they were told that the purpose of the extra instruction was to improve their vocabulary knowledge and to enable them to commit the vocabulary to their long-term memory.

The entire research project took place in eleven sessions. Eight reading passages were chosen and a variety of vocabulary that could challenge the students to think about how the words fit together was extracted from the passages. During eight sessions of instruction, 60 minutes each, the extracted words and their related passages were worked on. The experimental groups received semantic relation strategy instructions while the other one received the placebo. In order to teach semantic relation strategies in the experimental classes, the following phases were carried out:

Phase 1: In the first session, semantic relation strategies were presented and described explicitly. Then, they were explained to language learners why, when, and how these strategies were used.

Phase 2: In each session, before reading the passage, the teacher presented the students with the challenging new words extracted from the reading passage printed on a piece of paper. Since the focus of the research was on using semantic-concept and pictorial-semantic to teach vocabulary, the predetermined categories were specified to list of the challenging new words.

Phase 3: The students were gathered in groups of two or three around a table, and after explaining the meaning of difficult words, they were directed to classify the words or concepts under semantic or pictorial concept determined by the teacher, based on the topic, their background knowledge and experience.

Phase 4: The students were given the reading passage to read from which the new words had been extracted.

Phase 5: After each session, there was a five-minute rest and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice question quiz asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. While the experimental group received semantic relation strategies as treatment, the control group did not receive any particular strategies. The students were seated in groups of two or three

around a table as in the experimental group and were simply given the reading passages and required to read them and asked the teacher in case of facing any problems. Similar to the experimental group, after each session, there was a five-minute rest for the control group and right after that there was a ten-multiple-choice immediate test asking the meaning of the new vocabularies learnt in that session. Of course, it was administered to three groups. Then, in the end, three weeks after the end of the course, in session eleven, the post-test was given to three groups to evaluate the retention of words in a longer period and to see the real effect of the treatment.

Data Analysis

In order to determine whether semantic relation strategies have any effect on vocabulary learning, the collected data were analyzed using different statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations were estimated to describe and summarize the data. The statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA on the three groups' pre-test scores indicated that the difference among the means was not significant. On the other hand, the amount of observed F (.165) for the three groups was lower than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between three group's mean was not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test level. The data of the delayed post-test were put into one-way ANOVA to find the significance differences between the groups. Then a post-hoc Scheffe test was run to determine the effectiveness of instruction which influenced the groups during the recall period. Moreover, KR-21 formula was used to estimate the reliability of the test. The independent variable in this study was semantic relation strategies and the dependent variable was vocabulary learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Three Groups' Pre-test

At the beginning of the study, three groups were given a pre-test which their statistical data is presented in Table 1

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Semantic Relation Strategies(Pre-test)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Min.	Max.
Groups					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Semantic	20	9.4500	10.898	2.43708	4.3491	14.5509	.00
Pictorial	20	10.4000	2.962	.66253	9.0133	11.7867	6.00
Control	20	10.9000	8.340	1.86505	6.9964	14.8036	1.00

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of the students in three groups is 20. Initially, each student's pre-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each groups, were calculated. Results indicated that the average means for every three groups was near and the difference among the three groups' was not significant. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out that the SD of the semantic group was 10.898, higher than other two groups, and SD of the pictorial group was 2.962 which was the lowest comparing to the other two groups.

In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the three groups was statistically significant, One- way ANOVA for the three groups was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. Table 4.2., displays the results of the statistical operations.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA of Semantic Relation Strategies(Pre-test)

	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	21.700	2	10.850	.165	.848
Within Groups	3745.550	57	65.711		
Total	3767.250	59			

Since the critical F ($F_c=3.171$) with $df=2/57$ is greater than the observed F ($F_o=.165$), the difference among the groups is not significant. Therefore, three groups are homogenous. Table 2 indicates the statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA on the three groups' pre-test scores. Results of the pre-test on the subject's scores did not reject the null hypothesis at ($p<.848$) level of significance which indicated that the difference among the means was not significant, because of the fact that the probability level chosen for rejecting the null hypothesis of no difference was $\alpha = .05$, so that the null hypothesis was not rejected if the amount of signification was lower than 0.05. By dividing the between-group variance by the within-group variance and finding the ratio between them, we found the probability that the ratio we obtained would recur if the experiment were repeated an infinite number of times with three sample groups on the same participants or any other experimental groups under the same conditions. The critical F was (3.17) while the observed F was (.165); therefore, the observed ratio was not large enough to convince the researcher that the mean difference was significant. On the other hand, in Table 2., the amount of observed F (.165) for the three groups was lower than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between three group's mean was not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test level.

Results of the Three Groups 'immediate Post-test

The descriptive statistics for the three groups on the immediate post-test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Semantic Relation Strategies(Immediate Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	95% Confidence Interval for Mean					
			Std.Deviation	Std.Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Semantic	20	14.8500	9.922	2.2186	10.2063	19.4937	2.00	39.00
Pictorial	20	19.1500	13.192	2.9498	12.9760	25.3240	2.00	39.00
Control	20	10.9500	8.272	1.8497	6.4284	14.1716	.00	26.00

Table 3 shows that the mean in the pictorial group differs significantly from two other groups, and also the mean for semantic group shows difference to some degree from conventional group. The mean for pictorial, semantic, and control groups were 19.15, 14.85, and 10.95 respectively. To describe the statistical significance of the three groups' mean, One-way ANOVA was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. The results of the statistical operations are analyzed in Table 4.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA of Semantic Relation (immediate Post-test)

Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	
Between Groups	783.433	2	391.717	3.447	.039
Within Groups	6477.300	57	113.637		
Total	7260.733	59			

Based on Table 4, the results of the immediate post-test on the subject's scores rejected the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance which shows that the differences among the means were significant. The amount of observed F (3.447) for the three groups was higher than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between the three group's mean was significant. Since the probability level for rejecting the null hypothesis was smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. To clarify which group outperformed other groups in the immediate post-test, the Post-hoc Scheffe test was conducted to compare the specific mean effectiveness among the three groups. Data are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Post-hoc Scheffe test (Multiple Comparisons of Semantic Relation Strategies(Immediate Post-test)

(I) VAR00002	(J) VAR00002	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Semantic	Pictorial	-4.30000	3.37101	.448	-12.7730	4.1730
	Control	4.55000	3.37101	.408	-3.9230	13.0230
Pictorial	Semantic	4.30000	3.37101	.448	-4.1730	12.7730
	Control	8.85000*	3.37101	.039	.3770	17.3230
Control	Semantic	-4.55000	3.37101	.408	-13.0230	3.9230
	Pictorial	-8.85000*	3.37101	.039	-17.3230	-.3770

*, The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

It can be inferred from Table 5, that pictorial group is significantly different from control group at the 0.05 level. The semantic group is not significantly different from the control group ($p < 0.408$). The results shows that the pictorial group shows the greatest difference in compare to the control group ($p < 0.039$) and it shows that the pictorial-semantic instruction had the most influence on the results of vocabulary retention on the immediate post-test and learners' scores.

Results of the Three Groups ' Delayed Post-test

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Semantic Relation Strategies (Delayed Post-test)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimu m	Maximu m
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Semantic	20	12.80	11.35	2.53	7.48	18.11	1.00	33.00
Pictorial	20	18.50	11.61	2.59	13.06	23.93	2.00	35.00
Control	20	9.15	6.62	1.48	6.04	12.25	1.00	23.00
Total	60	13.48	10.68	1.37	10.72	16.24	1.00	35.00

Table 6 shows that the mean in the pictorial group differs significantly from two other groups, and also the mean for semantic group shows difference to some degree from conventional group. The mean for pictorial, semantic, and control groups were 18.50, 12.80, and 9.15 respectively. To describe the statistical significance of the three groups' mean, One- way ANOVA was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio. The results of the statistical operations are analyzed in Table 7.

Table 7: One-way ANOVA of Semantic Relation Strategies(Delayed Post-test)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	888.23	2	444.11	4.328	.018
Within Groups	5848.75	57	102.61		
Total	6736.98	59			

Based on Table 7, the results of the delayed post-test on the subject's scores rejected the null hypothesis at ($p < .018$) level of significance which shows that the differences among the means were significant. The amount of observed F (4.328) for the three groups was higher than Critical F (3.17) suggesting that the difference between the three group's mean was significant. Since the probability level for rejecting the null hypothesis was smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. To clarify which group outperformed other groups in the delayed post-test, the Post-hoc Scheffe test was conducted to compare the specific mean effectiveness among the three groups. Data are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8: Post-hoc Scheffe test (Multiple Comparisons of Semantic Relation Strategies(Delayed Post-test)

(I)	(J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
VAR00001	VAR00001				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Semantic	Pictorial	-5.70000	3.20327	.214	-13.7514	2.3514
Pictorial	Control	3.65000	3.20327	.526	-4.4014	11.7014
	Semantic	5.70000	3.20327	.214	-2.3514	13.7514
Control	Control	9.35000*	3.20327	.019	1.2986	17.4014
	Semantic	-3.65000	3.20327	.526	-11.7014	4.4014
	Pictorial	-9.35000*	3.20327	.019	-17.4014	-1.2986

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As the data indicate in Table 8, there are significant differences between the Pictorial, Semantic, and the control groups. After three weeks interval pictorial group outperformed semantic and control groups. And pictorial group at the 0.05 level shows a great difference to control group.

Discussion

Picture instruction is another method that can be used in classroom to teach new vocabulary. Pictorial-concept was found to be produced a better performance than the other groups. This superiority is due to the fact that this method allows direct link with the conceptual system; as a result, connecting directly the L2 word with the corresponding concept. For the picture- method participants of the present study, this superiority is obvious in the delayed post-test because they performed better than the other participants. From this study, teachers may gain insights into the role of picture methods in the learners' learning process and ways to integrate this method in their

teaching. Pictures reliably improve the reading-to-learn process—just as had been concluded on the basis of the pictures-in-text research literature through the 1980s (e.g., Levie, 1987)

Fang (1996) suggests that “the contributions of pictures to the overall development of children’s literate behavior seem to be overwhelmingly greater than its potential dangers.” In this regard, Fang (1996) lists six roles that pictures play in storybooks. Pictures may serve to help (a) establish the setting, (b) define/develop the characters, (c) extend/develop the plot, (d) provide a different viewpoint, (e) contribute to the text’s coherence, and (f) reinforce the text. Fang goes on to list several benefits that pictures provide, including such things as motivating the reader, promoting creativity, serving as mental scaffolds, fostering aesthetic appreciation, and promoting children’s language and literacy. Based on the result section, there are significant differences between the three groups. The results of the post-test may show the difference between the three groups in case of the use of semantic strategies. The group of pictorial instruction outperformed the group of semantic-concept instruction. It shows that the use of pictorial-concept might be of more use than the use of semantic-concept concerning vocabulary recall and retention. So the second null hypothesis was rejected. Another possible reason may be due to the fact that although both strategies were explained to the participants; however, learners are more interested with pictorial-concept than concept maps. Furthermore, using pictures is easier, comes naturally, and does not need much instruction; while using concept maps is more complicated and may be confusing for the learners who encounter it for the first time. The results showed that the first group’s scores were 15 to 120 percent higher than the second group’s score which shows the positive effect of contextual instruction on vocabulary acquisition, retention, and use.

The results of the delayed post-test, after two weeks, also showed remarkable difference between the three groups and again better performance of pictorial group than semantic - concept group. The findings of this study concerning semantic-concept strategy did not show a positive effect on vocabulary recall and retention, that is, the results of the study did not indicate the superiority of semantic- concept strategy over traditional ways in terms of improving Iranian EFL learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. The findings of the study also revealed that interval between the immediate and the delayed post-test affects the EFL learners’ vocabulary achievement. This interval may affect the loss of learning. However, it needs further research to study the length of interval and the loss of vocabulary achievement. Concerning the inefficiency of semantic-concept strategy in improving Iranian EFL learner's vocabulary recall and retention, the researcher also found that this strategy was considered new by some of the participants in the study and they were not used to the new strategy. It should be stated that innovative strategies such as semantic-concept strategy, require strong foundations, that is, learners need to build a background concerning current ideas and strategies in teaching vocabulary before the main course of instructions.

CONCLUSION

This study began with the assumption that applying vocabulary learning strategies could enhance the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary recall and retention. The two experimental groups were taught the new vocabulary through two methods of instruction. And the control

group did not receive any instruction. The instructor explored to see if the application of different vocabulary learning strategies have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners or to investigate the effect of each approach.

Having administered the post-test and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of One-way ANOVA, the researchers found that results indicated that the instruction of using pictorial-semantic strategies did affect the learners' vocabulary acquisition and retention the most. The results also showed that applying the semantic-concept strategy may improve the learners' vocabulary recall and retention. This study faced several limitations in this study including the small size of the research population. Secondly, students were not really cooperative since they knew they are participating in a research they may not did their best to complete the experiment. Thirdly, the time allocated to the instruction was so limited

REFERENCES

- Akbari, O. (2008). Teaching vocabulary items through contextualization to elementary Iranian EFL students. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 10(3), 53-77.
- Alnasir, M.E. (2012). *Comprehension between meaning and retention: comprehension between translation method and pictorial method in learning vocabulary in Saudies' school*. MA Thesis. University of Colorado.
- Carter, R. (1998). *Vocabulary: Applied Linguistics Perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Chularut, P., & DeBacker, T.K. (2004). The influence of concept-mapping on achievement, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in students of English as a second language. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 29(3), 248-264.
- Cook, V. (2001). *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. Third edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fang, Z. (1996). Illustrations, text, and the child reader. What are pictures in children's storybooks for? *Read. Horizons* 37: 130-142.
- Levie, W. H. (1987). Research on pictures: A guide to the literature. In Willows, D. M., and Marashi, H., & Azarmi, A. (2012). The comparative effect of presenting words in semantically related and unrelated sets in intentional and incidental learning contexts on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. *Journal of Second Language Teaching and Research*, 1(2), 71-89.
- Mostaan, J. (2012). The effect of concept sort strategy on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention .MA thesis. Islamic Azad University. Khouzestan Science and Research Branch.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2006). *Language Education: Vocabulary in The encyclopedia of language and linguistics*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.
- Novak, J. D. (2010). Learning, creating, and using knowledge: Concept maps as facilitative tools in schools and corporations. *Journal of e-Learning and Knowledge Society*, 6(3), 21-30. Retrieved October 18, 2013, from <http://je-lks.maieutiche.economia.unitn.it/.../433>.

- Ojima, M. (2006). Concept mapping as pre-task planning: A case study of three Japanese ESL Writers. *System*, 34 (4), 566-85.
- Richards, J. C., Lesley, T., Hansen, C., Sandy, C., & Zukowski, J. (2008). *Interchange passages placement and evaluation package (3th eds.)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Saslow, J., & Ascher, A. (2011). *Top notch*, 2A. London: Longman.
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Singleton, D. (1999). *Exploring the Second Language Mental Lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tinkham, T. N. (1994). *The effects of semantic and thematic clustering on the learning of second language vocabulary*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Illinois, Urbana).
- Waring, R. (1997). The negative effects of learning words in semantic sets: A replication. *System*, 25(2), 261-274.
- Zhan-Xiang, M. (2004). The necessity of intensifying English vocabulary teaching in the remote minority area college English teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*. 6(2), 25-31.

THE EFFECT OF TEACHING CONVERSATIONAL STRATEGIES THROUGH VIDEO CLIPS ON DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Zahra Amoozesh

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian

*Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran
Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This research investigated the effect of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on developing speaking skills among senior high school students. In doing so, a homogeneity test was administered among 150 students at the third grade of senior high school. Accordingly, one hundred students whose scores fell above and below the median were selected as the participants of the study. The students whose scores were above the median were selected as high achievers and the students whose scores were below the median were chosen as low achievers. Then, the two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, the control and the experimental groups. Thus we had two control groups with high and low and two experimental groups with high and low proficiency. Before starting the research, a pre-test was administered among all the four groups. In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers' traditional handouts while the experimental groups received six video clips and participated in observation tasks. After 6 sessions of treatment, a post-test was given to the participants. Data were analyzed by paired and independent samples t-test. The findings showed that the experimental group of high achievers significantly performed better than other groups. The results suggest that the video clips can be used in conversational classes to develop speaking proficiency among high achievers rather than low achievers.

KEYWORDS: Conversational strategies, Video clips, Speaking skills

INTRODUCTION

Conversation skills are crucial for effective socialization, influencing how easily people make friends and excel in the workforce (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994). Developing good conversation skills often requires that students break bad habits and come up with conversation topics. Although some dynamic and proactive learners can improve their communicative abilities in their own way (finding chances to talk to English speakers or watching English films or TV programs), finding effective ways to prepare students for spontaneous communication is one of the biggest challenges for all current language teaching methodologies. Hence, instruction in

class is important to provide students with conversational strategies to help them avoid or overcome communication breakdowns. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) argued that conversational strategies are particularly helpful for language learners who frequently face difficulties in conversations, because these strategies provide them with a sense of security in the language. Conversational strategies could be divided into nine types in order of significance: message adjustment or avoidance, paraphrase, approximation, appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, interpretive summary, checking (for comprehension and confirmation), and use of fillers/hesitation devices (Dörnyei&Thurrell). Based on the teaching context, teachers can teach conversational strategies to students in various ways, for instance, through picture dictation tasks (Kebir, 1994), pair-taping (Washburn & Christianson, 1995), or telephone conversation role-plays (Ting & Lau, 2008).

Speaking is an important skill in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Since learners need it for communication (Nunan, 2001). Students must regularly practice conversing with others to improve their speaking and also to develop conversation skills. The teacher can pair up students with other students and make them comment on topics of interest to them, such as their favorite bands. Although students learn effective strategies for conversing, they still appear awkward, since they are not accustomed to using these skills. In this case, teachers can help by pairing awkward students with friendlier students to help the former feel at ease. Conversation skills do not only involve knowing what to say, but also paying attention to others and picking up on non-verbal cues (Nunan, 2001). The teacher should first indicate different aspects of nonverbal communication, such as eye contact and voice tone. Then, he/she should have students exercise expressing hidden meaning through non-verbal cues, and make other students try to interpret these cues. An integral part of developing conversational skills is learning proper manners. The teacher should reinforce conversation etiquette, and direct to keep his/her students from violating these rules. For example students should not interrupt others when they are speaking. The teacher can kindly remind students when they deviate from these norms. Students are often unaware of their incorrect pronunciation (Nunan, 2001). However, no conversation will run smoothly when improper pronunciation impedes clear communication, an especially significant problem with non-native speakers. Indicating an improperly pronounced word is crucial for students to begin addressing the problem. Some sounds make the throat vibrate, while other sounds do not. The teacher should guide students to feel their vocal cords to determine whether they are properly vocalizing. Some sounds produce a puff of air, while other sounds do not. The teacher should have students place a hand near their mouths to determine if air is coming out of the mouth when it should. Also, the teacher should tell students the proper mouth position when making certain sounds. For example, when making the “f” sound, she should instruct students to touch the bottom lip to the top teeth (Nunan, 2001).

When native speakers and non-native speakers hold conversations, they must ordinarily work together to avoid and overcome communication breakdowns. The strategies and tactics which they use include selecting salient topics, checking comprehension, requesting clarification, repeating utterances, stressing key words, and switching topics (Ellis, 1985). Research shows that the skills involved in negotiating to avoid and repair breakdowns are important for ESL/EFL learners to have. Pica (1987) states that "To engage in the kind of interaction believed to activate

the acquisition process, classroom activities must be structured to provide a context whereby learners not only talk to their interlocutors, but negotiate meaning with them as well" (p. 40). Ellis points out that a one to one native speaker to non- native speaker linguistic environment is superior to the one to many environment of the classroom in providing opportunities for negotiated interaction. Anybody can talk about the news or express basic opinions, but good talkers can frequently tell you things you did not know and that you'll find fascinating. This is why it's good to have knowledge into fields such as psychology or sociology, and bring such knowledge out at the right moments in a conversation.

In the current study, video clips were applied in teaching conversational strategies, as Hill (1989) claimed carefully handled videos could provide a good base for speaking tasks. For EFL learners in Asia, the teaching of conversational strategies through video clips may also familiarize them with how conversational strategies are used in native English speakers' cultures. The present study intends to investigate the effect of teaching conversation strategies via printed and visual modes on developing speaking performance among high school students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The term conversational strategies indicate those strategies which help speakers to maintain a conversation and to achieve their communicative goal (Nguyet & Mai, 2012). Using conversational strategies has been suggested as one effective way to overcome problems in maintaining conversations. Learning effective conversation skills ranks as one of the most significant social abilities that students need to accomplish. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) proposed that, learners are well equipped to handle instances of naturally arising conversations through using these strategies. Conversational strategies are also regarded as a sub-division of communication strategies. Sometimes the two terms conversational strategies and communication strategies are believed to be exchangeable. The term conversational strategies indicate those strategies which help speakers to maintain a conversation and to achieve their communicative goal. In short, conversational strategies are worth attention because they can facilitate interaction and fluency.

Effective Factors in Selecting Film

Nowadays, exposing students to English culture is the best way to study English. Using original films is one of the best approaches because language in movies is rich and dialogues are authentic (Chun-Yi, 2008). In other words, stated clearness, attractiveness, length, and familiarity are four criteria of good films for using in the classes. The students are expected to understand the language of the film. The attractive and appealing film arouses the students' curiosity. Students' proficiency level in four skills should be considered in selecting the films and video clips. In addition, time pressure is another major performance condition affecting speaking. Language teachers should pay attention to the length of the film because they need to fit the time of the class. Teachers can cut the extensive sections from films while learners understand the entire plot.

For mature and advanced learners, teachers have to select films which deliver a clear message to enhance classroom discussion. King (2002) stated that teachers should choose films that deal with different interesting fields such as education, science, history, marriage, justice, etc. A theme-based discussion allows students to discover relevant issues rose from a variety of perspectives, develop critical thinking skills, elicit responses, engage in conversation freely on all aspects of the movie they watch and release them from inhibiting grammatical rule-binding and detailed-oriented learning habits.

Speaking Skill

Speaking is an important skill in learning English as EFL. Language learners and teachers look for effective ways to increase this skill. Chastain (1988) argued that speaking a language includes more than knowing the linguistic components of the message and developing language skills needs more than grammatical comprehension and vocabulary memorization. Speaking is an interactive process of building meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and developing. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be recognized and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce special points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (i.e. linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (i.e. sociolinguistic competence). A speaker's skills and speech habits may have an effect on the success of any exchange (van Duzer, 1997). Speaking has a special and important place in the language learning. Language teachers should keep in mind that speaking is not a skill, which they can improve in isolation. Like other language skills, speaking is a process. Speakers use their background and linguistic knowledge to make a meaningful message to their audience. Converting thought to language, though a subconscious process, is a very demanding task for a second or foreign language learner. Speakers must be able to anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations (Chastain, 1988). They must also handle discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, a learner involved in the exchange with the salesperson described previously must know the usual pattern that such an interaction follows and access that knowledge as the exchange progresses. The learner must also choose the correct vocabulary to describe the item sought, rephrase or emphasize words to clarify the description if the clerk does not understand, and use appropriate facial expressions to indicate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service. Other skills and knowledge that instruction might address involve the following: producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language; using grammar structures accurately; assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives; selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the

topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs; applying strategies to increase comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension; using gestures or body language; and paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement (Brown, 1994). Teachers should monitor learners' speech production to determine what skills and knowledge they already have and what areas require development. Therefore, speaking is a key to communication. By considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report, teachers can help learners improve their speaking and overall oral competency.

Students often think that the ability to speak a language is the product of language learning, but speaking is also a very important part of the language learning process. Effective instructors teach students speaking strategies, using minimal responses, recognizing scripts, and using language to talk about language that they can use to help themselves expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it. These instructors' help students learn to speak so that the students can use speaking to learn.

In a study, Lee (2010) investigated the effects of using film-based instruction on listening comprehension and speaking skills of Applied English majors. The researcher analyzed students' performances on listening comprehension tests and oral presentations before and after the instruction. In addition, students' learning knowledge before and after the instruction compared. The study lasted for a whole semester, from September 2008 to January 2009. The participants of this study were 22 Applied English Department students in Southern Taiwan University who were enrolled in the elected course "Movie English." Instructional activities were developed out of the three feature films which were selected as the main teaching materials in this research. The top three types of films recommended by students were comedy, dramatic feature and animation. The instrumental tools included pre and post treatment questionnaire surveys, the pre and post of listening comprehension tests and the evaluation sheet of oral presentation. Follow-up interviews were also conducted after the treatment. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively through SPSS program. The students' responses to the questionnaires and interviews were also analyzed qualitatively. Based on the findings of the study, using film-based instruction was enhanced learning interests and motivation. Also, it was provided the chance for learning real-life conversation and it was improved listening comprehension and speaking ability of learners. Moreover, Subjects responded that dictation and listening exercise assist their listening most and oral presentation and group discussion help their speaking most.

Nguyet and Mai (2012) explored the effects of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on learners' speaking performance. It was planned as an experimental study conducted with two groups of English majors. All participants received six weeks of instruction on four conversational strategies. The control group received direct instruction from the teachers' handout while the experimental group viewed six video clips and participated in observation tasks. Data was collected via pre-and post-tests on speaking performance and semi-structured interviews. The results showed that after the treatment with video clips, (a) the frequency of the

use of these strategies increased, (b) the learners' speaking performance was enhanced, (c) there was a low correlation between the frequency of strategy use and the learners' speaking performance, and (d) the learners expressed a positive attitude towards the treatment.

Suttinee and Kanchana (2009) aim to obtain empirical data on the types of communication strategies those low-ability students select which may affect their oral communication abilities. Three hundred Thai university students participated in the initial part of this study, 100 of who were randomly selected to complete the Strategies Used in Speaking Task Inventory, which was developed to elicit responses related to their use of communication strategies. In addition, content analysis was employed to confirm the quantitative analysis. It was found that low-ability students tended to employ risk avoidance techniques, especially time gaining strategies, and needed assistance in developing risk-taking techniques such as social-affective, fluency-oriented, help seeking, and circumlocution strategies.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This paper specifically attempted to reflect on the following research question:

Do teaching conversational strategies through video clips enhance the learners' speaking performance among high achievers?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study was conducted with the help of 100 students who were selected out of 150 students of the third grade of Farzanegan high school and Hajar high school, Ahvaz, Iran. As some students attend English institutes and have higher English education, the first step was to make sure of the students' homogeneity in speaking level. Based on Homogeneity test, the students whose scores fell below and above the median were selected as the participants of the study. Fifty of the students were below the median and another fifty students were above the median. Therefore, two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, control and experimental groups. Thus, there were two control and experimental groups with high proficiency and two control and experimental groups with low proficiency, each of them included 25 students. The participants ranged in age from 16 to 17 years old. In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers' handout traditionally while the experimental groups received six video clips and participated in observation tasks.

Instrumentation

Several different testing instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially the pre- test and post -test were piloted on five learners of English at a similar level to the participants of the study to find out if any modifications should be made. There were no significant changes after the piloting of the test.

A homogeneity test was used to determine the students' homogeneity level. The test contained 50 multiple-choice items and the students were supposed to answer them in 60 minutes. The reliability of this test was computed through Kuder-Richardson-21 formula as ($r = 0.73$).

A pre-test and a post-test determined the effects of teaching conversational strategies through using video clips on developing speaking skills. Moreover, the post-test included the same dialogues in the pre-test. The inter-reliability values of pre and post tests were calculated through Pearson Correlation Analysis as ($r=.72$) and ($r=.81$) respectively. Furthermore, a checklist (Hughes, 2003) was used in both pre and post tests to measure communicative abilities of participants.

Materials

The textbook used in this curriculum for the two groups was "Fundamental Top Notch A and B" written by Joan Saslow and Allen Asher (2007). Considering six sessions for the research at the high schools, the high achievers studied five units of Fundamental Top Notch B and the low achievers studied five units of Fundamental Top Notch A which were selected as the materials of the study. The units were chosen to be compatible with the proficiency level of students. Six two to four minutes video clips were carefully selected from Fundamental Top Notch A and B, which were in line with the speaking level of the experimental groups. Five of the video clips were compatible with the five units of the aforementioned textbook and the sixth clip served as a review for all the strategies used in the supplementary course. The control groups were provided with the hand out of the same selected unit conversations.

Procedure

This study was conducted at Farzanegan high school and Hajar high school in Behbahan, Iran. The participants were 100 high school students out of 150 students in the third grade of aforementioned schools. Based on their performance on a speaking placement test designed by Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy and Zukowski(2008), the students whose scores fell below and above the median were selected as the participants of the study. Reliability index of homogeneity test was ($r=0.73$). So, we had one group of students with high and another one with low English speaking proficiency. Then, the two groups were randomly divided into two sub-groups, control and experimental groups, each of them had 25 students ranged from 16 to 17years old.

The material was five units which were selected from "Fundamental Top Notch A & B" based on students' level. In the experimental group six video clips were used. Each of them was from 2 to 4 minutes. The five week supplementary course were held on five types of conversational strategies which in high groups they were chosen from Top notch B and in low groups the conversation strategies were chosen from Top notch A to be in line with the level of proficiency of students. The sixth video clip served as a review for all of the strategies used in supplementary course. The selected video clips had to meet some criteria. Existence of some various conversation strategies was the first criterion. The second criterion was their appropriateness based on the students' English level and their speaking proficiency. Thirdly, in selecting the video clips we had to take into account the participants' social and religious norms and values as well as the relatedness of the film to the students' daily life in order to communicate well with

them. The video clips were appropriate and fun for the senior high school students. They also were both pedagogical. So they were suitable for using in classes to discover the effects of teaching conversation strategies on developing speaking skill.

In the control groups, conversational strategies were taught directly by using the teachers' handout. A pre-test was administered to discover the speaking skill proficiency at the beginning of research period. Through the pretest, the researcher asked all the four groups of students to practice the five conversations selected by her from "Fundamental Top Notch A& B" in 30 minutes and choose one of them deliberately to practice with their partners. The students were free to choose the dialogue and also add or remove some utterances to them. In fact they were open ended dialogues. The researcher observed the students' conversations that were done in pair and recorded their voices by mp3 player and transcribed them. A checklist (Hughes, 2003) was used in pre-test and post -test to measure communicative abilities of participants. The recordings were evaluated through inter-rater correlation to arrive at the reliability value which met as ($r=0.72$). The treatment lasted 6 sessions, 30 minutes a session, twice a week.

During the treatment, in each session, the researcher devoted times to showing the video clips, introducing conversation strategies and their uses and also practicing new words and dialogues. Each video clip was presented and repeated to the students for 10 minutes in every session. During each session, four types of techniques including note taking, question and answer, discussion, and description were used to work on the video clips. Most of the students took notes while they watched the clips for reviewing it. After watching the clips, some questions were asked to discover students' comprehension of it and then the students practiced the conversation strategies presented in clips in pair. In addition, the students discussed the videos and gave their opinion about them. The control groups were conducted by the same activities which were done in the experimental groups. The only difference between the control and the experimental groups related to the visual phases. Finally, after the six weeks of treatment period, a post-test of speaking achievement covered all the materials was administered to the four groups. Through the post-test, the researcher chose one topic for conversation from the five units of the book that was taught during the course and asked students to do it pair wise. In this phase students could not choose the dialogues themselves. As the pre-test, the students' conversation recorded and transcribed and evaluated by the Hughes (2003)' checklist. The recordings were evaluated through inter-rater reliability. Finally, the results of the pre-test and post-test were compared to each other to know the effect of teaching conversation strategies through video clips on developing students speaking performance.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of teaching conversational strategies through video clips among senior high school students. Students' speaking exam was conducted at the first and the end of the research as the pretest and post-test of speaking. Participants' interviews were recorded for analyzing in both pre and post- tests. The data were collected and analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17 in order to determine whether teaching conversational strategies through video clips has any effect on developing speaking skill. In this study, the data were analyzed by Independent and paired samples t-test to see if there

was any significant difference between the control and experimental groups regarding their speaking performance. The analysis went further to find out whether it influences on students' performance in speaking skill; two t-test analyses were applied in this section, for the two groups' performances on speaking. Then, an independent samples t-test was also performed to determine the rate of mean differences, if any, between two groups and this last t-test was used to show the role of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on speaking skill.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine the effect of teaching conversational strategies through video clips on developing speaking skills among senior high school students, once the scores of the pre-test and post-test were obtained, the mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. Then, analysis of paired and Independent Samples t-test was run in order to find out whether the differences between the two paired and independent groups are statistically significant or not. It is important to note that the researcher employed all the formulas with the level of significance set at 0.05 in all their applications. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' speaking pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), means, standard deviations (SD), and standard errors of mean.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test Experiment. Vs. Control)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error
Experimental (L)	1.00	25	18.16	7.79	1.55
Control (L)	2.00	25	18.00	7.00	1.40
Experimental (H)	1.00	25	16.36	4.54	.908
Control (H)	2.00	25	16.72	5.99	1.19

In Table 1, shows the number of the students in the groups of low and high achievers in pre-test are 25. The standard deviations in the experimental and control groups of low achievers were (7.79) and (7.00), while the standard deviation in the experimental and control groups of high achievers were (4.54) and (5.99) respectively. Furthermore, the mean of the experimental low and control low was 18.16 and 18. In addition, the means of the experimental and control groups of high achievers were 16.36 and 16.72 respectively. Thus, there were close means between the pairs low and high achievers in the pre-test. The differences between each the two groups were not significant.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-test (Experimental vs. Control in High and Low Achievers)

t-test for Equality of Means									
Groups		T	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Me an Diff erence	Std. Error Differ ence	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper		
Experimental (Low) vs. Control (Low)	Equal variances assumed	.076	48	.939	.160	2.09	-4.05	4.37	
	Equal variances not assumed	.076	47.45	.939	.160	2.09	-4.05	4.37	
Experimental (High) vs. Control (High)	Equal variances assumed	.239	48	.812	.360	1.50	-3.38	2.66	
	Equal variances not assumed	.239	44.73	.812	.360	1.50	-3.39	2.67	

Table 2 shows observed t for experimental and control low achievers is .076 with df=48. This amount of observed t does not exceed the critical t, i.e. 2.00. Thus, both groups are homogeneous. The observed t for experimental and control high achievers is .239 with df=48. Since the observed t does not exceed the critical t, both groups are homogeneous. Consequently, the p values for low and high achievers are .939 and .812 respectively which are more than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the two groups are homogeneous which shows no significant difference between the two groups. So, it can be claimed that two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of the experiment regarding their prior knowledge. Descriptive statistics of students' speaking post-tests are summarized in the Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Low and High Achievers in Groups' Post-tests

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental (L)	25	22.72	2.92	.58
Control (L)	25	18.80	7.45	1.49
Experimental (H)	25	22.68	7.57	1.51
Control (H)	25	17.32	9.085	1.81

Table 3 shows the number of the students in the groups of low and high achievers in post-test is 25, and in each experimental low and high group is 25 too. The standard deviations in experimental and control low achievers are (2.92) and (7.45) respectively, while the standard deviations in the experimental and control high achievers are (7.57) and (9.08) respectively. In addition, the mean of the experimental and control low achievers are 22.72 and 18.80 respectively, and the mean of the experimental high and control high are 22.68 and 17.32.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-tests of Low and High Achievers in Groups' Post-tests

t-test for Equality of Means								
Groups			t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differ ence	Std. Error Diffe rence	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper
Experimental (L) vs. Control (L)	Equal assumed	variances	2.44	48	.018	3.92	1.60	.69 7.14
	Equal assumed	variances not	2.44	31.20	.020	3.92	1.60	.65 7.18
Experimental (H) vs. Control (H)	Equal assumed	variances	2.26	48	.028	5.36	2.36	.60 10.11
	Equal assumed	variances not	2.26	46.49	.028	5.36	2.36	.59 10.12

Table 4 shows there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups in the post-test. Thus, the difference between the means of the experimental and control groups is significant. The Independent Samples t-test for the post- test between low achievers showed that the observed t for the experimental and control low achievers is 2.44 with 48 degree of freedom, this amount of observed t is greater than the critical t (2.0). Also the Independent Samples t-test between high groups showed that the observed t for experimental high and control high is 2.26 with 48 degree of freedom, this amount of observed t is greater than the critical t (2.000). Furthermore, t-test analysis showed the significance value as .018 in the low groups and .28 in the high groups are much greater than 0.05. This means that there is significant difference between the means of the fourth sets of scores in experimental and control groups. Thus, the treatment made a significant difference between control and experimental groups' post-tests. In other words, teaching conversational strategies through video clips developed the speaking performance of the senior high school students.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of teaching conversational strategies through video clips in improving speaking skill. Since the experimental groups outperformed the control groups in both high and low achievers, teaching conversational strategies through video clips are supposed to improve speaking skill among senior high school students. One possible explanation of such a result is that the correct use of video clips in the classrooms may help students to enhance using conversational strategies in developing their speaking skill. This explanation is compatible with Katchen (2003) who discovered that films could be used as the major course materials in listening and speaking course for English majors at the university levels. It also showed that students benefited from using films. Combination of sounds and

images in watching films may be one of the reasons that improve speaking. King's (2002) ideas are in line with the results of the present research since he stated that the great value of films lies in its combination of sounds, images and sometimes texts. Another explanation for the greater progress of the experimental groups with comparing to the control groups is that using video clips could better demonstrate how to avoid communication breakdown and enhance learners' conversational fluency. Moreover, it was observed that these video clips could effectively illustrate how the conversational strategies are used with both verbal and non-verbal communication. This enables learners to use vocabularies, speaking expressions, and frequently used grammatical structures in their interactive strategies.

Based on the findings of this research, creating a meaningful environment by use of video clips may encourage students to speak. As Canning-Wilson (2000) supports this idea, the use of visuals, films, cartoons, and some audio-visual materials help learners to clarify the messages and enhance their understanding. Progoosh (1996) states the same results and notes that visual imaging systems have widespread among people and is an inseparable part of people's lives. Thus, video clips provide strong motivation for students to learn English. This is in line with Gorjian and Dorshmal (2013) who found that using films in teaching could be motivated and attractive. Similarly, Istanto (2009) emphasized the use of films in classes and his findings are consistent with the outcome of current study. Istanto also argued that films provide strong motivation for learners to learn the target language and culture because they can learn in more interesting ways compared to traditional class activities. Moreover, Jahangard (2007) took the same position and proposed visual materials increase language learning in classrooms.

Based on the above supports, the video clips may arouse learners' curiosity and can motivate learners to develop their speaking skill through using conversation strategies. The learners show less stress and tension in the class since they were able to cope with the difficulties of speaking through various activities and putting them into the use. The learners feel more comfortable in the classes which are fun for them. The findings of this study also are compatible with the findings of Bahrani and Soltani (2002) who concluded that learners show great interest in watching films and different programs of TV during their research. The participants attended the classes with low anxiety which led to the high motivation.

The results also showed that teaching conversational strategies through video clips could generally lead to improve the speaking skill. This result might be predictable since the use of video clips in teaching conversational strategies may attract learners' attention and the observation tasks could raise the learners' awareness on the strategies used in the video clips. Thus, the frequent use of conversational strategies could enhance the learners' speaking performance since they can see when and how to use the strategies in an appropriate manner.

Comparing the means of the pre-test and post-test of the two experimental high and low achievers showed the speaking score of the two experimental high and low achievers improved and there was significant increase in mean of the experimental high achievers. The results also indicated that the experimental high achievers outperformed the experimental low achievers in the post-test although this difference was not significantly confirmed. This may be due to the

background knowledge of high achievers and their mastery on the vocabularies and expressions used in the video clips. Therefore, it can be claimed that having good knowledge of English grammar and vocabularies and also having good listening ability can be a key factor in developing speaking skills through video clips. Thus, the use of video clips for teaching conversational strategies in developing speaking skills may be beneficial to high rather than low achievers.

CONCLUSION

This study proposed new way of teaching conversational strategies that facilitate interaction and maintain speaking fluency in daily conversations. Video clips, are suggested as an effective tool for carrying out this teaching process (Gorjian & Dorshmal, 2013). In this respect, high school learners can be familiar with how conversational strategies are used in native English speakers' cultures. Finally, it is vital for instructors to choose appropriate conversational strategies, video clips, and observation tasks to suit their learners' needs in specific context. The results of the research indicated that video clips did affect the senior high achievers' speaking skill; however, the difference between the high and low achievers in the experimental groups was not significant. In other words, both high and low achievers of the experimental groups performed in the post-test without any significant difference.

REFERENCES

- Bahrani, T., & Soltani, R. (2011). Improving the components of speaking proficiency. *Canadian Social Science*, 7 (3), 78-82.
- Brown, H.D. (1994). *Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). *Focus on speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Canning-Wilson, C. (2000). Practical aspects of using video in the foreign language classroom. *The Internet TESLJournal*, 6(11), 2-4. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.iteslj.org/Articles/canning-video.html>.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second-language skills: Theory and practice*, (3rd ed). San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
- Chun-Yi, B. (2008). Brief analysis of college English teaching mode for viewing, listening and speaking. *Journal of Ezhou University*, 15(4), 1-24.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1994). Teaching conversational skills intensively: Course and Rationale. *ELT Journal*, 48(1), 40-49.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gorjian, B., & Dorshmal, N. (2013). The role of the pedagogical films in developing Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill: The case of motivation. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, 4(4), 143-150.
- Hill, B. (1989). *Making the most of video*. London, England: CILT.

- Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Istanto, J. (2009). The use of films as an innovative way to enhance language learning and cultural understanding. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 6(1), 278–290.
- Jahangard, A. (2007). Evaluation of EFL materials taught at Iranian public high schools. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 9(2), 130-150.
- Katchen, J. (2003). Teaching a listening and speaking course with DVD films: Can it be done?, In H. C. Liou, J. E. Katchen, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Lingua TsingHua* (pp. 221-236) Taipei: Crane, 2003.
- Kebir, C. (1994). An action research look at the communication strategies of adult learners. *TESOL Journal*, 4(1), 28-31.
- King, J. (2002). Using DVD feature films in the EFL classroom. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 15(5), 509-523.
- Lee, S. C. (2010). The effects of feature films upon listening comprehension and speaking skills: The case of STUT applied English students. Retrieved January 18, 2013 from <http://www.eshare.stust.edu.tw/View/14821>
- Nguyet, T.M.N, & Mai, L.T.T. (2012). Teaching conversational strategies through video clips. *Language Education in Asia*, 3(1), 32-49.
- Nunan, D. (2001). *Second language teaching and learning*, Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Pica, T., Young, R., & Doughty, C. (1987). The impact of interaction on comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(4), 737-758.
- Progoosh, D. (1996). Using video for listening assessment: Opinions of test-takers. *TESL Canada Journal a Revue TESL Du Canada*, 14(1), 34-40.
- Richards, J. C., Lesley, T., Hansen, C., Sandy, C., & Zukowski, J. (2008). *Interchange passages placement and evaluation package* (3th eds.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Saslow, J., & Ascher, A. (2006). *Top Notch Fundamentals*. White Plains, New York: Pearson Longman.
- Suttinee C. & Kanchana P. (2009). A study of English communication strategies of Thai university students. *MANUSYA: Journal of Humanities, Special Issue No.17*, 100-126.
- Ting, S. H., & Lau, L. Y. (2008). Lexical and discourse-based communication strategies of Malaysian ESL learners. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 4, 18-31.
- Van Duzer, C. (1997). *Improving ESL learners' listening skills: At the workplace and beyond*. Washington, DC: Project in Adult Immigrant Education and National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education.
- Washburn, N., & Christianson, K. (1995). Teaching conversation strategies through pair-taping. *TESL*, 28(2), 41-52..

THE EFFECT OF PRE-TASK PLANNING & ONLINE PLANNING ON FLUENCY & ACCURACY IN L2 ORAL PRODUCTION BETWEEN INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS IN IRAN

Mohamad Ali Fatemi, PHD. Assistant professor of TEFL
Islam Azad university, Torbat-e-heydariyeh branch
Fatemi35@gmail.com

Neda Tafazoli, MA student of TEFL
Islam Azad university, Torbat-e-heydariyeh branch
Neda.tafazzoli@gmail.com

Maryam Ghanbarizadeh, MA student of TEFL
Islam Azad university, Torbat-e-heydariyeh branch
Ghanbarizadeh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to compare the effect of pre-task and online planning on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' accuracy and fluency in speaking. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 30 intermediate female learners at the first grade of high school were chosen by means of a sample Preliminary English Test (PET) and randomly divided into two experimental groups of 15 students; the pre-task and online planning groups which were provided with 8 sessions with the last one devoted to the posttest. The students in both classes were given the same tasks (two, three, and five minutes depending on the task complexity) but in one group, the participants carried out the task without any planning beforehand and in the other, they performed pretask planning. After the treatment, the two groups were given a posttest on a narrative task. The results of the T-test indicated that the pretask planning group outperformed the online planning group in terms of speaking accuracy and fluency. This study can have some implications for incorporating task based language teaching in the language classroom.

KEYWORD: pretask planning, online planning, fluency, accuracy

INTRODUCTION

The dissatisfaction with traditional methodologies in language teaching and their failure in bringing about naturalistic language learning in which language is used meaningfully and communicatively resulted in a paradigm shift within language teaching towards the more learner-centered communicative methodologies. One of these developments is known as task-based language teaching, a logical development of communicative language teaching (CLT). Task-

based language teaching draws on the use of different tasks in the classroom context as a tool to make language learning a meaningful experience in which an outcome is desired.

Historically speaking, an interest in tasks as potential building blocks of second language instruction came to the scene when researchers turned to tasks as second language acquisition research tools in mid 1980s (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Some of the proponents of task-based language teaching (TBLT) (e.g., Willis, 1996) consider this change to be a logical development of CLT since it draws on several principles forming part of the CLT movement from 1980s. In fact, in TBLT, it is suggested that engaging learners in task work provides a better context for the activation of learning processes than form-focused activities. This appears to ultimately provide better opportunities for language learning. As indicated by Samuda and Madden (cited in Crookes & Gass, 1993), task-based learning comes from the belief that language can be learned by doing when attention is focused on meaning. TBLT, therefore, organizes the learning process by tasks to be performed in the target language not by functions, notions, topics, and structures.

One way of accounting for language performance is by examining the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of the language produced. According to Skehan (2009), successful performance in task-based contexts include: complexity, defined as more advanced language, accuracy, in which the performer tries to make as few errors as possible, and fluency, the rate of speech production. Since speaking and writing are seen as complex and multi-faceted phenomenon involving a series of interrelated stages, attention to one aspect of production is likely to be at the expense of the other. Depending on the situation, an L2 learner's attention might be focused on one of the three aspects of performance while jeopardizing the other two. For example, L2 learners who are more concerned with the correctness of what is said might not pay much attention to how something is said or vice versa. Therefore L2 learners, especially those at lower levels of proficiency, find it difficult to attend to meaning and form at the same time. L2 learners' problems in production may be lessened if they are given time to plan before they produce an L2 utterance or composition. When learners are given the opportunity to plan the linguistic and propositional content of an upcoming task, they can make up for the drawbacks in their language production and as a result the quality of the linguistic output is improved. In relation to providing learners with opportunities for planning, a number of studies have investigated the impact of planning on language production over the last past decade (e.g. Ellis, 1987; Mehnert, 1998; Ortega, 1999).

Oral tasks are commonly used in second or foreign language classes, which are at times challenging for language learners. The reason seems to be that unlike writing tasks where learners can review and revise their output, an oral presentation demands online language processing. Therefore, students are often given some time to prepare for their presentation prior to the conduction of the task. Ellis (2005) refers to such a preparation as strategic or pre-task planning. Over the past decade there has been a growing interest in the effect of pre-task planning on the subsequent performance. For example, Ortega (2005) claimed that one of the main benefits of strategic planning was that it enabled the learners "to access the upper limits of their interlanguage systems without time pressure, thus, making a wider linguistic repertoire available for subsequent on-line use" (p. 90). In other words, strategic planning reduces the cognitive pressure of online performance. The main focus of the research has been on various design

features and implementation procedures of the tasks and their effects on different aspects of language use such as the fluency, complexity, and accuracy of task performance. While the previous studies have not provided consistent results, they have recognized the influence of certain variables. Task planning, which is defined as the provision of time before or during performing a task (Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008), is one of the implementation variables producing relatively consistent effects on L2 task performance (Ellis, 2003; Ellis, 2005). Task planning, whether pretask or within-task, has been shown to have predictable effects on certain aspects of language use; however, their influences on these aspects are somewhat different (Foster & Skehan, 1996; Yuan & Ellis, 2003).

With regard to its theoretical rationale, the study of planning is considered within a larger framework, namely information processing. Models of information processing account for how information is stored and retrieved. Information processing models are informed by a number of principles (Ellis, 2005). The first principle of information processing models is a control mechanism that language users need to access when they are performing a new task for which they do not have linguistic knowledge (Baddeley & Hitch, 1974; Baddeley & Logie, 1999). This control mechanism draws on explicit stored knowledge. Therefore, it uses up processing power and thus overloads working memory. In fact, this control mechanism consists of a central executive system and a phonological loop. According to Baddeley and Logie (1999), the central executive system controls the relationship between the working and long-term memory. This system is limited in capacity. Therefore, the extent to which language learners are able to attend to a specific system depends on the extent to which other systems are automatized. Hence, planning, whether pretask or within task, seems to play a role in reducing the burden on short-term memory and thus allows for controlled processing and the linear processing of multiple systems. The phonological loop consists of two components, that is, the phonological store providing a temporary representation of material taken from the input or long-term memory and an articulatory rehearsal mechanism which helps maintain materials in working memory that are subject to vanishing. By using this mechanism, that is, articulatory rehearsal, planning allows learners to attend to one set of material while drawing on another set for modification.

Researchers have distinguished two major types of planning pre-task planning and within-task planning (online planning). These are distinguished based on when the planning takes place either before the task itself or during the performance of the task (Ellis, 2005). Pre-task planning is further divided into rehearsal and strategic planning. According to Ellis (2005):

Rehearsal entails providing learners with an opportunity to perform the task before the ‘main performance’. In other words, it involves task repetition with the first performance of the task viewed as a preparation for a subsequent performance. Strategic planning entails learners preparing to perform the task by considering the content they will need to encode and how to express this content. In pre-task planning, the learners have access to the actual task materials. Within-task planning can be differentiated according to the extent to which the task performance is pressured or unpressured. This can be achieved most easily by manipulating the time made available to the learners for the on-line planning of what to say/write in a task performance. When this is unpressured the participants have the opportunity to conceptualize, formulate and

articulate their messages with some care. Moreover, Yuan and Ellis (2003) define online planning as 'the process by which speakers attend carefully to the formulation stage during speech planning and engage in pre-production and post-production monitoring of their speech acts'. In the case of pre-task planning, learners plan propositional content and isolated chunks of language to encode it. As the name suggests, online planning takes place during performance of a task, whereas pre-task planning examines how planning prior to performance influences production. Task-based language teaching, which requires learners to transact tasks resembling their real life language needs, demands language learners to perform planning at different stages of their learning. Thus, in this study, we aimed at examining the effect of pretask and online planning on accuracy and fluency of oral tasks.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of studies have investigated the effects of planning on L2 learners' oral performance. Research lends general support to the claim that planning in advance impacts positively on language production, mostly fluency and complexity (Ortega, 1999). Studies by Crookes (1989), Foster and Skehan (1996), Skehan and Foster (1997), Wendel (1997) and Mehnert (1998) report that pre-task planning results in increased fluency. In addition, pre-task planning has a positive effect on complexity, in that more complex language is produced by planners than non-planners (Ellis, 2004). Foster and Skehan (1996) found that detailed planners used significantly more subordination than undetailed planners. Wigglesworth (1997) reports that one-minute of planning time only led to more complex language use in the high proficient learners on the difficult task. Yuan and Ellis (2003) found that pre-task planning had a positive effect on complexity. As thus, it has been found that pre-task planning has a positive effect on fluency and complexity. When it comes to accuracy, however, the effects of strategic planning are less certain.

The body of research has consequently shown that pre-task planning leads to more complex language production (e.g., Ortega, 1999), but the findings for accuracy are somewhat surprising. For example, a study by Foster and Skehan (1996), which investigated the effect of three conditions of individual planning (unplanned, detailed planning, and undetailed planning) on task performance, demonstrated that less detailed planning activity resulted in more accurate language production. Wendel (1997), who also found that pre-planned discourse was not significantly more accurate than unplanned performance, explained that accuracy might depend on online/moment-by-moment processing while learners perform the task and not on the offline/pre-task planning.

As discussed above the findings of research on the positive impact of pre-task planning on complexity have been more conclusive than those on the accuracy. In other words, as mentioned above some studies (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Wendel, 1997) concluded that planning was not effective on accuracy, nevertheless Wigglesworth (1997), who investigated the effect of planning on the performance of different task types and at different proficiency levels in a language testing context, found that planning led to greater accuracy and complexity only on high-proficiency candidates and generally on the most demanding tasks (e.g., summary of a conversation). However, the results indicated that low proficiency candidates did not benefit from

planning time. Wigglesworth suggested that this may have been due to the fact that the low proficiency learners did not use the planning time effectively or may have focused on the content rather than the language of their performance. However, later investigation by Mochizuki and Ortega (2008) advanced the proposal that guided planning that involves specific grammatical features may be a suitable pedagogical tool to be used with beginning levels in foreign language classrooms since this type of guided planning may lead to a balance between communication and grammar.

Crookes, in line with Wigglesworth (1997) found that planning opportunity resulted in significantly more complex language in terms of longer utterances, higher number of S-nodes per utterance, and more and longer subordinate clauses. Regarding accuracy, however, no support was found for the hypothesized favorable effect of the planning condition. Crookes (1989) concluded that a tension appeared to operate in the L2 production between complexity and accuracy, and that planning opportunity seemed to have a more powerful effect on language complexity than on language accuracy, in that the urge for complexity may undermine or weaken simultaneous efforts in achieving accuracy. This pay-off between complexity and accuracy led Crookes to the conclusion that no differences in accuracy are to be expected when learners are given opportunity to plan.

Kawauchi (2005) used three different proficiency levels to show the effect of the interaction between proficiency and pretask planning on task performance. Sixteen low intermediate, 12 high-intermediate, and 11 advanced L2 Japanese learners participated in this study. The content of pretask planning was also specified through choosing three kinds of planning: writing, rehearsal, and reading. The results of the study showed that while strategic planning improved fluency, complexity, and accuracy, it appears that strategic planning worked to the advantage of high-intermediate L2 learners since they performed at the same level of fluency as the advanced L2 learners. Planning also had a negative effect for advanced L2 learners in terms of repetition as an aspect of fluency. In addition, planning appears to have improved complexity in the high-intermediate learners more than in the advanced intermediate learners. Advanced learners were also at a similar level of accuracy to the high-intermediate learners under both planning and non-planning conditions. The low intermediate learners benefited most from the planned task in terms of accuracy.

In another study on the effects of planning condition, task structure and gender on different aspects of written performance, Jafari (2006) found that there was a significant difference between planned and no-planned groups in terms of performance measures (i.e., strong and positive effects of planning on all aspects of learners' performance were observed). There was also an interaction between task structure and planning condition. That is to say, the effects of planning were greater with the personal (i.e., picture-description tasks) and narrative (i.e., narrating stories from some picture strips) tasks than with the decision-making task. In contrast, no interaction was found among task structure, planning condition and gender. Rahmanian (2004) examined the relationship between pre-task and online planning and fluency, accuracy and complexity. He concluded that pre-task planners outperformed other groups in terms of fluency. However, the difference in accuracy and complexity of different planning groups did not reach

conventional level of significance and the mean difference was not considerable. Regarding the effect of task type, he found that descriptive tasks, being easier than narrative tasks and freeing up more attentional resources, were not only significantly more accurate, but also more complex.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in the accuracy of EFL learners' speaking ability in the pretask and online planning conditions?
2. Is there a significant difference in the fluency of EFL learners' speaking ability in the pretask and online planning conditions?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 30 EFL students. They were all Iranian adult females, ranging in age from 14 to 16 who were at the first grade of High School in Torbat-e-Heydariyeh, Khorasan razavi, Iran. The participants were homogenized by a sample Preliminary English Test (PET) at the beginning of the term. As the classes were assigned for the teacher, the sample was selected based on convenient non-random sampling. After homogenizing the participants, they were randomly divided into two experimental groups of 15 students, one served as the pre-task planning group and one as the online planning group.

Preliminary English Test (PET)

At the onset of the study, a sample of Preliminary English Test was used to homogenize 60 students among the 105 first grade students of the mentioned high school. The PET consisted of speaking section and 67 items in the reading, writing, and listening sections. The test had a total score of 75 and the administration of the test took 120 minutes. The mean of the scores was calculated and students who achieved between one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen as the participants of this study.

Procedure

Every session, a task was given to the participants as part of their regular classroom instruction. The instruction was carried out over 7 sessions and the 8th session was allocated to the posttest. The participants in the pre-task planning group listened to the teachers' description of the task and were told that they would receive some time to plan (two, three, or five minutes depending on the task complexity) during which they could think about what they would say when they carry out the task. The participants in this group worked on the pre-task planning individually. After the planning time, two students were randomly asked to talk about the task.

However, the participants in the online planning group worked on the same task in groups with the same planning time and the same teacher's description of the task but without having time to preplan the task. As the posttest, an oral task the same as one of the task types used during the treatment period was selected by the researchers and was given to the participants in both classes

at the end of the term. The task type was narrative and supported by visual material, but required some degree of organization of material to tell a story effectively. The participants in first class (pretask planning) listened to the teachers' description of the task and had five minutes planning time. The only difference in the posttest of the two groups was that the individual pre-task planning group did the planning in the posttest individually while group pre-task planning group carried out the planning in groups of five. The rationale for different conduction of planning in the posttest was that each group had a different experience during the treatment period and thus, the same context needed to be set for the posttest.

Fluency

Fluency has been defined as the production of language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). It could be defined also as the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulations (Ellis, 2003). Following Foster and Skehan (1996), Skehan and Foster (1999), Elder and Iwashita (2005), fluency was measured by counting the number of repetitions (of the same word or phrase), false starts (utterances abandoned before completion), reformulations (phrases or clauses repeated with some modification to syntax, morphology, or word order) and replacements (substitution of one lexical item for another).

Accuracy

Accuracy is defined as the ability to produce error-free speech (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). Ellis (2005) stated that accuracy can be defined as the ability to avoid errors in performance, possibly reflecting higher levels of control in the language as well as a conservative orientation. In the current study, accuracy was measured by calculating the number of error-free clauses. All errors in syntax, morphology, and lexical choice were counted. High means indicate less number of errors and as a result better performance. The same measure was used in some previous studies (Yuan & Ellis, 2003; Guar -Tavares, 2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the first research question, independent sample *t-test* was used to measure the statistical differences in means between the groups in the results of the post test. The result is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Independent sample *t-test* result for accuracy

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for equality of means		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
treatment	Equal variances assumed	2.235	.641	-6.045	28	.002
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.035	28	.002

According to the findings and on the basis of calculation of sample *t-tests*, observed value of 2-tailed statistic for the groups and (.00) was less than the alpha level of .05. So, we concluded that

there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in their performance on the posttest.

To examine the second research question independent sample *t*-test was used to measure the differences in developing students' speaking skill between groups. The result is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent sample result for fluency

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for equality of means		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
treatment	Equal variances assumed	6.256	0.212	-.758	28	.005
	Equal variances not assumed			-.758	28	.006

Table 3 shows the mean score of accuracy group in pre and posttest.

Table 3: Group Statistics for accuracy.

	Mean	N	SD	SEM
Accu pretask	14.56	15	2.35	0.43
online	17.46	15	1.25	0.75

As you can see in the above table, students in this group have improved over their speaking ability in the posttest. The following table will show the result for the fluency group.

Table 4: Group Statistics for fluency

	Mean	N	SD	SEM
Flue pretask	16.26	15	1.35	0.43
online	14.46	15	1.25	0.75

Regarding the first research question posed, examining the effect of pre-task and online planning on accuracy, it was found that the participants in the online planning group outperformed the pre-task planning group in the number of error-free clauses produced. In a way, this finding is consistent with the results that Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984), Ellis (1987), and Yuan and Ellis (2003) obtained. These three studies suggest that the time learners are given for online planning improves the accuracy of their production. In terms of the second research question the results of the present study indicate that pre-task planning positively affects fluency. In pre-task planning the participants are given time prior to the speaking performance. During this time the participants in most cases try to understand the story illustrated in the pictures, organize the information that needs to be conveyed, establish the setting and describe the characters without feeling any pressure. In line with our findings, a number of studies have confirmed that giving learners the opportunity to plan results in greater fluency (e.g., Foster & Skehan, 1996; Skehan & Foster, 1997; Wigglesworth, 1997; Wendel, 1997; Mehnert, 1998; Ortega, 1999).

CONCLUSION

Many studies have been done on the effect of pre-task planning on students' language performance (e.g., Crookes, 1989; Foster & Skehan, 1996, 1999; Mehnert, 1998; Sangarun, 2005; Wendel, 1997; Wigglesworth, 1997; Yuan & Ellis, 2003). What research evidence has shown so far is that giving learners extended planning time before task performance seems to have beneficial effects for complexity, but the findings have been controversial for accuracy. For example, Yuan and Ellis (2003) found that whereas pre-task planning time promoted higher complexity and lexical variety, it did not have significant effects on accuracy. The purpose of this article was to explore the effects of two types of planning (pretask and online) on oral output. This study, being in line with Ellis and Yuan's (2004) study, suggests that pre-task planning has a positive effect on the fluency and complexity of the Oral output, whereas online planning has an influential impact on the accuracy of the Oral product. This has important implications for Oral pedagogy. Depending on the purpose of Oral tasks teachers assign EFL learners, different aspects of the Oral performance can be emphasized by altering the type of planning conditions.

This study has some limitations. The number of learners participating in this study is small so it limits the generalization of the study. Also, the study has been limited to female students. Moreover, the number of session that students underwent treatment is limited to

REFERENCES

- Baddeley, A. D., & Hitch, G. (1974). Working memory. In G. H. Bower (Ed.), *The psychology of learning and motivation: Advances in research and theory* (Vol. 8, pp. 47–89). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Baddeley, A. D., & Logie, R. H. (1999). Working memory: The multiple component model. In A. Miyake & P. Shah (Eds.), *Models of working memory: Mechanisms of active maintenance and executive control* (pp. 28–61). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Crookes, G. (1989). Planning and interlanguage variation, in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11, 367-383.
- Crookes, G., & Gass, S. M. (1993). *Tasks in a pedagogic context: Integrating theory and practice*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- Ellis, R. (1987). Interlanguage variability in narrative discourse: Style in the use of the past tense, in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 9, 12-20.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2005). *Planning and task performance in a second language*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Ellis, R., & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analysing learner language*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Foster, P., & Skehan, P. (1996). The influence of planning and task type on second language performance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 299–323.
- Guará-Tavares, M. (2008). *Pre-task planning, working memory capacity and L2 speech*

- performance. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil.
- Housen, A., & Kuiken, F. (2009). Complexity, accuracy, and fluency in second language acquisition. *Appl. Linguist.*, 30(4), 461-473.
- Hulstijn, J., & Hulstijn, W. (1984). Grammatical errors as a function of processing constraints and explicit knowledge, in *Language Learning*, 34, 23-43.
- Jafari, S. (2006). *The effects of planning condition, task structure, and gender on different aspects of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' performance (fluency, accuracy, complexity, and lexical density) in written tasks*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.
- Kawauchi, C. (2005). The effects of strategic planning on the oral narratives of learners with low and high intermediate L2 proficiency. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Planning and task performance in a second language* (pp. 143–164). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Mehnert, U. (1998). The effects of different lengths of time for planning on second language performance, in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 20, 52-83.
- Mochizuki, N., & Ortega, L. (2008). Balancing communication and grammar in beginning-level foreign language classrooms: A study of guided planning and relativization. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 11–37.
- Ortega, L. (1999). Planning and focus on form in oral performance, in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21, 108-148.
- Ortega, L. (2005). What do learners plan? Learner-driven attention to form during pre-task planning. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Planning and task performance in a second language* (pp. 77-109). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Rahmanian, M. (2004). *The relationship between pre-task and online planning and fluency, accuracy and complexity of Iranian EFL students production in written narrative and descriptive tasks*. Unpublished master's thesis, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran.
- Skehan, P. (1996). Second-language acquisition research and task-based instruction, in J. Willis and D. Willis (Eds.): *Challenge and Change in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Heinemann, 17-30.
- Skehan, P. (2009). Modeling second language performance: Integrating complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis, in *Applied Linguistics*, 30 (3), 510-532.
- Skehan, P., & Foster, P. (1997). Task-type and task processing conditions as influences on foreign language performance, in *Language Teaching Research*, 1 (3), 1-27.
- Wendel, J. (1997). *Planning and second language narrative production*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Tokyo: Temple University Japan.
- Willis, J. (1996). A flexible framework for task-based learning. In J. Willis and D. Willis (Eds.), *Challenge and change in language teaching* (pp. 52-62). Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann.
- Wigglesworth, G. (1997). An investigation of planning time and proficiency level on oral test discourse, in *Language Testing*, 14, 85-106.
- Yuan, F., & Ellis, R. (2003). The effects of pretask planning and on-line planning on fluency, complexity, and accuracy in L2 monologic oral production. *Applied Linguistics*, 24, 1–27.

THE POVERTY OF THE STIMULUS ARGUMENT AND THE ACQUISITION OF STRUCTURE DEPENDENCY IN PERSIAN EFL LEARNERS

Maryam Sharif

Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
E-mail: sharifmar@yahoo.com

Firooz Sadighi

Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
E-mail: firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Universal Grammar-oriented second language acquisition research has primarily been interested in investigating whether second language learners, called L2 learners henceforth, have access to Universal Grammar (UG) principles and parameters in their interlanguage grammars. Recently, the pendulum has swung to the poverty of the stimulus argument. Drawing upon the poverty of the stimulus argument, the present study was intended to examine whether Iranian adult L2 learners of English show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, and whether their level of L2 proficiency influences their understanding of this principle. To this end, a Grammaticality Judgment Test was administered to 63 Persian learners of English (29 freshmen and 34 senior students) who were classified into two levels of language proficiency (the lower-proficiency level and the higher-proficiency level) based upon their institutional status). The results from an independent-samples t-test revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the two proficiency levels. Similarly, the results from within-group comparisons indicated that the participants in both groups scored highly on structure dependency violations despite the fact that they do not have syntactic movement for questions in their mother tongue implying that their knowledge for structure dependency must be innate as it comes neither from their L1 nor from the L2 input.

KEYWORDS: UG principles, Structure dependency, Poverty of the stimulus argument, L2 acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1980s, UG-oriented SLA studies, inspired by Chomsky's Government and Binding Theory, have proliferated (Ellis, 2008). That is to say, the question of whether SLA is mediated by UG and to what extent has been extensively probed since then.

In the case of L2 acquisition, White (2003a) has emphasized the need to distinguish between two issues: the logical problem of language acquisition, on the one hand, and UG availability (access), on the other hand. These two issues are by no means identical, "although they are often

collapsed” (White, 2003a, p. 22). The former is concerned with whether L2 learners develop unconscious syntactic knowledge or a mental representation that goes beyond the L2 input they encounter (Hawkins, 2001; White, 2003a), and the latter seeks to find out whether or not such knowledge is achieved by means of UG (whether UG is available or accessible to L2 learners) (White, 2003a).

The first decade of UG-based SLA research has principally focused on UG availability to L2 learners drawing upon three sets of hypotheses: no access, partial access (indirect access), or full access (direct access). However, “as hypotheses about UG access developed, interest began to shift from overarching questions like ‘Is UG available?’ or ‘What kind of UG access is there in L2?’ to a closer examination of the nature of the interlanguage grammar, with particular focus on whether interlanguage grammars exhibit properties characteristic of natural language” (White, 2003b, p. 17). As far as the second line of research is concerned, “it is conceivable that there is a logical problem of L2 acquisition” (White, 2003a, p. 22), for there appears to be a mismatch between the input (whether naturalistic input or classroom input) L2 learners are exposed to and the output they represent. Therefore, research which has taken into consideration the issue of the logical problem L2 acquisition or the problem of the poverty of the stimulus has looked for evidence as to whether UG principles constrain interlanguage representations (White, 2003a; Ellis, 2008).

To demonstrate that UG principles constrain interlanguage grammars two conditions must hold:

- i) The phenomenon under investigation must be underdetermined by the L2 input.
- ii) The phenomenon in question must also be underdetermined by the L1 grammar.

“Thus, the strongest case for the operation of principles of UG in interlanguage grammars can be made if learners demonstrate knowledge of subtle and abstract linguistic properties which could neither have been learned from the L2 input alone nor derived from the grammar of the mother tongue” (White, 2003b, p. 22).

A UG principle that since Chomsky has been used as the archetypal example to discuss the innateness hypothesis is the principle of structure dependency (Cook, 2003). Therefore, the present study is an attempt to provide further evidence for the poverty of the stimulus argument through investigating the acquisition of the principle of structure dependency by L2 learners of English from an L1 background without syntactic movement.

Structure dependency

Most SLA researchers focusing on UG availability have narrowed down the scope of their studies to parameter resetting in the L2 and the way it deviates from parameter setting in the learners’ L1s, or the way parameters are related to a particular principle (Cook, 2003). Yet few studies have been dedicated to how principles are acquired in the L2 and how they constrain interlanguage representation.

A specific UG principle is the principle of structure dependency, which since Chomsky (1971) has been utilized to set forth the idea of principles (Cook & Newson, 1996). In essence, the principle of structure dependency provides a test-case for UG-oriented studies of both the L1 and the L2 acquisition (Cook, 2000). In the L1, the existence of the principle of structure dependency provides basic evidence for the innateness of UG, and in the case of L2 acquisition, testing structure dependency is tantamount to demonstrating that L2 learners show knowledge of this principle regardless of whether or not they have syntactic movement in their L1s (Cook, 2003).

The principle of structure dependency assumes that “the knowledge of language relies on the structural relationships in the sentence rather than on the sequence of words” (Cook & Newson, 1996, p. 4). That is to say, the grammatical processes within a language function on the basis of the underlying structures in the sentence rather than the linear order of words within the sentence (Sadeghi, 2007).

Structure dependency is closely related with movement. Movement relates the surface structure to the underlying structure wherein the sentence elements are in positions constrained by the grammar (Cook, 2003). The principle of structure dependency stipulates which element in the structure should be moved “not which word in the sequence or which type of word” (Cook, 2003, p. 203). In other words, “the element to be moved must have a particular structural role in the sentence, not be in a particular place in its linear order” (ibid). For instance, the rules for question formation in English do not rely on the linear order of words rather they are structure-dependent.

According to Cook and Newson (1996), in Chomsky’s writings, the principle of structure dependency has often been introduced through questions like the question in (1) that is related to the statement in (2):

- 1) Is Jack going?
- 2) Jack is going.

In forming yes/no questions in English, it is not the 2nd word that is moved; otherwise, the statement in (3) would become the question in (4):

- 3) On Tuesday, Jack is going.
- 4) * Tuesday on Jack is going?

Rather it is the auxiliary within the structure of the sentence that is moved. However, it is not sufficient to specify the kind of word or phrase (e.g., the auxiliary) that is moved (Cook & Newson, 1996). This could be illustrated by (5), Chomsky’s archetype in the discussion of structure dependency and its related question (6), in which he has combined a question with a relative clause consisting of a copula verb:

- 5) Sam is the cat that is black.
- 6) Is Sam the cat that is black?

It must be noted that only the copula verb in the main clause can be moved not the copula *be* in the subordinate clause; therefore, (7) yields an ungrammatical question in English:

- 7) * Is Sam is the cat that black?

It follows from the discussion above that movement is a matter of moving the right element in the right phrase (Cook & Newson, 1996; Cook, 2003; Sadeghi, 2007), and while structure dependency is closely related to movement, it enters into almost all aspects of language in a way that it affects the interpretation of sentences (see Cook & Newson, 1996, for detailed discussion).

English language shows structure dependency in questions as it forms questions through the syntactic movement of certain elements within the sentence. Persian, on the contrary, forms questions by adding the question particle *aya* to the beginning of the sentence rather than moving elements within the sentence; thus, it does not need structure dependency for the formation of questions. So in case Persian learners of English show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, it surely does not come from their L1.

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Actual L2 research into structure dependency has been sparse” (Cook, 2003, p. 206). In a study, Naoi (1989), as cited in Cook (2003), found that Japanese learners of English showed knowledge of the principle of structure dependency despite the fact that the principle of structure dependency is not required for question formation in Japanese.

In the same vein, Cook (1994), as cited in Cook and Newson (1996), administered a Multi-parameter Universal Grammar Test (MUG test) to a group of native speakers and L2 learners of English from different language backgrounds. The participants were asked for their grammaticality judgment on sentences involving different principles and parameters. The results from the grammaticality judgment tasks revealed that the native speakers rejected sentences with structure dependency violations. As for the L2 learners, all groups with different L1s showed an understanding of the principle of structure dependency, although they demonstrated some variations in their judgment depending on whether they have syntactic movement in their L1s.

In Iran, Sadeghi (2007), in an empirical study, investigated the acquisition of structure dependency among Persian EFL learners by giving a group of 30 adolescents a recognition test, along with a UG adoption test, after training them on relative clauses for four sessions. The results from both tests revealed that the participants showed knowledge of structure dependency, and the few errors they made did not violate structure-dependency indicating that Persian learners of English have the same access to UG as in their L1.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study generally seeks to establish that Persian EFL learners’ interlanguage grammars are UG constrained and more specifically to provide further evidence for the presence of an innate knowledge of a UG principle called the principle of structure dependency in the minds of Persian learners of English, who do not have question movement in their L1.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have been raised for the present study:

- 1) Do Iranian EFL learners from a language background without syntactic movement show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?
- 2) Do lower-proficiency and higher-proficiency learners show any significant differences in their knowledge of structure dependency? (i.e., does the level of language proficiency have any impact on the knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?).

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants for this study were 29 Iranian freshmen (26 females, 3 males) and 34 senior students (26 females, 8 males) studying English as a Foreign Language at an institute of higher education in Shiraz, Iran. The participants, aging from 18 to 40, were selected through convenience sampling.

It must be pointed that in the selection of the participants for the present study, the researchers have chosen to suffice to Persian EFL learners and to dispense with native speaker participants in order to avoid the foul of Bely-Vroman's *comparative fallacy* (cited in White, 2003a; Ellis, 2008), who argued that interlanguage grammars are worth studying in their own right, and what really matters in the study of UG principles and parameters is "whether the interlanguage grammar shows evidence of certain distinctions: does learners' performance on grammatical sentences differ significantly from their performance on ungrammatical sentences?" (White, 2003a, p. 26).

Instrument

For the present study, a Grammaticality Judgment Test (GJT) was administered as GJTs, despite their methodological problems, have been proven to be the conventional method in the UG-related L2 studies, and the results they yield are comparable to those of other research (Cook, 2003).

The grammaticality judgment test included a total of 12 test items (8 grammatical and 4 ungrammatical sentences) adopted from an earlier study conducted by Cook (2000). The sentences, which were modeled on Chomsky's classic examples (Cook, 2003), came in 3 types: relative clauses with copula, questions with relative clauses, and structure dependency violations wherein the wrong copula had been moved. There were 4 cases of each sentence type (see the Appendix).

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the administration of the GJT, the participants were assigned to two groups of language proficiency based on their institutional status, in a way that the freshmen were classified as the lower-proficiency group, and the senior students fell into the higher-proficiency group. Then, the test was carried out in a paper-and-pencil format. The test required the participants to read and

judge each sentence making one of the three choices: *Ok*, *Not Ok*, and *Not Sure*. It must be noted that the researchers adopted an unspeeded format for this study to allow the participants to have sufficient time to judge the grammaticality of each test item using their explicit knowledge of the acquired grammatical rules (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

Scoring Procedure

As for the scoring procedure, a binary system (0 and 1) of marking the GJT was adopted in a way that *Not Sure* and blank responses as well as the overtly wrong responses were counted as incorrect while *Ok* and *Not Ok* responses in case correctly assigned to the right sentence type were treated as correct. As a result, the correct answer was *Ok* for relative clauses and questions with relative clauses, and *Not Ok* for the structure-dependency violations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers in this study have been interested in the interlanguage grammars of individual learners in addition to their group behavior. Hence, as group results may conceal individual variations (White, 2003a), the results of the grammaticality judgment test are going to be presented first for the two groups under scrutiny and then for the individual participants. In addition, two one-way repeated measures ANOVAs and an independent samples *t*-test were conducted to provide opportunities for both within-group and between-group comparisons, the results of which have been tabulated in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7.

Table 1: Repeated measures results for freshmen (multivariate tests^b)

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Type						
Wilks' Lambda	.551	11.010 ^a	2.000	27.000	.000	.449

a. Exact statistics

b. Design: Intercept

Within Subjects Design: Type

Table 2: Pairwise comparisons for freshmen

(I) Type	(J) Type	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^a	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	B	.655	.282	.083	-.063	1.373
	C	-1.069*	.325	.008	-1.897	-.241
B	A	-.655	.282	.083	-1.373	.063
	C	-1.724*	.361	.000	-2.643	-.805
C	A	1.069*	.325	.008	.241	1.897
	B	1.724*	.361	.000	.805	2.643

Based on estimated marginal means

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05level.

Table 1 suggests statistically significant differences in the mean scores obtained by the freshmen on the three sentence types ($p < .0005$). The partial Eta squared value indicates a moderate effect size (Pallant, 2007, citing from Cohen, 1988). Table 2 demonstrates significant differences between Type A vs. Type C sentences on the one hand, and Type B vs. Type C, on the other hand. However, the differences between Type A and Type B sentences are not statistically significant.

Table 3: Repeated measures results for senior students (multivariate tests^b)

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Type						
Wilks' Lambda	.541	13.594 ^a	2.000	32.000	.000	.459

a. Exact statistics

b. Design: Intercept

Within Subject Design: Type

Table 4: Pairwise comparisons for senior students

(I) Type	(J) Type	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^a	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	B	-.176	.209	1.000	-.703	.350
	C	-1.206*	.253	.000	-1.843	-.569
B	A	.176	.209	1.000	-.350	.703
	C	-1.029*	.217	.000	-1.577	-.481
C	A	1.206*	.253	.000	.569	1.843
	B	1.029*	.217	.000	.481	1.577

Based on estimated marginal means

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

In the same vein, Table 3 indicates a significant difference in the senior students' scores on the three sentence types and a moderate size effect. Table 4 reveals non-significant differences between Type A and Type B sentences, yet significant differences between Type A and Type C or Type B and Type C.

Table 5: Correct responses for each sentence type (group results)

N	Lower-proficiency Level 29	Higher-proficiency Level 34
Maximum Possible Score	116	136
a. Relative Clauses	57 (49.13%)	72 (52.94%)
b. Questions	39 (33.62%)	77 (56.61%)
c. Structure-dependency Violations	86 (52.94%)	110 (80.88%)

As it is illustrated in Table 5, both the freshmen and the senior students scored higher on the sentences with structure dependency violations in comparison with the two other sentence types. Also, the freshmen found questions containing relative clauses more difficult than Type A sentences. This is while the senior participants scored almost similarly on Type A and Type B sentences. The results are in line with Cook's (2003) findings that all groups of participants from seven different language backgrounds "strongly reject violations of structure dependency and accept the other two sentence types less strongly" (p. 210). For the sake of a better visualization of the obtained data, see Figure 1 below:

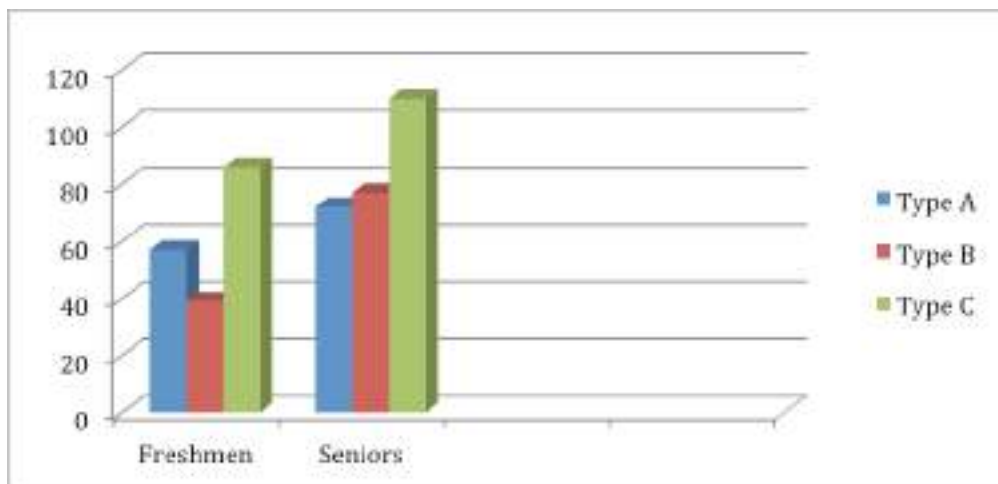


Figure 1: Correct responses for each sentence type (group results)

In order to report the results individually, the scores must be reported in terms of the number of participants scoring at each level from zero to four. Table 6 demonstrates the scores individually for both freshmen and senior students:

Table 6: Scores for L2 individuals for each sentence type

Sentence Types	Scores (Out of 4)				
	0	1	2	3	4
a. Relative Clauses	7	15	20	11	10
b. Questions	13	14	13	15	8
c. Structure-dependency Violations	3	5	6	11	37

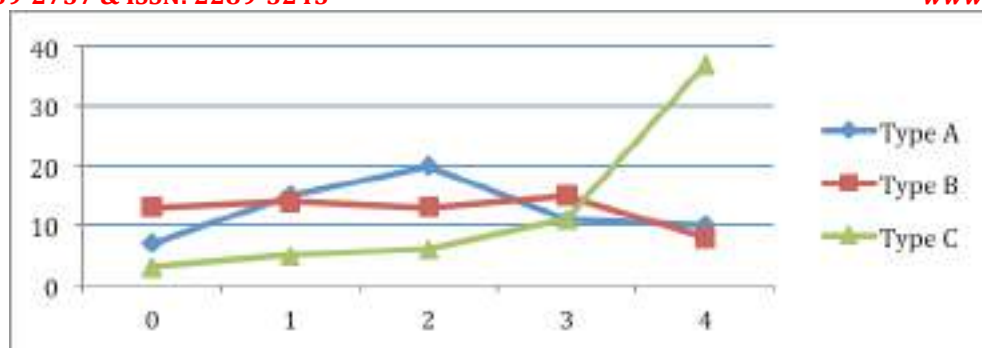


Figure 2: Individual scores for each sentence type

As it is illustrated in Figure 2, Type A sentences show a gradual rise from 0 to 2, then fall at 2. Type B questions, however, move rather steadily from 0 to 3 and fall at 3. Finally, Type C sentences show a gradual rise from 0 to 3 and suddenly peak at 4, showing that 37 participants got 4 out of 4 on Type C sentences. This is while Type A sentences became second, and Type B sentences had the fewest number of individuals obtaining 4 out of 4.

Thus, referring back to the research questions posed earlier in this study (1. Do Iranian EFL learners show knowledge of the principle of structure dependency? 2. Does the level of language proficiency have any impact on the knowledge of the principle of structure dependency?), it must be pointed out that Persian EFL learners show a good understanding of the principle of structure dependency as they could detect violations of this principle by 74.13% for the freshmen and 80.88% for the senior students. This has been established by earlier studies on syntax. Sadighi (2008), for instance, quoting from Shapiro (1997), maintains that no one has yet found instances wherein the L2 learners breach principles like structure dependency. Therefore, the first research question could be answered positively. As for the second research question, it is worth mentioning that an independent-samples *t*-test was conducted in order to compare the scores on the GJT obtained by freshmen and senior students. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the two groups in question at .05 level (see Table 7), indicating that the level of language proficiency had strong impact on the participants' performance on the grammaticality judgment test leading us to conclude that language proficiency does influence this innate endowment. Interestingly, this is in sharp opposition to Jalilifar and Shooshtari's (2009) findings, who concluded that language proficiency has no part in parameter resetting, the case of null subject value.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics and independent samples *t*-test results

		N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
GJT Scores	Freshmen	29	6.17	2.96	-2.187	61	.033
	Senior Students	34	7.65	2.38			

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating whether the principle of structure dependency is known by the Persian L2 learners of English and demonstrating the innateness of this knowledge among L2 learners who do not have syntactic movement for polar interrogatives in their L1.

As it was mentioned before, using the poverty of the stimulus argument to highlight the innateness of a particular aspect of syntax in the L2 learners' interlanguage grammars requires fulfilling the following stages:

- A) providing evidence for the very fact that the L2 learner knows a particular aspect of syntax
- B) demonstrating that this aspect of syntax could not have been acquired from the L2 input
- C) showing that it could neither have been acquired nor transferred from the L1
- D) concluding that it must be innate coming from within the L2 learners' minds.

Hence, if L2 learners show knowledge that does not come from their first language or the L2 input it must then come from their own minds. As for this very study, the participants in both groups showed knowledge of the principle of structure dependency, for they could spot sentences with structure dependency violations, despite the fact that they do not have syntactic movement for question formation in their native language. In addition, the senior students outperformed their lower-proficiency counterparts on the grammaticality judgment test indicating that the level of language proficiency might increase L2 learners' knowledge of UG principles.

Obviously, grammaticality judgment tests do not always yield clear-cut results as L2 learners' intuition tend to be unstable and at times unreliable (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). However, "rejecting the method itself as unsound would undermine most second language acquisition research in the UG paradigm" (Cook, 2000, p. 5).

In the end, it must be pointed out that some scholars including Reali and Christiansen (2005) have challenged the idea that the poverty of the stimulus argument could be applied to auxiliary fronting in interrogatives, which has long been used as a cornerstone in the argument for the innateness hypothesis and have proposed that the basic assumptions of the poverty of the stimulus argument need to be reappraised. Therefore, this study can be considered as a "what if paper", to use Cook's (2003) terminology, in a sense that it is concerned with what consequences will be gained if the poverty of the stimulus argument holds true. Of course, further studies are required to reveal the hidden depths of the poverty of the stimulus argument.

Limitations of the study

The results from the present study might have been limited on several grounds by the methodological problems inherent in the grammaticality judgment test. In essence, the major limitations of this study have arisen from the limitations of the GJT itself. Firstly, the problem of interpreting performance data as evidence of competence might have imposed certain limitations on the findings of the study. Secondly, as Ellis (2008) noted, it is not obvious whether the participants' rejection of particular sentences has been due to the grammatical properties of the sentences or the difficulty they have faced in an attempt to parse the sentences. Finally,

variability in the participants' judgment might have thrown doubt on the reliability of the grammaticality judgment test which has rarely been examined even by eminent UG researchers and has remained unchecked in the present study. The reliability of the GJT for this study could have been examined through a test-retest procedure if the researchers were not pressed for time.

On the whole, had the researchers administered the multiple task technique for the data collection procedure, the findings from the study could have been interpreted with more conviction.

REFERENCES

- Cook, V. J., & Newson, M. (1996). *Chomsky's Universal Grammar: An introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Cook, V. J. (2000). The innateness of a Universal Grammar principle in L2 users of English. *Essex Working Papers*, November 2000. Retrieved from homepage.ntlworld.com/vivian.c/Writings/Papers/SD&UG.htm.
- Cook, V. J. (2003). The poverty-of-the-stimulus argument and structure dependency in L2 users of English. *IRAL International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 41 (3), 201-221. doi: [10.1515/iral.2003.009](https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2003.009).
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analyzing learner language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hawkins, R. (2001). *Second language syntax: A generative introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Jalilifar, A.R., & Shoostari, Z. G. (2009). Investigating parameter resetting by Persian learners of English as a second language: The case of null subject value. *Glossa*, 4 (2), 220-255.
- Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (2004). *Second language learning theories*. London: Hodder Arnold.
- Pallant, J. (2007). *SPSS survival manual*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Real, F., & Christiansen, M. H. (2005). Uncovering the richness of the stimulus: Structural dependence and indirect statistical evidence. *Cognitive Science*, 29 (6), 1007-1028.
- Sadeghi, S. (2007). The accessibility of Universal Grammar in the acquisition of structure-dependency in Persian learners of English. *Journal of Formal, Computational & Cognitive Linguistics*, 1(3). Retrieved from fccl.ksu.ru/issue9/11.doc.
- Sadighi, F. (2008). *English grammar: A development-oriented approach*. Shiraz: Navid Publications.
- White, L. (2003a). On the nature of interlanguage representation: Universal Grammar in the second language. In C. J. Doughty and M. H. Long (eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 19-42.
- White, L. (2003b). *Second language acquisition and Universal Grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX

Grammaticality Judgment Test

Age: -----

Sex: M----- F-----

Directions: Read the following sentences and decide if they are grammatically ok or not. In case you are not certain, check "Not Sure".

1. Sam is the cat that is black.
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
2. Sarah is the woman who is English.
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
3. Bill is the student who is French.
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
4. Joe was the man who was late.
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
5. Is Joe the dog that is black?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
6. Is Bill the man who is English?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
7. Is Sarah the woman who is early?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
8. Was Peter the student who was French?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
9. Is Sam is the cat that brown?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
10. Is Sarah is the woman who early?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
11. Was Bill was the man who French?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----
12. Was Sarah was the teacher who English?
Ok ---- Not Ok---- Not Sure----

Thank You

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, THEIR SELF-ESTEEM, AND GENDER

Mohammad Ali Fatemi (Ph.D)

*Professor at Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Iran
m.fatemi@iautorbat.ac.ir*

Bahareh Shahabi

MA Student at Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Iran

ABSTRACT

This research effort examines the relationship between Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' cultural intelligence (CQ) and their self-esteem (SE) and the effect of gender on these two variables (SE & CQ). To this end, 118 Iranian English teachers from different parts of Iran (Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table), both male (N=53) and female (N=65), participated in this project. Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Cultural Intelligence Centre in 2005 and self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) were used in this study. The results indicated a direct significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their self-esteem ($r=.342$, $sig=.000$). Also it was found that gender does not have any significant effect on EFL teachers' self-esteem (two-tailed $=.189 > .05$) nor does it have any significant effect on their cultural intelligence (two-tailed $= .0933 > .05$). The relationship between cultural intelligence and self-esteem can directly or indirectly lead us to conclude that teachers with higher level of CQ are expected to enjoy higher level of self-esteem, whereas gender has no effect on those variables. These results can have implications for those who are engaged in teacher training programs.

KEYWORDS: Iranian EFL teachers, Self-Esteem, Cultural Intelligence

INTRODUCTION

Recent research shows that teachers have great potential to affect students' educational outcomes (Anderson, 2004). The teacher is an educational leader and decision maker, who directly affects and indirectly influences the students and responsibility of the teachers to guide and inspire students, to enrich his disciples and inculcate values. Research on teacher effectiveness has yielded a wealth of understanding about effective teacher characteristics (Hughes, Abbott-Campbell & Williamson, 2001) on education and learning. These effective teachers have some features that make them different from others.

It is clear that a person who teaches a foreign language and aims at mastering it requires enough information about the culture of the people whose language s/he is trying to teach.

Now, more than ever, cultural intelligence becomes a critical part of preparing youth for their 21st century careers. As the world of work becomes more automated and robotic, cultural intelligence becomes a crucial way to stand apart. As the 21st century presents a deepened global experience through internet resources and more accessible modes of mobility, a greater number of individuals have the opportunity to interact with persons from different cultural backgrounds (Templer et al., 2006). Many ESL students are most comfortable by learning through rote memorization or by mastering grammatical rules that doesn't necessarily mean they won't benefit from other methodologies that you might view as more effective. But teaching with cultural intelligence means you begin with where your students are most comfortable and then find ways to strategically prepare them for alternative strategies. All teachers are aware of the role of English as international language, but only few of the teachers make efforts to teach intercultural activities in language classrooms (Livermore, 2014).

Cultural intelligence (CQ) can be defined as an Individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings" (Ang & Dyne, 2008, p.3). It also gives insights in how one performs effectively in culturally diverse settings. As a result, teachers need to be culturally intelligent in order to classroom management and teach intercultural activities in language classrooms. A great deal of what's required to work effectively in a cross-cultural context requires creative solutions

Self-esteem can strongly influence thoughts, moods and behaviors. Psychologists notice that deep feelings of worthlessness (loss of self-esteem) are the root of many psychiatric disorders (Shamlou, 1991). Self esteem simply means as an individual's overall evaluation of one's self worth or self image (A. Maslow 1954 and Rogers 1980). Teacher self-esteem may be defined as the evaluation of each characteristic contained in teachers' self-concepts.

According to Maslow's need hierarchy theory of motivation, the esteem needs have two versions, a lower one and a higher one. The lower one is the need for the respect of others, the need for status, fame, glory, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, even dominance. The higher form involves the need for self-respect, including such feelings as confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom. So having high self-esteem means a person wants to find the courage to do things that previously did not.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thomas and Inkson (2004) argued that Cultural intelligence (CQ) is a multidimensional competence that is composed of knowledge of other cultures, mindfulness, and a set and of behavioral skills. Cultural intelligence is consists of four dimensions (1) meta-cognition, (2) cognition, (3) motivation, and (4) behavior. Meta-cognition is defined as higher-order mental processes which are concerned with the acquisition, monitoring, and control of cultural knowledge (Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2009). Cognitive intelligence refers to an individual's knowledge about different cultures, including their norms, traditions, and practices (Ang & Dyne, 2008; Ng et al., 2009). Motivational aspect of CQ involves ones interest in learning and functioning in cross-cultural situations (Ang et al. 2006). Behavioral intelligence includes the

capability to behave appropriately in a cross-cultural setting using different relevant verbal and nonverbal behaviors and practices such as culturally appropriate gestures, facial expressions, and tones (Hall, 1959; Ng 2009, Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Chua, 1988).

McNab and Worthley (2011) examined the relationship between CQ and individual characteristics. Their findings indicated that there is a positive relationship between general self-efficacy and CQ. McNab and Worthly (2011) concluded that general self-efficacy is a salient feature in CQ education and development efforts.

Petrovic (2011) investigated teachers' level of cultural intelligence and the factors that may be regarded as the predictors of CQ. In order to this 107 elementary teachers were participated in this study. These teachers were taught in culturally heterogeneous classes. Contacts with other cultures, communication in a foreign language, reading of foreign literature, watching TV travel shows, the importance of knowing other cultures, experiencing multicultural classes as a challenge, enjoyment of intercultural communication, and openness to cultural learning were selected as the factors for CQ predictors. The result Indicated a high level of CQ in these teachers (mean= 67.79, SD= 9.21).most of teachers showed a high (66.4%) or very high (22.4%) level of CQ.

On other hand, most research has confirmed a positive association between self-esteem and achievement. People who think of themselves favorably should be able to learn and work more efficiently. Someone with a high self-esteem would expect to do well (Kohn,1994). Self-esteem, a relatively old concept in psychology, was coined by William James in 1890. James (1890) in his 'Principles of Psychology' defined self-esteem as being the sum of our successes divided by our pretensions i.e. what we think we ought to achieve. Rosenberg (1965) made an important contribution to defining self-esteem by introducing the concept of 'worthiness'. Worthiness is whether a person judges him or herself as good or bad and is therefore an evaluative attitude towards oneself.

Heyde (1977) conducted a study about the relationship between self-esteem and oral production in ESL performers at the University of Michigan. He reached the conclusion that there is a high correlation between global self esteem and teacher ratings of oral production. Langroudi and Amiri (2014) examined the relationship of academic Self-esteem, academic self-efficacy and academic self-concept to academic achievement among Iranian EFL University Students. The findings of this study revealed that first, there was a significant positive relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic achievement; second, there was a significant positive relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement; third, there was no relationship between academic self-esteem and academic achievement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions that drive our research are:

Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' self-esteem and their cultural intelligence?

Does gender have any significant effect on self –esteem?

Does gender have any significant effect on cultural intelligence?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study was carried out in some cities in Khorasan Razavi, Iran. The study participants consisted of 118 Iranian English language teachers who worked at public school or English language institutes. Both male (N = 53) and female (N = 65) participants were included in the study. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to over 50. They were either BA or MA. Their teaching experience ranged from 1 to over 20 years. The participants were selected randomly.

Instrumentations

Two questionnaires of cultural intelligence scale and the self-esteem scale were used in this study.

Cultural intelligence scale developed by Cultural Intelligence Centre in 2005. It consisted of 4 components. The first one, Metacognitive CQ, included 4 items, the second one which is cognitive CQ was comprised of 6 items, the third one which is motivational CQ consisted of 5 items, and the last component, behavioral CQ, was composed of 5 items. The reliability of each component was reported as follows: metacognitive CQ = 0.72, cognitive CQ = 0.86, motivational CQ = 0.76 and behavioral CQ = 0.83 (Ang et al., 2007). The items of this questionnaire are on the basis of a five point Likert scale, i.e., strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965) which comprises 10 statements, 5 positively worded and 5 negatively worded. This 10 item scale assesses an individual's feelings of self-worth when the individual compares himself or herself to other people. The scale is an attempt to achieve a one dimensional measure of global self-esteem. It was designed to represent a continuum of self-worth, with statements that are endorsed by individuals with low self-esteem to statements that are endorsed only by persons with high self-esteem. The scale can also be modified to measure state self-esteem by asking the respondents to reflect on their current feelings. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The reliability this scale was reported as follows:

A correlation of at least .80 is suggested for at least one type of reliability as evidence; however, standards range from .5 to .9 depending on the intended use and context for the instrument. Internal Consistency: Ranges from .77 to .88. Test-Retest: Ranges from .82 to .85. Aside from the materials which were mentioned earlier, the researcher used no other instrument during the administration of the tests. But for data analysis which is the strong base of this research, some software including SPSS 17.0, Excel 2010, and SAS 9.0 were quite useful or better to say essential to carry out the statistics properly.

Procedure

Participants of this study were 118 Iranian English language teachers of different language institutes and public school from Khorasan Razavi, Iran. They were from both genders and from different ages with different years of experiences. Surveys are usually conducted by using questionnaires. In this study, for collecting the data, different English language teachers answered the questions of questionnaires in the form of emails (using Google drive) or on the paper. Collecting data started on December 2014 and lasted for about 3 weeks. Finally, in order to answer the research question, the responses obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software. Then, the correlation between these two variables was calculated

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After collecting data obtained from the instruments, data analysis was conducted by using SPSS (16.0).

Participants' Demographic Information

Table 1 shows data related to participants' demographic information.

Table 1: Participants' demographic information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	male	53	44.9	44.9	44.9
	female	65	55.1	55.1	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Age	20-29	51	43.2	43.2	43.2
	30-39	50	42.4	42.4	85.6
	40-50	7	5.9	5.9	91.5
	over 50	10	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Degree	Teacher Certificate	11	9.3	9.3	9.3
	BA	54	45.8	45.8	55.1
	MA	53	44.9	44.9	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	
Experience	1-5	59	50.0	50.0	50.0
	6-10	31	26.3	26.3	76.3
	11-15	13	11.0	11.0	87.3
	16-20	5	4.2	4.2	91.5
	Over 20	10	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	118	100.0	100.0	

As Table 1 shows a total number of 118 EFL teachers (53 males; 65 females) took part in the study. Participants' age ranged from 20 to over 50 years. The majority of them were 20 to 39 (N=101). Regarding participants' degree, the majority of them (N=107) were either BA (N=54) or MA (N=53). Concerning teaching experience, the majority of them (N=90) were partly novice whose experience was less than 10 years. Only 10 participants had experienced teaching for over 20 years. The rest had the teaching experience between 11 to 20 years.

Correlation between EFL Teachers' Cultural Intelligence & Self-Esteem

In order to see if there is a statistically significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' cultural intelligence and their self-esteem Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test was conducted (Table 2).

Table 2: Results of Correlation between EFL Teachers' Cultural Intelligence & Self-Esteem

		Cultural intelligence	Self-esteem
Cultural intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.342**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	118	118
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	.342**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	118	118

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

As Table 2 displays there is a statistically significant correlation ($r=.342$, $\text{sig}=.000$) between EFL teachers' cultural intelligences and their self-esteem. Based on the present finding it can be concluded that a high level of cultural intelligence results in a high level of self-esteem. This may be due to the fact that cultural intelligence may make teachers' aware of similarities and differences between their own culture and the culture of other groups. So this understanding may increase teachers' level of self-esteem. According to Jersild (1955) and toneslon (1981) teachers' self esteem is closely related to students' self esteem. Teacher with high self esteem is able to evaluate themselves more accurate (vukovich & pheiffer, 1980). Teachers who have higher level of self-esteem are more productive (Schultz & Hausafuse, 1982) and also these factors have a positive impact on their healthy and stress.

Role of Gender in EFL Teachers' Cultural Intelligence

In order to compare scores obtained by males in cultural intelligence with females' independent samples t-test was conducted. Results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of independent samples t-test for males' & females' cultural intelligence

Gender	N	M	SD	Df	t	Sig(two-tailed)
Male	53	74.96	9.41	116	.085	.933
Female	65	74.80	11.02			

As Table 3 shows there is not any statistically significant [$\text{df}=116$, $t=.085$, $\text{sig}(\text{two-tailed}) = .0933 > .05$] difference between males ($N=53$, $M=74.96$, $SD=9.41$) and females ($N=65$, $M=74.80$, $SD=11.02$) with respect to their cultural intelligence. Therefore, gender is not viewed as a factor affecting EFL teachers' cultural intelligence.

Role of Gender in EFL Teachers' Self-esteem

Once again, independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate the effect of participants' gender on their self-esteem (Table 4).

Table 4: Results of independent samples t-test for males' & females' self-esteem

Gender	N	M	SD	Df	t	Sig(two-tailed)
Male	53	26.09	2.55	116	1.32	.189
Female	65	26.64	1.97			

As Table 4 shows there is not any significant difference [$df=116$, $t=1.32$, sig (two-tailed) $=.189 > .05$] between males ($N=53$, $M=26.09$, $SD=2.55$) and females ($N=65$, $M=26.64$, $SD=1.97$) with respect to their self-esteem. Therefore, based on the present finding it can be concluded that gender does not have any significant effect on EFL teachers' self-esteem.

CONCLUSION

This research project explored the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their self-esteem. Cultural intelligence, in a general sense, is the capability of having successful interactions with people from different cultures. In order to get such conclusion, an EFL teacher should teach intercultural activities in language classrooms and, a teacher with high self-esteem want to find the courage to do things that previously did not.

The findings of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' CQ and their self-esteem ($r=.342$, sig $=.000$). Based on this relationship, teachers with high level of cultural intelligence enjoy intercultural communication, openness to cultural learning and contact with people from other cultures, and able to adaptability with different cultures. Thus, because of the significant effect of teachers' self-esteem and cultural intelligence on effective teaching, it seems that teachers with higher self-esteem and cultural intelligence should be employed. The second aim of this paper was to find any relationship between males and female with respect to their cultural intelligence and their self esteem. The results of the analyses revealed gender is not viewed as an affecting factor on EFL teachers' CQ and SE, Therefore, we can conclude that gender does not play a significant role in training and employment of teachers with high self-esteem and cultural intelligence.

This study has some limitations. The result is based on the correlation between cultural awareness and self-esteem and there has been no treatment such as teaching cultural intelligence to the teachers. Also the number of teachers who participated in this study is small. In order to be able to generalize the finding we should search more teachers. Also, the study is limited to EFL teachers in a province in Iran and is not generalizable to other places.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, L. (2004). *Increasing teacher effectiveness* (2nd edition), UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning. [viewed 26 Aug 2006, verified 1 May 2007]
- Ang, S., & Van Dyne, L. (2008). Conceptualization of cultural intelligence: Definition, distinctiveness, and nomological network. In S. Ang & L. Van Dyne (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural intelligence: Theory, measurement, and applications* (pp. 3-15)

- Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., & Koh, C. (2006). Personality Correlates of the Four Factor Model of Cultural Intelligence. *Group & Organization Management*, 31 (1), 100-123.
- Derin, A., Zeynep, C., Pinar, E., Özlem, K., & Gökçe, K. (2009). Turkish EFL teachers' opinions on intercultural approach in foreign language education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1, 1611-1616.
- Doherty, J. (1980). An exploratory investigation into the relationship between self-esteem and teaching performance in a group of student teachers. *Educational Review*, 31(1), 21-35
- Hall, E.T. (1959). *The silent language*. New York: Doubleday.
- Heyde, M. (1977), Self-esteem and oral production. Retrieved June 12, 2008 from: http://www.sdkrashen.com/SL_Acquisition_and_Learning/030.html.
- Hughes, P., Abbott-Chapman, J., & Williamson, J. (2001) teaching Competencies in the classroom: Deconstructing teacher experiences. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 28, 1-24.
- James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard university press.
- Jersild, A. (1955). *When teachers face themselves*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kohn, A. (1994). The truth about self-esteem. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 76, 272-283.
- Langroudi, J., & Amiri, N. (2014). The Relationship of Academic Self-esteem, Academic Self-efficacy and Academic self-concept to Academic Achievement among Iranian EFL University Students. *The Iranian EFL Journal February*, 44, 427-442
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row
- McNab, B. R., & Worthley, R. (2011). Individual characteristics as predictors of cultural intelligence development: The relevance of self-efficacy. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 1-10
- Petrovic, D. S. (2011) How do teachers perceive their cultural intelligence? *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 11, 276-280.
- Rogers, C. R. (1980). *A way of being*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the Adolescent self-image*. New jersey: Princeton university press
- Schultz, J.B., & Hausafus, C.O. (1982). Self –concept of college faculty in a traditionally female field. *College Student Journal*, 16(3), 269-278.
- Shamlou, D. (2014), Teaching English with Cultural Intelligence from: <http://davidlivermore.com/2014/11/>
- Shamlou, S. (1991). *The relationship between job satisfaction and compliance with social norms*, Casestudy: Teachers of Mashhad.
- Templer, K., Tay, C., & Chandrasekar, N. A. (2006). Motivational cultural intelligence, realistic job preview, realistic living conditions preview, and cross-cultural adjustment. *Group & Organization Management*, 31(1), 154-173.
- Thomas, D. C., & Inkson, K. (2004). *Cultural intelligence: People skills for global business*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler
- Tonelson, S. W. (1981). The Importance of Teacher Self-Concept to Create a Healthy Psychological Environment for Learning. *Education* 102, 96 – 100.
- Vukovich, D., and Pfeiffer, I. (1980), “Self Concept and Self Evaluation: What is the relationship? ”, *Action in Teacher Education*, 2 (1), 49-53.

Appendix A:

Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

The 20-item, Four Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

Instructions: Select the response that best describes your capabilities.

Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree).

CQ Questionnaire Items

Factor

CQ-Strategy:

MC1	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MC2	I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MC3	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MC4	I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

CQ-Knowledge:

COG1	I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
COG2	I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
COG3	I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
COG4	I know the marriage systems of other cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
COG5	I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
COG6	I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

CQ-Motivation:

MOT1	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MOT2	I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MOT3	I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

	disagree				agree
MOT4	I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
MOT5	I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

CQ-Behavior:

BEH1	I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
BEH2	I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
BEH3	I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
BEH4	I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
BEH5	I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Appendix B:

Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities..				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

THE PROCESS OF THE IMPLICIT KNOWLEDGE OF LISTENING SKILL DEPENDING ON THE NOTION OF AUTOMATION IN DEVELOPING INTONATION IN EFL CONTEXT

Hadi Kazemi

*Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the role of implicit knowledge of listening comprehension on promoting intermediate language learners' intonation. To achieve this purpose, a language proficiency test was administered to 58 female language learners studying English in Pars language institute. Ultimately, 40 intermediate language learners were divided into an Experimental and a control group. The participants in the Experimental group were instructed to practice listening comprehension strategies explicitly and use intonation types and rules implicitly whereas the participants in the control group received some placebo for ten sessions. Statistical analyses were conducted through Paired and Independent Sample t-tests following the post-test administration. The analyses of the post-tests showed that explicit instruction of listening comprehension for language learners proved to be effective in developing the general listening and specifically the intonation which is the purpose of this study. Independent Sample t-test analyses revealed that there was a significant difference between control and experimental groups. The statistical test proved that there was a considerable difference between the post-test of the experimental group and the control group. This study suggests that intonation should be introduced implicitly and then empowered through a lot of practices in the EFL context.

KEYWORDS: Implicit knowledge, Listening skill, Automation, Intonation

INTRODUCTION

The process of listening comprehension thought to be a passive activity but now described as a dynamic interpretive process consisting of a series of complicated interactive processing stages that a listener goes through. As mentioned there exist many interpretations of these processes and different authors make their own distinctions in gradation and the rank order in which some processes occur.

Although intonation has been noticed by linguists in general to be an indispensable component of language and communication in the field of listening, there are few listening specialists who do more than mention its importance and then proceed to ignore it in proportion to other areas of focus (e.g., Mendelsohn, 2001). This may be because of several factors, one being that, perhaps because of the nature of intonation and its obvious connection with sound, it seems to be more often associated with pronunciation and speech production than listening and is usually seen to fall outside the domain of listening comprehension. It is mainly from authors in the field of pronunciation and speech production; however, that advice is to be found recommending a focus on prosodic elements in the sound stream to facilitate listening.

Developing intonation which is considered as a part of productive skill has been discussed for a long time and has been paid attention to through different aspects in language research. This piece of research has tried to observe intonation and its developmental stages differently. Considering the necessity of listening skill in language learning generally, decision is made to look more deeply on the possible effects which listening skill could have on intonation as a part of the receptive process implicitly. Listening has been looked upon and utilized in teaching explicitly and also the results have been implemented in teaching procedures explicitly to measure the listening effects on different skills and sub-skills of the language. In this namely piece of research a considerable job has been done to show the implicit effects of listening through different materials on the intonation to see whether intonation could progress this way or not in EFL context.

In modern language teaching and learning, listening has gained its active and communicative value while, as comes in the literature, it had been neglected for years or less emphasis was laid on this skill. Due to the technology development, these days the teachers and researchers benefit from various listening tools to display tasks in the classroom to hone learners' listening comprehension ability. Yet, students in each level may have problems listening to audio programs.

Listening has remained a difficult skill to teach students since setting listening task is considered time-consuming and boring if the strategy itself is problematic to enhance the students' level of proficiency. Learning a language, students may encounter some affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, inhibition and so forth that let them keep the pace forward or give up and quit the scene unsuccessfully. It seems the primary step overcoming the barriers would be to understand the language spoken in a context. If the recipient do not listen attentively, understanding may be undergone some difficulties interacting in sides.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Listening Comprehension

The act of listening plays a vital part in our daily life. Celce-Murcia (1996) states that listening is the most frequently used skill in our daily life compared to the other three skills. 45% corresponds to listening, 30% to speaking, 16% to reading and 9% to writing (Hedge, 2005). Morley (1991) maintains that “we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times

more than we read, and five times more than we write in our daily life” (p. 82). However, Nunan (1988) comments that listening is the “Cinderella Skill” which is overlooked by “its elder sister” speaking in second language learning. Brown (2006) asserts that the number of published books on listening comprehension and its classroom practices in many countries demonstrate that listening is regarded as the least important skill in language teaching. Until 1950s and 1960s, language learning and teaching were limited to grammar, reading and literacy. Later on, primarily the Direct Method and then the Audio Lingual Method highlighted the oral skills which are listening and speaking. From 1970s on, instructional programs expanded their focus on pragmatic skills to include listening and other language skills (Osada, 2004). Researches into listening over the past three decades have emerged that listeners need to integrate phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information to comprehend spoken messages (Celce-Murcia, 1996).

Comparing past approaches, in which listening materials were frequently based on a series of post-listening comprehension questions, in modern language teaching teachers can help students listen more effectively if they spend more time teaching them about the purpose for listening (strategy training). As such, it helps students organize and reflect on their learning (Brown, 2006). Furthermore, since listening is so challenging, teachers need to think carefully about making students' activities successful and the content interesting. They can help students explore a way to lessen the difficulty of listening by training them in different types of listening: systematic presentation of listening for main ideas, listening for details, listening and making inferences (Brown, 2006). When students miss one word or phrase while listening, they might be distracted, stop the task, and lose the link, which seems to be the reason for showing fear and anxiety (Underwood, 1990). Hence, students' motivation (e.g. listening to songs & stories) can play a significant role in learning listening and soothing the problem.

Language learners may encounter some difficulties in understanding the incoming speech. Hedge (2005) divides these difficulties into two types as internal and external problems. Internal problems can be listed as the lack of motivation, high level of anxiety, lack of knowledge of the topic under discussion and unknown vocabulary of what is being heard. On the other hand, external problems are related to listeners' failure in understanding as a result of the speakers' characteristics and environmental noises.

Buck (2001) defines strategies as “the thought of ways in which a learner approaches and manages a task” (p. 104). He classifies strategies as cognitive and metacognitive. For him, “Cognitive Strategies are the mental activities related to the comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory for later retrieval” (Richards, 2008, p. 11). This group consists of three processes as Comprehension Process, Storing and Memory Processes, Using and Retrieval Processes. On the other hand, “Metacognitive Strategies are conscious or unconscious mental activities that perform an executive function in the management of cognitive strategies” (Richards, 2008, p. 11) these are assessing the situation, monitoring, self-evaluating and self-testing.

In English, meaning is not only expressed through lexical choices, but also through intonation, whether that is within through groups, sentence-final intonation, or by paragraphs. Intonation can convey a wealth of information, from syntactic and informational material to attitudinal and emotional viewpoints of the speaker. Intonation can be used to manage conversation topics, negotiate turn-taking, and show awareness of information, all of which may not be apparent by other linguistic means (Swain, 1995). As a logical consequence of rich and multidimensional meaning being conveyed through one linguistic feature, many cross-cultural misunderstandings can be attributed to misinterpretation of intonation features in English (Ellis, 1994).

In English there are many types of intonation patterns, depending on the type of sentence. Under the broad category of 'questions' there are different types of questions, each having its own intonation pattern. They are also several different types of intonation patterns for questions alone: yes-no questions, echo questions, calls for confirmation, alternative questions, rhetorical questions, disbelieving questions, and questions to oneself. Despite the fact that, most questions are accompanied by rising intonation (and L2 learners of English are thus taught this), wh-questions are accompanied by falling intonation, which has been the subject of study in the past.

Research and observation are constantly extending the scope of language awareness with the result that the list of skills to be aware of in learning and teaching are constantly being expanded (Swain, 1995). On the whole, most of the studies carried out in the second language classroom (e.g., Buck, 2001); have noted a general positive impact of awareness giving on learners' subsequent post-exposure performances.

In a study conducted by Zhang, Li, Lo and Meng (2010), perception of English intonation by L1 Chinese speakers was measured by dividing sentential intonation into three categories: declarative statements with intonation signifying continuation or termination, wh-questions and yes-no questions. As stated, Wh-questions carry rising intonation, while yes/no questions and declarative statements are expressed through falling intonation. Participants were to listen to a recording of an L1 English speaker saying statements including these intonation types, then mark whether each sentence contained rising or falling intonation. Students scored high on yes/no questions and declarative sentences, but their scores were equivalent to random guessing on wh-questions, showing they were unaware that Wh-questions are accompanied by falling intonation. Results were the same for continuation statements; participants were unaware of the rising intonation that accompanies these types of sentences. This study suggests that intonation in general is a feature of English that requires a student's attention, whether through explicit instruction or implicit learning. More specifically, this study also suggests that different types of intonation patterns are acquired before others. Not only does a L2 English speaker have to perceive and learn the pitch contrasts between different types of statements, but he or she also has to learn the meaning tied to these contrasts.

Levis (1999) argues that current pedagogical materials on intonation lack communicative purpose and present an inadequate view of the functions of intonation. He further claims that current pedagogical materials and texts have overlooked more recent research. One way current materials rely on “outdated and inaccurate descriptions of intonational forms and function” (p. 37) is in describing English intonation patterns. Current research supports a need for three patterns to describe pitch: rising, falling, and a half-fall or unfinished pattern. All three are needed to fully teach comprehensive intonation of conversation, especially for students to learn accurate response cues. Levis (2002) presents four principles for improving intonational teaching methodology. He encourages teachers to teach intonation in explicit context; this is the most effective way to exemplify dialogic intonation assignment. Secondly, teachers should make learnable and generalizable statements about meaning. Levis offers guidelines for teaching emotional-attitudinal effects on intonation meaning. Thirdly, teaching intonation should be in the context of a communicative purpose, not just the pattern. Otherwise, intonation is treated as subordinate to its communicative value. Lastly, it is important to teach intonation with realistic language. If the primary goal of classroom exercises is communicative proficiency, the unnatural language that has been included in textbooks in the past will no longer be applicable.

Overall, the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase scored higher on the perception post-test than those who received no treatment, although the improvement was not found to be statistically significant. A small number of learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the Experimental group did not significantly improve in their perception of intonation patterns compared to their peers. Overall, the difference in scores between the pre- and post-tests is higher for the Experimental group (7.29% vs. 4.55% increase) meaning the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase made more gains than those who received no treatment. There were visible patterns or significant gains in one isolated sentence type, Wh-, tag, or declarative. Despite overall improvement, learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the Experimental group significantly got improved in their perception of intonation patterns. These findings suggest that implicit attention to sentence-final intonation supports acquisition for students with reported musical familiarity, though a further area of research could be separating L2 English speakers' perception of intonation pitch and the meaning attached to it for possibly different results. It is possible that musical familiarity is beneficial to the second language learner only after prolonged experience to a form, or sometimes after the new form is introduced.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The main research questions in this study are as follows:

Does implicit knowledge or automation affect learners' intonation in the experimental and control groups through listening activities in an EFL context?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The samples of the study were gathered of 58 students in an institute located in Ahvaz. The participants are at the same level, taught by the same instructor. Afterwards, they were randomly assigned into two groups based on the results of a standard test administered (FCE): one control group and the other one experimental group, each containing 20 students, respectively. With regard to the timing of the study, all students participating in the research project received course book treatment. Both groups shared similar social and cultural characteristics and were selected as homogeneous in the intermediate institute level. For selecting homogenous participants, a standard listening comprehension test which is known as 'First Certificate in English' (FCE), was administered to a group of EFL learners who were learning English in a language school called Pars Institute. The participants were 58 intermediate female Iranian EFL learners whose average age range was between 18 and 29. According to the standard structure of the test, each item possesses 1 mark and in order to select homogenous participants, those who had between 10-19 correct answers out of 30 questions were selected for the purpose of the study. After selecting the homogenous participants, they were assigned into two groups namely experimental and control groups according to (+1 -1 SD) one standard deviation above and one below the mean. There were 20 female learners in the experimental group and 20 female learners in the control group.

Instrumentation

Initially, before the final administration, the homogeneity test was piloted with a similar group of 10 students. After piloting the test was found to be appropriate for the participants. A reliability index for this test was calculated through KR-21 ($r=.81$). Then 58 participants took the FCE Homogeneity Test. The test contained thirty multiple-choice and fills in the blanks items and one mark has been specified for each item. Based on the obtained scores two groups were specified according to (-1 +1 SD) above and below the mean. Each group included 20 participants.

A teacher made test was designed and piloted with a similar group of 10 students, then item analysis (item facility and item decimation) was employed through item analysis. Some items were modified or discarded and replaced with new ones. The reliability index for the pre-test was ($r=.76$). After piloting the instructor concluded that only 25 questions could be used in the pre-test level. So a pre-test including 25 items was administered to determine the effectiveness of experimental and control groups regarding implicit listening comprehension to enhance intonation automatically.

For the post-test the instructor administered a test with 25 questions similar to the pre-test to estimate the amount of enhancement caused through the treatment course. It was piloted with a similar group of 10 students. After piloting, the test was found to be appropriate for the participants. The reliability index for the post test was ($r=.78$). It is important to note that both pre and post-tests are teacher-made developed by the instructor.

Another instrument was the course book that was used during the treatment level. 'Listen Here' is a British accent-based book which includes twenty-eight units plus a pronunciation bank at the end. It was written by Clare West (1999).

Procedure

During the study, the Experimental and Control groups went through different procedures. While the Control group did not receive any treatment, the Experimental group received the treatment. Both classes met two times a week at different times of the day, covering the same content and material for all the groups with the Experimental group receiving the treatment and the Control group not receiving any implicit intonation teaching. To enhance the reliability and validity of the study, the same material was used by the same teacher (the researcher). The tasks used for the classroom were selected from the book 'Listen Here' (West, 1999). This writer's book is well known in the field of listening and speaking. This book is most commonly used in Iran for listening classes for intermediate learners and the listening tasks used are authentic and compatible with EFL contexts. The course of treatment lasted 5 weeks. Every week, students in the Experimental group were taught on each listening skill during two sessions. In each week, the teacher tried to implicitly involve the students with the intonation aspects as written or spoken varieties of intonation.

The common practice in such English classes is that firstly the participants were asked to answer the listening tests using the audio CD at home with a lot of repetitions, then checked their answers through their answer key, provided in the book and corrected the wrong answers if any. To analyze the learners' improvement they marked and discussed the wrong answers with the teacher in the class. In this part of the task the teacher presented the learners with some listening comprehension skills and techniques for answering questions related to the listening tasks and also gave them some tips for the following lessons which are supposed to be answered the next session. These techniques included those strategies which deal with different question types and the best ways to answer them. In addition they were familiarized with the 'time hunting' technique for better listening comprehension in which the listener tried to use the short periods of time given during the task to check the previous answered questions and also prepared for the following questions. Then the teacher played the audio again and made the participants look at the audio scripts presented at the end of the book and started performing the intonation practicing tasks implicitly. The skills which are taught to familiarize the learners with the intonation types and kind implicitly were as follows: how to stress individual words and also complete sentences, how to recognize which part of the sentence possesses the highest emphasis, when and where in speech the speaker can use a tonic accent, in which kinds of questions we can use rising or falling intonation and what changes in meaning we can notice if we alter the intonation of tag questions, etc.

Students in the Experimental group were taught some different listening skills explicitly. On the whole, the classes were held for 10 sessions, which emphasize explicit teaching of the different learning strategies of the listening and implicit teaching of intonation. On the other hand the Control group received the same teaching as was mentioned for the Experimental group but with no implicit intonation teaching. When the implicit intonation teaching sessions and exercise-

giving sessions were over for the Experimental and Control groups respectively, a post-test was administered to all the groups to test their listening comprehension enhancement and most importantly as the goal of the present study to test their intonation enhancement. The scores in both Experimental and Control groups were calculated and separated for the data analysis using SPSS package (version 18).

Data Analysis

The data were obtained on FCE then analyzed by using an Independent Samples t-test to insure the homogeneity of Experimental and Control groups regarding listening comprehension before starting the experiment. Furthermore another Independent Samples t-test was also used to see if there was any significant difference between Experimental and Control groups' participants' performance on the listening pre-test before starting the treatment. Next, a Paired Samples t-test was used to see any difference between pre-test and post-test of each group. Finally, an Independent Samples t-test was used to examine the difference between Experimental and Control groups' post-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the results obtained throughout the research and analytically scrutinizes the groups' performance in the study.

Tables 1 and 2 indicate the descriptive statistics and Independent Samples t-test for the homogeneity test (First Certificate in English).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Homogeneity Test

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
FCE	Experimental	20	15.0000	2.361	98.52815
	Control	20	15.0500	2.625	28.58703

Table 1 indicates that the mean score for Experimental group in First Certificate in English (FCE) homogeneity test was 15.00 and for the Control group was 15.05 and the standard deviations were 2.36 and 2.62 respectively.

Table 2: Independent Samples test for the Homogeneity Test

		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
		T	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error		
		Upper		(2 tailed)	Difference	Difference		Lower
Pre-test	Equal variances assumed	.44	38	-.06	-.05	0.78965	-1.64	1.54
	Equal variances not assumed							

This statistical test was used to make sure that there was no difference between two groups before the experiment. Since the sig. (2-tailed) was .06. This confirms that the difference between two groups was not significant. Thus the two groups were homogeneous before the treatment period.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups (Pre-test)

		Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	Experimental		20	31.4000	7.94322	1.77616
	Control		20	32.6500	7.92249	1.77152

As it can be seen in Table 3 the experimental group obtained the mean score of 31.40 and standard deviation of 7.94 and the control group obtained the mean score of 32.65 and standard deviation of 7.92. To see if the mean score of both experimental and control groups are statistically significant an Independent Sample t-test is used.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test of Mean Scores (Pre-test)

		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
		T	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error		
				(2 tailed)	Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper
Pre-test	Equal variances assumed	-.49	38	.621	-1.25000	2.5085	6.32	3.82
	Equal variances not assumed							

Calculation of observed P-value between Experimental and Control groups ($\text{sig}=0.62$) and comparing it with the critical value of $P=0.05$ shows that observed differences is not meaningful and the participants of both experimental and control groups were homogeneous and at the same level of listening knowledge before starting the treatment.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental Group (pre-vs. post-tests)

Experimental	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	31.4000	20	7.94322	1.77616
Post-test	66.0000	20	15.88776	3.55261

As it is evident in Table 5 the pre-test mean score of the experimental group was 31.40 while that of post-test was computed as 66.00. A short look at the table indicates that a considerable difference between two sets of scores could be observed. To see that if this difference was statistically significant, a Paired Samples t-test was run.

Table 6: Paired Samples Test of Experimental Group (pre-vs. post-tests)

Experimental	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-test – Post-test	-34.60	16.91	3.78	-42.51	-26.68	-9.14	19	.000

As it is shown in Table 6 the t-observed value was computed as 9.14 by the degree of freedom of 19. Since the sig. (2-tailed) was less than 0.05 it indicates that there was statistically significant difference between the performances of participants in pre-test and post-test.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Control and Experimental Groups (Post-test)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	Experimental	20	66.0000	15.88776	3.55261
	Control	20	46.0500	13.03629	2.91500

As can be seen in the descriptive statistic of Table 7 the mean score of the Experimental group was computed as 66.00 while that of Control group was calculated as 46.05 and nearly corresponding standard deviation between two groups could be observed. To see that the difference between Control and Experimental groups was significant an Independent Samples t-test was used.

Table 8: Independent Samples T-test of Control & Experimental Groups (Post-test)

		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		T	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Pre-test	Equal variances assumed	4.34	38	.000	19.950	4.595461	0.64	9.25
	Equal variances not assumed							

According to Table 8 the t-observed value was 4.34 by the degree of freedom of 38. Moreover, since the sig. (2-tailed) value was less than 0.05. This statistical test proves that a considerable difference between the post-tests of Experimental group and Control group in a favor of Experimental group can be seen.

Discussion

Results of the study indicate that there was statistically significant difference between the performances of participants in pre-test and post-test for the Experimental group. In this case the null hypothesis for question number one is rejected because there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the Experimental group. Based on the activities which the teacher performed during the treatment period, a significant improvement can be seen in the post-test of the Experimental group which received these treatments. The teacher trained the participants both in the class and out of the class as homework and this had a considerable effect on their listening comprehension and also using intonation in their speaking.

The learners in the Experimental group answered the given questions after listening to the audio CD of the book and this was just as a warm up for the further class activities. Through this kind of homework the teacher used the time of the class for implicit training. The transcriptions were comprehensive enough to teach the basic rules of word stress and sentence intonation implicitly because they included nearly all kinds of word forms such as content or function words and also were rich in various statements and questions to show and emphasize the overall intonation both rising and falling. The improvement of the learners in Experimental group was noticeable after each week and for the teacher to make sure of this improvement, he was asking them to produce some sentences and questions according to what had been said weekly to see if they are practicing and doing their homework correctly.

The findings of this study are in line with the study of (Arjmandi, Ghanimi & Rahimy, 2014) which investigated the effects of audio story practice (task) on EFL learners' listening comprehension. In the Control group the regular method was used to teach English language and in Experimental group audio story task was applied as a supplementary material. A pre-test

on listening comprehension was run to determine the initial level of participants' listening comprehension ability. Then, both groups received a semester treatment sessions (6 weeks). The classes met three sessions each week, each session for 90 minutes. The Experimental group received 30 minutes audio story task treatment at the end of a couple of sessions each week (8 sessions a semester). A post-test measure was run to see whether there is any development in each group' performance after a semester instruction period. The findings of the study showed that there was statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group. That is, the experimental group outperformed the control group in development of the study.

The results of the study say that there was a significant development in Experimental group's listening comprehension ability using audio story task after the treatment sessions. This development can be defined because of the audio story task as a complementary material to classroom activities. Designing stories to the educational space are considered helpful. However, audio story is strange a bit at the initial step. That is, affecting factors can build obstacle and barriers to improving language learning and teaching procedure, especially listening skill. Yet benefiting from the native speakers' performance (stress, intonation, pitch, and rhythm) is something important in improving intonation. Therefore, the teacher actually tried to somehow consider participants feelings and prepared them for the task. On the other hand, the control group using the regular English class also developed at the end of the project. The development in control group is undeniable because the learners are expected to improve listening comprehension along with the other skills after they receive one semester instruction. However, comparing two groups, the development of the experimental group is statistically more significant than the control group. Therefore, teaching listening can be integrated with audio story task as an effective input to improve learners' listening comprehension ability.

Overall, the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase scored higher on the perception post-test than those who received no treatment. Overall, the difference in scores between the pre-test and post-tests is higher for the experimental group, meaning the group that received implicit instruction during the four-week treatment phase made more gains than those who received no treatment. Learners with self-reported musical familiarity in the experimental group did significantly improve in their perception of intonation patterns. These findings suggest that implicit attention to sentence-final intonation may support acquisition for students with reported musical familiarity. It is more likely that the students with musical familiarity could perceive the intonation contrasts more than those without musical experience and therefore answered the questions correctly. Within the group of students with self-reported musical familiarity, there was much variation in the amount and type of musical training. The time studying music ranged from three months to 10 years. Some students were self-taught, others had formal training, and the age at which that training took place varied from student to student. But according to the test-type administered, musicality was a factor that aided students in making intonation gains.

CONCLUSION

Language studies in the domain of language learning strategies, especially listening comprehension in developing, intonation types and skills, are well advised to take the implications presented in this study into thoughtful considerations. This study could be a striking inception of extensive investigations to be launched into discovering the influence of listening comprehension on intonation in EFL context. The listening comprehension skill and the use of proper strategies in promoting listening comprehension should be investigated by teachers as researchers before launching them for better understanding of the task.

Many language teachers in EFL contexts treat the listening comprehension skill in a traditional way. They are considerably careless in teaching this skill, overlooking the insight that they can give language learners by using listening strategies in general and intonation application strategies in particular. Teacher trainers should first introduce the importance of proper listening strategies to language teachers. Then, they must receive some instruction on how and when to utilize these strategies for enhancing better understanding. Subsequent to getting acquainted with these types of listening strategies, they should be highly recommended to employ and teach them at suitable levels of language learning.

In language classrooms, it is suggested that language teachers familiarize their elementary and pre-intermediate language learners with listening comprehension tasks. Since this study manifested that explicit instruction on listening strategies of understanding and answering properly to listening comprehension questions was useful for intermediate learners of English, it is recommended that language teachers explicitly instruct their intermediate language learners in the use of these strategies, and also leave them to use them on their own.

The application of explicit strategies for listening comprehension skill may result in successful learning among female intermediate learners. Language learners who are successful in their listening comprehension skill might draw on this strategy more frequently than do those who are poor in their listening comprehension skill. Learners should try to change their views toward listening and their understanding in that they do not have to expect themselves to understand every piece of the given listening. The modern tactics for listening practitioners suggest a whole understanding of the given listening skill, but they also suggest a detailed attention in case of answering detailed questions. For the listening textbooks to be more effective it is helpful to pay attention more to the pre-listening activities. There should be a part to warm up and negotiate the tasks which are given in each lesson. Material designers should try to apply this part to their listening books to increase the effectiveness of their books. The present study has been carried out at the intermediate level. Succeeding studies had better evaluate the effect of listening comprehension on intonation development at the beginning and advanced levels.

REFERENCES

- Brown, S. (2006). *Teaching listening*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., & Goodwin, J. M. (Eds.). (1996). *Teaching pronunciation audiocassette: A Reference for teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ghanimil, A., Arjmandi, M., & Rahimy, R. (2014). The Effect of Audio Story Practice on Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Ability. *International SAMANM Journal of Business and Social Sciences*. ISSN 2308-2372
- Hedge, T. (2005). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Levis, J. M. (1999). Intonation in Theory and Practice. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 37- 63.
- Levis, J. M. (2002). Reconsidering low-rising intonation in American English. *Applied linguistics*, 23, 56-82.
- Mendelsohn, D. J. (2001). Listening comprehension: We've come a long way, but... *Contact*, 27(2), 33-40.
- Morley, J. (1991). The pronunciation component in teaching English to speakers of other languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25, 481-52.
- Nunan, D. (1988). *Task-based language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Osada, N. (2004). Listening comprehension research: A brief review of the past thirty years. *Dialogue*, 3, 53-66.
- Richards, J. (2008). *American new interchange* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M. (1995). *Three functions of output in second language learning*. Oxford.
- Underwood, M. (1990). *Teaching listening*. London: Longman.
- West, C. (1999). *Listening activities: Listen here*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

THE EFFECT OF RECONSTRUCTION PODCASTS ON PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

Nadereh Asaadinezhad

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

Recent studies have suggested that the Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Moodle programs affect language learning and teaching but there are not any researches on podcasts and reconstruct of them. The present study aimed to investigate the effect of reconstruction podcasts on pre-intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking proficiency. It attempted to examine students' speaking skill among Iranian Islamic Azad University of Ahwaz at BA course level. Sixty participants were non-randomly divided into two groups (the treatment group and the control group) from Richards' (2008) proficiency placement test and the Cambridge oral unlimited placement interview test (2010). Before the period of treatment, the oral sample test was given to eight students who were not in participants' members, but they were at the same level to follow piloting the pre and post-tests. Then, the participants were interviewed a pre-test based on the reconstruction podcast. The present study examined the effect of the podcasts after the reconstruction during treatment on experimental groups. Finally, a post-test was administered to two groups and data were collected. Results showed that the reconstruction podcasts instruction affected the experimental group more than the control group significantly ($p < 0.05$). The present study suggests that the use of the reconstruction podcasts in speaking proficiency could be a beneficial activity which improves both fluency and accuracy of the EFL learners' speaking skill.

KEYWORDS: Reconstruction, Podcast, Speaking proficiency (fluency & accuracy)

INTRODUCTION

By growth of technology and increase of significant of English learning in business, scientific and so on, make learners learn English through CALL, Moodle, and Internet. The life of people, nowadays, is affected by their powerful personal computers and net connection (Mishan, 2005). According to Gulek and Demirtas (2005), they prefer to rely on writing e-mails, chatting on yahoo, sending online cards, reading online News, at all using Computers and Internet for their connections. While, according to the Office of Information Technology of the University of Minnesota in the United States (2006), these days are a shift from e-learning to mobile learning, as podcasting is a time-shifting technology. The scope of English teachers and learners (as second or foreign language) is to speak and write English the same as native speakers. According

to Celce-Murcia (2001), some people believe that speaking is the central aim in language learning and shows interlocutors' abilities of that language and makes accomplished skills in real communication. Richards and Renandya (2002) propose that learning to speak a foreign language needs the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structural exchange and the knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. They believe that speaking the target language fluently and appropriately is difficult for EFL learners because oral communication proficiency needs the ability to interact in social context. Appropriate interaction involves both verbal communication and paralinguistic elements of speech include pitch, stress and intonation. They argue like the other linguists and philologists such as McCarthy (1991) that the above issues affect paralinguistic elements, non-linguistic elements such as gestures and posture/body language, facial expressions to convey appropriate message during oral communication. They would be occurring by placing the EFL learners in native position among extra listening contents.

According to Son (2008), podcasts have so realistic and authentic contents. Fang (2008) argued that listening and speaking are complementary and listening to the sound before talking is so beneficial for speaking (Celce-Murcia, 2001). For improving fluency and accuracy of speaking, the learner needs the ability to negotiate in social context for appropriate interacting verbal communication and paralinguistic elements (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Iranian EFL learners have also many difficulties in speaking accuracy and fluency (Dolati & Seliman, 2011). The teachers could help learners by giving them opportunity to be in this kind of position. The podcast programs are online learning programs which are so realistic. The EFL learners would practice in real native situations by listening to these podcasts. The purpose of present study based on improving speaking proficiency (fluency and accuracy) through reconstructing of the extra podcast programs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Warschauer (1996), CALL has gradually improved over past 30 years; this improvement occurs in three phases, behavioral CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL. Behavioral CALL which has been started from 1950s until improved in 1960s- 1970s, was based on the ten-dominant behaviorist theories of learning. Programs of this phase entailed repetitive language drills and can be referred to as drill and practice. The computer utilizes as a tool or vehicle for delivering instructional materials to the student.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, behavioral CALL was undermined by two important factors. First, behavioral approaches to language learning had been rejected both at theoretical and pedagogical level. Secondly, the introduction of the microcomputer allowed a whole new range of possibilities. The second phase was followed by the communicative approach for teaching which became proponent in the 1970s and 80s. Proponents of this approach felt that the drill and practice programs of the previous decade did not allow enough authentic communication to be of much value. The third phase integrative (multimedia technology and the Internet) of CALL was developed on the integration of skills like listening with reading. Hypermedia makes multimedia powerful and it makes authentic learning environment by listing up through seeing, skills are

easily integrate, students by themselves control their own learning, and facilitates a principle focus on the content, without sacrificing a secondary focus on language form or learning strategies which are important advantages of hypermedia.

The other step of integrative is the Internet. The most use of Internet increase writing and reading skills through online chat speaking and listening. This phase puts all theoretical language teaching principles into practice that is integrating meaningful and authentic communication into all aspects of the language learning curriculum. In addition the combination of internal and external glossaries help learners to significantly recall a greater number of ideas when reading the text than when they only accesses to an external dictionary while reading an online text. Podcast online programs that accessible these days are more authentic and realistic with different topics for huge inference input (Son, 2008). By using different strategies of listening for instance, the reconstructing of the podcasts might improve accuracy and fluency of speakers. In addition, Podcasts are more effective than Moodle system in vocabulary, reading and listening development (Son, 2008).

Harmer (2001) believes that for speaking fluently, interlocutors should correctly pronounce phonemics, use appropriate stress and intonation in the different range of genre and situations, range of conversational and conversational repair strategies. According to Fang (2008), listening and speaking are complementary. Listening comprehension is prior to production in speaking a language. In everyday life, listening is the most frequently used language while Morley (1991) argued, we listen twice as much as we speak, four times as much as we read, and five times as much as we write. According to Richards (1983), a learner can control relatively narrow range of vocabulary at his or her own utterance during expression of an idea in speaking, but when listening to the response he or she no longer deals with the choice of vocabulary (cited in Richards, 2006). Richards (2006) argues that teachers should increase classroom activities in which students need to negotiate meaning, use communication strategies to avoid potential breakdowns in communication. Therefore, an individual must possess a much broader competency in listening comprehension than speaking (Fang, 2008).

Podcast programs are online learning English programs with realistic dialogues and lectures that would be placed learners on real situation. Constantine (2007) believes that for finding new materials in teaching listening, podcasts are so advantage instead of repetition and bad habits of listening materials repeatedly. Podcasts provide new voices and relevant contents. She argued that a teacher must also be committed to teaching good listening techniques such as listening for details. At the end of the day students must be able to do something with what they have heard. As students respond positively to listening tasks, they will be motivated to learn more. The goal of every teacher should be to help students gain confidence in hearing and understanding what is spoken in their new language.

The teacher could bring the appropriate context at EFL learners' home, work and school. The teacher may select best topics of podcasts that correspond with the learners' interest and purpose to lack of native situation for EFL learners could be another reason to use reconstruction podcasts. According to Son (2008), podcasts programs or CALL programs are so beneficial. Nida

(1953) believes that "Learning to speak a language is very largely a task of learning to hear it" (p. 53). Nord (1981) argues that production should occur after reception because reception enables production. According to Derwing (2010), intelligibility (actual understanding) has more significant than comprehensibility (how easy or difficult an individual's pronunciation is to understand) and accent. The teachers may encourage learners to download much of them for more listening inputs (Constantine, 2007).

Son (2008) argues that podcasts are so realistic and authentic and the teacher has opportunity to access many materials and pass them on the learners. Celce-Marcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996) argue that listening before talking would be helpful for talking fluently and accurately. Braun (2007) proposes that podcasts were so beneficial for school and librarian EFL learners because of daily listening of appropriate and interested on them by learners. Rezapour, Gorjian and Pazhakh (2012) propose that podcast programs affect vocabulary achievement during English learning as a second language.

There are not several empirical researches conducted on using the reconstruction in language teaching and learning through CALL or listening podcasts, but there are several empirical research on using CALL, Moodle, podcasts program for improving vocabulary, speaking skill, reading comprehension, grammar and so on. In an experiment research, Lomicka (1998) investigated how computer soft ware influenced the level of EFL reading comprehension for students enrolled in a second semester French course. Three conditions were used when students were reading a text on the computer screen: full glossing, limited glossing, or no glossing. The results showed that the students who had access to full glossing improved better than those who had access to either limited glossing or no glossing. Sakar and Ercetin (2004), who went even further and investigated 44 adult intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners' preferences for hypermedia annotations, also suggested similar results. The results suggested that students preferred visual annotations to textual and audio annotations. Video and graphic annotations were accessed when students wanted to retrieve background information about the topic and graphic annotations were used to illustrate the meanings of words.

The other similar research by Rezapour, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2012) were also explored the effect of the podcast and Moodle on improvement vocabulary in language instruction. Ninety EFL learners were selected out of 120 learners from Islamic Azad University of Abadan in pre-intermediate level. The results of that study confirmed that using systematic instruction of Podcast and Moodle approaches could improve vocabulary through acquisition of English language by pre- intermediate learners.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main questions to be investigated in this study are:

RQ1. Do the reconstruction podcasts affect Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' accuracy in speaking skill?

RQ2. Do the reconstruction podcasts affect Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' fluency in speaking skill?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study was constructed at Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, Iran. The Interchange Placement Test (Richards, Lesley, Hansen, Sandy & Zukowski, 2008) was used to homogenize the learners. 60 out of 90 Iranian EFL students took the homogeneity test. This test included 50 items and the participants should gain 25 to be placed at the pre-intermediate level. Those pre-intermediate participants whose scores were between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of the study who were revealed homogenous participants. The Cambridge English Unlimited Placement Test (Oral Test, 2010) was interviewed students to estimate their speaking proficiency level. This test was a face to face interview on the reconstruction of the podcasts. These participants were divided by non-random sampling into two groups of control group (n=30) and an experimental group (n=30). The experimental group was taught by the reconstruction podcasts instruction and appropriate listening strategies. The control group was taught through the conventional method of English language teaching "New interchange 1" developed by Richards.

Instrumentation

The Richards (2008) homogeneity test was given to participants to find out their homogeneity level. It was comprised 50 items of multiple-choice on language accuracy. The reliability coefficient of the test in this research was calculated by Kuder-Richardson formula (KR-21). The reliability coefficient for the proficiency test was ($r=0.823$).

The Cambridge English Unlimited Placement Test (Oral Test, 2010) was interviewed students to estimate their level of speaking proficiency. The oral test included placement items concerned with the several selected topics. It was used as a speaking test to homogenize the participants' accuracy and fluency levels.

Interview pre-test (The Reconstruction Podcast Test) was the next instrument that was consisted of listening comprehension and speaking test. This test was downloaded from pre-intermediate podcast programs to determine the participants' proficiency of their listening comprehension and their speaking proficiency before the treatment period. The topic of the pre-test was general due to being relevant to the participants' background knowledge. Before listening to this podcast, the interviewer asked some relevant questions based on the test content related to the participants' real life to familiarize them with the content of the test for more comprehension. The participants were requested one by one to listen to the podcast for 3 to 5 minutes (pre-test) carefully and then they were asked to reconstruct what they were hearing in 2 minutes. Their voice was recorded during their reconstruction. Oral pre-test inter-rater reliability was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as ($r=0.791$).

The post-test (The Reconstruction Podcast Test) was also interviewed participants to find out the effect of training by podcasts through reconstruction strategy and to estimate their accuracy and fluency of their speech after period of instruction from both classes. The participants of both classes were taken post-test the same as the pre-test. The topic of the post-test was relevant to the pre-test. The interviewer asked some relevant questions and they reconstructed the podcast. The

participants listened to 3 to 5 minutes of podcast carefully and then they asked to reconstruct what they were hearing (about 2 minutes). Then, their voice was recorded during their reconstruction. The oral post-test inter-rater reliability was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as ($r=0.902$).

These podcasts were downloaded from www.zappenglish.com whose topics were consciously selected through participants' interests, purposes and level of their speaking proficiency for pre-, post- test and treatment materials. The Check list was used to score the participants' oral proficiency developed by Hughes (2002) for rating performance of the participants both pre- and post- tests. This checklist comprises six items of fluency and accuracy. The fluency consists of three items to estimate participants' ability of coherence, communication and speed and each of them includes 5 sub-items (15 items), while accuracy includes three items to rate participants' ability of vocabulary, structure and pronunciation again each of them includes 5 sub-items (15 items), at all 30 items utilized for estimating fluency and accuracy in details.

Materials

The main materials were worked on the reconstruction podcasts. The technology revolution among CALL, Moodle and Web- based give positive facilities to teachers and learners for learning and teaching EFL /ESL, in these days. Podcasts are new technology for broadcasting audio programs on the Internet (Selingo, 2006). Podcasting was originally for conveying information and entertainment. But soon educators saw that it has the huge potential for teaching (Adams, 2006). Many writers believe that podcasting can offer language education, especially developing learners' listening and speaking skills (Pun, 2006). Radio and Independent podcasts are two types of podcast programs. Radio podcasts are such as BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong). Independent podcasts are Web-based podcasts produced by individuals and organizations such as Zappenglish. The second type is so beneficial for ELT. We can find these podcast programs from these websites such as <http://www.podcastalley.com/>, <http://epnweb.org/>, <http://recapltld.uk/podcasting/> and <http://zappenglish.com>, <http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Listening/Podcasts/>, etc. (Man- Man, 2006).

The materials of the study were downloaded from podcasts' online programs, www.zappenglish.com, to be used offline. Therefore, podcasts were utilized as offline for instructing materials in the class and online podcasts were utilized as outside activities (when participants have facilities of net connection). Eighteen contents of podcasts were downloaded from this site and were copied on CDs according to participants' interest, purpose and level of speaking proficiency. It was comprised of the different subjects who follow the same titles. On the other hand, one topic for example "Job and Work" follows by separate contents; listening in vocabulary, listening in formal and listening in colloquial (informal) and each files of the podcasts had its own e- book which includes a transcript, all the colloquial expressions, their definitions and finally some extra written exercises for the instructors' guide. The study looked forward to extra listening in different situations in which improve learners' skills. Then, the CDs consisted of eight topics and five of them followed by listening in vocabulary, listening in formal and listening in colloquial contents and three of them just included listening in formal contents. In addition to these CDs, the instructor guide's CD has transcripts of all contents, too. Ten

contents were taught by instructor in the class during 10 sessions and the rest of them for more listening at home, in car or anywhere that participants liked to listen to. These podcasts have so authentic and realistic contents in different situations for proficiency levels.

Procedure

The whole research project took place in 14 sessions. First session of the present study started by Interchange Placement Test which 90 students of Islamic Azad University taken this test. Sixty students out of 90 were selected as research's participants. Richards et al's (2008) Placement Test was comprised of 50 multiple-choice grammatical items. This test took 45 minutes. Those participants whose scores were between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of this study. Then, the Oral Cambridge Placement test (2010) was interviewed students for estimating their level of speaking proficiency. The participants were at the same level of speaking proficiency and homogenous and then were divided into two groups through non-random convenience sampling method. Thirty of the participants were in the experimental group and 30 ones were in the control group. The aim of this oral (interview) test was to discover the appropriate level of the speaking proficiency of the participants at the beginning of the treatment. Next time, Eight other students which were out of participants were asked to listen to one podcast to inform researcher about learners' interest, background language and time of each podcast spending for each reconstruction in the oral test. This test was beneficial for researcher to get information about the problem of reconstruction and utilizing appropriate strategies during listening and reconstructing the podcasts. It is necessary to say that, those eight students were homogenous and in the same level of speaking proficiency of participants, too.

Then, the pre-test was given to both experimental and control groups which concluded unseen podcast at the level of participants' speaking proficiency with general and relevant topic. This pre- test included an oral (interview) test and a listening comprehension test. The participants of both classes were requested to listen to offline selected podcast and to reconstruct what they were hearing one by one, their voice was recorded by the interviewer. The CDs of offline podcast treatment were available to the experimental group. During the treatment, the experimental group listened to the topics of podcast and reconstructed the content. In this way, the instructor was asking some questions from students and let participants become familiar with the content before listening to it. The instructor asked them to listen twice to each podcast. After listening, participants reconstructed or retold what he or she was hearing about 2 or 3 minutes and the other participants were listened or participated in the retelling activities. Selected podcast programs were downloaded from www.zappenglish.com website which they were corresponded to appropriate participants' level for the experimental group. These podcasts were taught and added to routine conventional course, 30 minutes during 10 sessions of instruction. These podcast programs included 18 podcasts containing so interesting subjects. The podcasts were taught in the class with reconstruction strategy of listening and then speaking procedures. Podcasts are programs that could be daily listened to with different realistic topics. The learners were requested to listen to this podcasts everywhere and try to retell or reconstruct what they were hearing alone and made efforts to record their reconstruction by themselves. Through these podcasts, learners explicitly learn culture, intonation, pitch, stress, and other functions of target

language. Then learners unconsciously use all of them in their speech. The control group was taught routine instruction, the conventional method of teaching English language including working on the text book of New Interchange 1 units dealing with dialogues, discussions, question and answers, etc.

Finally, a post-test was given to the experimental and control groups. It included two- or three-minutes' interview on the selected unseen podcast for both groups. It estimated the reconstruction of the unseen podcast through both groups. Data was recorded and scored by two raters. The inter-rater reliability showed that the scoring consistency. Then the scores were analyzed through SPSS version 17. The descriptive and inferential statistics such as Paired and Independent Samples t-test were done to find any differences between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Pre- test and Post-test

Descriptive statistics of the pre- and post- tests are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Pre and Post-tests

Pairs	Groups	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test (Experimental)	30	14.00	26.00	18.6452
	Post-test (Experimental)	30	17.00	27.00	22.0323
Pair 2	Pre-test (Control)	30	7.00	26.00	17.2000
	Post-test (Control)	30	12.00	24.00	17.9667

As shown in Table 1, the number of participants in experimental group is 30 and control group is 30, too. Statistical data in Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of the two groups, experimental and control, before and after using treatment. Table 1 shows the mean of experimental pre- test group is lower than the mean of the experimental post-test.

In pair (2), the mean of control in the pre-test group is approximately as the same as the post- test of this group. In order to find out whether the differences among the performances of the two groups were statistically significant, the Paired Samples t- test (pre- test versus post-test) was applied, and the results of the tests were interpreted from the two values of t- observed. Since the descriptive statistics cannot show the significant difference between the groups, Paired Samples t-test was run in Table 2.

Table 2: Paired Samples t- Test (Pre-test vs. Post-test/Experimental and Control groups)

Pairs	Groups	Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test vs. Post-test (Experimental)	3.38	3.93	.707	4.831	1.942	4.788	29	.000
Pair 2	Pre-test vs. Post-test (Control)	.76	5.28	.965	2.741	1.208	.794	29	.434

Table 2 provides the values of the two pre- versus post- test of experimental and control groups before and after the treatment in terms of the reconstruction podcasts. Table 4.2 indicates the statistical analysis of Paired Samples t- test (experimental and control group). Since observed t (4.788) with df= 29 is greater than the critical t (2.042), the difference between the two tests are significant at ($p < .05$) in the experimental group. According to pair 2, the observed t (.794) with df= 29 is less than the critical t (2.042) in the control group. Thus, the difference between these pre- and post- tests is not significant at ($p < .05$). To calculate the mean difference between pre- and post-tests of the groups, descriptive statistics of the tests is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups (Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	30	18.645	3.125	.561
Control	30	17.200	3.507	.640

Table 3 shows that the mean of the pre- test among the experimental group (18.64) is nearly the same as the mean of pre- test among control group which is 17.200. There is no much difference between these two tests. In order to find out whether the similarity among the performances of the two groups was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups (Pre-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Pre-tests									Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed		.011	.919	1.70	58	.094	1.445	.850	.255	3.14
Equal variances not assumed				1.69	56.7	.095	1.445	.851	.259	3.15

Table 4 provides the means of the two experimental and control groups' pre- test analyzed through Independent Samples t-test before the treatment in terms of reconstruction podcasts and number of participants, means, standard deviations (SD), standard error, lower and upper bounds. As shown in Table 4, since observed t (1.70) with $df= 58$ is less than the critical t (2.00), the difference between the groups is not significant at ($p<.05$). This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test (Oral Proficiency Test). The podcast scores are analyzed in Table 5 to find any significant difference between the two groups.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups (Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	30	22.32	3.134	.562
Control	30	17.96	3.169	.578

Table 5 shows that the mean of experimental post- test is higher than the mean of control one. It reveals that the reconstruction podcasts and the conventional method both performed better in post-test, but the reconstruction podcasts in experimental group outperformed. In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups in post-test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t-test was applied in Table 6.

Table 6: Independent Samples t-Test of Experimental and Control Groups (Post-test)

Post-tests	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.405	.527	4.88	58	.000	4.065	.832		2.399	5.732
Equal variances not assumed			4.87	56.71	.000	4.065	.834		2.395	5.736

As Table 6 indicates, since the observed t (4.88) with $df= 58$ is greater than the Critical t (2.00), the difference between the groups is significant at ($p<.05$).

Discussion

Results of the pre-test and the post-test showed an improvement in overall participants' speaking proficiency skill through instructions and strategies used during this study. However, the most important issue is the usefulness of the reconstruction podcasts activities in order to obtain better

results. Thus, the results will be discussed in this part, was involved with the following research questions. As it was mentioned before, according to data analysis, the experimental group who worked on the reconstruction podcasts instruction has outperformed the control group. It affected both fluently and accuracy in the experimental group rather than the control one.

Based on the results, there are significant differences between the post-tests of groups. The results of the post-test may show the difference between the two groups in case of the Reconstruction podcasts. The group of the reconstruction podcasts instruction outperformed the group of conventional instruction. It shows that the application of pre- and post-listening podcast and reconstruct what they were hearing might be of great help in approving the learners' speaking proficiency. By comparing the both post-test scores of the two groups of experimental and conventional instructions, it can be inferred that the difference may be due to the enormous listening relevant and authentic podcasts and reconstruction.

The ability of fluency is a bit higher the accuracy in the control group is post-test while the ability of accuracy before treatment was a bit higher. It revealed that accuracy was higher than fluency in both groups. This shows that there is a difference between the ability of fluency and accuracy in the experimental group. Fluency and accuracy in the experimental group's post- test were higher than control group. As it was mentioned earlier, it indicates that the accuracy of the learners is higher because of the background knowledge of grammatical competence before treatment during their curriculum at school. The reconstruction podcasts instruction affected more positive improvement on fluency rather than accuracy. This agrees with Rezapour, Gorjian, and Pazhakh's (2012) who argued that listening on these podcasts improve confident and fluency of learners and if participants work forward on this way they past faster their level than ever thought in which prove direct evidence of improving fluency in speaking. By comparing fluency in the experimental pre-test and post-test, fluency is reinforced in the experimental post-test. The experimental group outperformed the control group, but in comparison to accuracy in the experimental group. It reveals that their accuracy scores were higher than the fluency in the tests. It also showed that the background knowledge of both groups may reinforce more by the reconstruction podcasts instruction. The lower scores of the control group may be due to the teacher-centeredness of the instruction or low motivation of participants that may make the students bored.

The results of the descriptive statistics showed that, after the post-test, the mean of the reconstruction podcasts, and conventional instruction groups were different. These results might show that both pre- and post- listening podcasts affected learners' fluency in the treatment sessions. This is supported by Zamari, Adnan, Idris and Yusof (2011) who proved the evidence of improvement learning materials through using online language. Braun (2007) also supported these results that authentic and relevant podcasts have a positive effect on librarian speaking skill and their motivation. Rini (2012) also believed that unconscious listening improves speaking skills of learners. Therefore, based on the results of Descriptive Statistics and the answer to the above second research question, the second null hypothesis was also rejected. Thus, there was significant evidence that the reconstruction podcasts affect pre-intermediate EFL learners' speaking fluency and accuracy which it approximately affect accuracy higher.

CONCLUSION

The present study began with the assumption that applying the reconstruction podcasts instruction could enhance the pre- intermediate EFL learners' speaking proficiency. The experimental and the control groups were taught through two different methods of instruction. The participants of experimental group were taught through reconstruction online and offline podcasts and other group as control group were simultaneously taught the traditional instruction. The instructor explored to see if the application of enormous listening of offline podcasts and reconstruction what they were hearing have any effect on the Iranian pre- intermediate EFL learners' speaking proficiency and to investigate the effect of them, separately, on the ability of accuracy and fluency in speaking.

Having administered the pre-, post- tests and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples t- test and Paired Samples t-Test, the results indicated that the instruction of using the reconstruction podcasts did positive effect on the learners' speaking fluency and accuracy. Based on the present study results, the following conclusions may be made:

1. CALL approaches generally and especially the reconstruction podcasts may influence EFL learners' speaking proficiency.
2. Exposure to language materials through a synchronous approach is an influential factor for EFL learners.
3. The online or enormous offline podcasts reconstructing instruction do have more significant impact on the learners' speaking proficiency (both fluency and accuracy) than conventional instruction.
4. During the offline reconstruction podcasts instruction, the learners listen and reconstruct what they were hearing independently and freely. Therefore, produce and process their utterance better.
5. During the reconstruction podcasts instruction, the familiar questions by teacher and replied by learners can influence learners' listening comprehension ability to reconstruct it better.
6. Online or offline enormous podcasts listening out of the classroom or at class can improve prior knowledge of paralinguistic elements (implicitly master on stress, rhythm and intonation patterns).
7. Online or offline enormous podcasts listening out of the classroom or at class can improve the ability of accuracy and fluency during speaking in which accuracy improves a bit higher than fluency.
8. Conventional instruction based on task- based language teaching can also affect listening comprehension and speaking proficiency but its effect is less than the reconstruction podcasts instructions.

The following suggestions are drawn based on the limitations of the study. They may be applied in future researches. They are as follow:

1. As the study was only conducted at the university, more research is needed in similar situations to support the findings and to find more about the effect of the podcasts constructing instruction on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. It can also be applied at the schools or institutes for different range of ages and levels.

2. This study was conducted to measure the improvement of speaking proficiency ability and in some part listening comprehension ability. Future research can be done regarding the effect of the Reconstruction podcasts on other skills such as writing or reading.
3. The Podcasts instruction associated with some limited pre- and post-listening and speaking activities in this study. In future researches, other useful listening strategies and tasks such as note taking, questionnaires, and multiple- choice questions for better comprehension can be examined or comparing effect of multiple- choice questions with reconstructed for useful speaking.
4. In the present study, the synchronous way of instruction in case of listening was just used. Future research can cover synchronous way of applying podcasts with pictures as the material of speaking.
5. There are different websites containing effective podcast resources. Regarding learners' age and level of proficiency, other websites can be used instead of the "www.Zappenglish.com" website used in this study.
6. Instead of using conversation's content through podcasts, other kinds of literature such as songs, poem, lectures and novels or other kind of podcasts, videos, clips or Mp3 files can be used in future researches.

REFERENCES

- Adams, C. (2006). Geek's guide to teaching in the modern age. *Instructor*, 115(7), 48–51.
- Braun, L. W. (2007). *Listen up! podcasting for school and librarians*. John, B. Brayan. Retrieved February 25, 2014 from: www.leonline.com/listen_up
- Celce- Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. United States of America: Heinle & Heinle.
- Celce- Murcia, M., Brinton, D., & Goodwin, J. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation: A reference for teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Constantine, P. (2007). Podcasts: another source for listening input. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Retrieved January 2007 from: <http://iteslj.org/>
- Derwing, T. M. (2010). Utopian goals for pronunciation teaching. In Levis, J. & LeVelle, K. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 1st Pronunciation in Second Learning and Teaching Conference*, Iowa State University, Sept. 2009 (pp. 24-37). Ames, IA: Language Iowa State University.
- Dolati, I. R., & Seliman, S. (2011). An investigation on Iranian students' weaknessess in spoken English. *Journal of Edurpes*, 1, 94-99. Retrieved May 12, 2014 from: <http://eprints.utm.my/15930/1/JOE-1-2011-013.pdf>.
- Fang, X. (2008). Listening comprehension in EFL teaching. *China foreign Language*, 6(1), 1-15.
- Gulek, Ch., & Demirtas, H. (2005). Learning with technology: *The impact of laptop use on student achievement*. Retrieved April 30, 2014 from: <http://napoleon.bc/>.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. 3rd ed. London: Longman.
- Lomicka, L. (1998). To gloss or not to gloss: an investigation of reading comprehension electronic. *Language Learning and Technology*, 1, 41-50. Retrieved December 21, 2014 from: <http://llt.msu.edu/vol1num2/article2/default.htm>

- Man-man, P. (2006). Developing students' listening and speaking skills through ELT Podcasts. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (2007). *Educational Journal*, 34, (2), 1-11.
- McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Mishan, F. (2005). Designing authenticity into language learning materials. USA: Portland from <http://sv.libarts.psu.ac.th/>
- Morley, J. (1991). Aural comprehension instruction: Principles and practices. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 2001, (pp. 69-85). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Nida, E. (1953). Selective listening language learning: *A Journal of Applied Linguistics*. 4(3/4), 92-101.
- Office of Information Technology, (2006). Podcasting in education. *Unpublished manuscript, University of Minnesota, U.S.*
- Rezapour, E. Gorjian, B., & Pazhakh, A. R. (2012). The effect of Moodle and Podcast's instruction on vocabulary development among pre- intermediate EFL learners. *AITM*, 2, (2), 32-40.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Retrieved August 1, 2014, from: <http://www.professorjackrichards.com/pdfs/communicative-language-teaching-today>
- Richards, J. C., Lesley, T., Hansen, C., Sandy, C., & Zukowski, J. (2008). *Interchange passages placement and evaluation package (3th eds.)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking: From theory to practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. United States of America: Cambridge University Press.
- Rini, N. (2012). Considering unconscious listening to improve the speaking skill of the students of Business administration study program of Polytechnic Nigeria Semarang Indonesia. *Ragam Journal Pengembangan Humaniora*, 12(2), 78- 86.
- Sakar, A., & Ercetin, G. (2004). Effectiveness of hypermedia annotations for foreign language reading. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 21, 28-38.
- Selingo, J. (2006). Students and teachers, from K to 12, hit the podcasts. *New York Times*, January 25, (p. G4).
- Son, J. B. (2008). Using Web-based language learning activities. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 4(4), 34-43.
- Zamari, Z., Adnan, A., Idria, Sh., & Yusef, J. (2011). Students' Perception of Using Online Language Learning Materials. *Procedia- Social and Behavior Sciences*, 67, 611-620.

THE EFFECT OF FREQUENT SELECTED-RESPONSE VERSUS FREQUENT CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE QUIZZES ON DEVELOPING IRANIAN EFL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' FORMAL GRAMMAR IN WRITING SKILLS

Maryam Nazari

*Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to investigate the role of testing, especially a frequent one, as the facilitator of learning among Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) high school students. This study investigated the effect of two quiz formats (selected-response versus constructed-response) was studied among Iranian EFL high school students' writing skills specifically their command of formal grammar on the summative achievement tests. In order to arrive at a logical answer to the research questions, a sample population of 83 female senior high school participants, which was finally reduced to 60 participants, was chosen through a pre-test, namely, Nelson Proficiency Test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). After selection of the participants, they were randomly assigned into three groups (two experimental groups and a control one). Then the experimental groups were provided with the treatment; eight quizzes were given to them frequently. A summative post-test was administered to the groups at the end of the treatment period. One-way ANOVA determined the effect of the variables. The findings of the study revealed statistically significant difference between the experimental groups and control one. The results also showed that constructed-response quizzes with eight times frequency of administration resulted in the development of Iranian high school students' performance on the formal grammar in writing skills ($p < .05$). Therefore, employing appropriate test or quiz formats in the language teaching environment can assist learners to improve their writing through testing. Thus, the frequent administration of quizzes may pave the way for better learning and motivate the students to learn.

KEYWORDS: Frequent selected-response, Frequent constructed-response, Formal grammar

INTRODUCTION

Since English as a foreign language (EFL) has found its place among other subjects in the syllabus of Iranian schools, it seems necessary to pay attention to the techniques that can promote language abilities of Iranian learners. The issue of improving student learning has also been of salient interest in the administrative and academic community, therefore, the importance of

assignments, quizzes, and tests and their relation to student learning is a considerable topic (Smith, Zsidisin & Adams, 2005). This concern for assignments, quizzes, tests, and the role of them in developing students' writing, especially their formal grammar, is the foundation for this study. According to Heaton (2000), teaching and testing are closely related to each other so that it is impossible to work in either field without considering the other. As Harris (1996) points out, "classroom tests are generally prepared, administered, and scored by one teacher. In this situation, test objectives can be based directly on course objectives and test content could be derived from the specific course content" (pp. 1-2). Consequently, tests or quizzes during a given term can make the students better aware of the course objectives. The analysis of the test results reveals the students' areas of difficulty and, accordingly the students will have an opportunity to make up for their weaknesses. Therefore, teacher-made tests: 1) measure students' progress, 2) motivate students, and 3) provide an opportunity for the teacher to diagnose students' weakness. The effect of testing on teaching and learning is called wash back effect, which can be beneficial or harmful to teaching. It is beneficial when the test improves teaching and learning processes (Birjandi, Bagheridoust & Mossallanejad, 2006).

As Baker (1989) states if a test is regarded as important and the stakes are high, preparation for it can come to dominate all teaching and learning activities. Moreover, he believes that wash back can be viewed as part of something more general; the effect of assessment. The effect on educational measurement is not limited to the impact of assessment on learning and teaching, but extends to the way in which assessment affects society as a whole. Bachman (1990) argues that the selected-response items can involve simply selecting the correct answer among several alternatives or the identification of an incorrect alternative as in a sentence with several different words or phrases underlined; only one is incorrect. In the selected-response items, the test taker must select one response among two or more possible alternatives. Farhady, Jafarpur and Birjandi (2003) suggested that in selected or discrete-point items one element should be tested at a time, that only one skill should be gauged at a time, and that only one aspect of a skill should be tested at a time. Constructed-response tests or integrative tests consist of a single sentence or utterance, and can range from two sentences or utterances to virtually free composition, either oral or written form and also are designed to use several skills at one time, or more precisely, to employ different channels, modes or both of the languages simultaneously and in the context of discourse. Advocates of the integrative- sociolinguistic movement would argue that such a test is complex, as actual language use is complex.

Werner (1993) believes that constructed-response questions stimulate the student to construct acceptable answers rather than just recognize ones. The construction may be very brief and short or long. He added that constructed-response items are the key to more authentic assessment and they should be more widely used. As Martin (2011) states, unlike speaking or listening, when one writes he has to think about the correctness of his product. The writer should generate unambiguous ideas and edit them at the same time because his document may entail unchangeable implications for the readers when s/he is not there to clarify misunderstandings or misconceptions. Mirhassani and Ghasemi (2007) state that to put language to use we require two kinds of knowledge, known respectively as schematic knowledge or knowledge of the world and

systematic knowledge or knowledge of the language system; we referred knowledge of the formal grammatical system.

Writing is a central communication skill and is a fundamental process of learning the language. Learning a foreign language, with its four skills, is a very complicated process and different domains should be considered during language learning. One of these important domains is a test item format such as selected-response test versus constructed-response one. Most instructors confine themselves to multiple-choice or selected-response test in their examination for the sake of objectivity (Brown, 2001). The role of frequent administration of constructed-response quizzes in which the student must construct the correct answer, whether in a word, sentence, or essay form is somehow neglected in our high schools during the term quizzes; this will result in a poor writing.

This research clearly suggests that frequent (weekly) quizzes are important in learning writing skills. Therefore, the result of this study can be beneficial and bring to notice by the interested audience, ELT practitioners, and teachers to promote Iranian EFL learners' writing abilities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The field of study wash back effect has not been so welcomed in Iran and the literature is really scant and seems that it is in its infancy (Kheirhak & Ghonsooly, 2014). Gorjian (2011) investigated the impact of different response formats (selected versus constructed) administrations on pre-intermediate Iranian EFL university learners' general writing skill specifically their command of formal organization. The result revealed that constructed-response quiz with ten times frequency of administration resulted in the improvement of Iranian EFL learners' performance in the formal organization in general writing skills. Thus, he found that repeated constructed-response quizzes received the first priority. Therefore, there was a significant difference between, the writing's performance of the group who received ten times constructed-response quizzes and the group who did not receive any quizzes. The findings indicated that constructed-response quizzes can be used for promoting different skills and component of language learning. Bryan (1998) conducted a research on factors contributing to a reduction in race based subgroup differences on a constructed-response paper and pencil test of achievement. Results showed that the constructed-response item format may be a viable alternative to the traditional multiple-choice one in predictors of job performance and simultaneously reduce subgroup differences and subsequent adverse impact on tests of knowledge, skill, ability, and achievement. However, additional research is needed to further demonstrate the appropriateness of the constructed-response format as an alternative to traditional testing methods. Several studies (e.g., Davis, 1999) indicates that students study more efficiently for essay-type examinations than for selection (multiple-choice) tests; students preparing for essay tests focus on broad issues, general concepts, and interrelationships rather than on specific details. Essay tests also give you an opportunity to comment on students' progress, the quality of their thinking, the depth of their understanding, and the difficulties they may be having. However, because essay tests pose only a few questions, their content validity may be low. In addition, the reliability of essay tests is compromised by subjectivity or

inconsistencies in grading. Also short answer tests depending on your objectives, can call for one or two sentences or a long paragraph.

Constructed-response quiz items as Johnson's (2006) findings show are related more strongly to measures of student achievement than did selected-response items. It may be that constructed-response quiz items, which required the actual input of words, engaged students in course content at a deeper level than simply checking selected-response items. However, no significant relationship emerged among the number of constructed-response quizzes and student achievement as measure by conceptual test items. It might be that constructed-response quiz items may not have facilitated the cognitive processing necessary to respond to conceptual measures of learning. He found that students take in quizzes were associated with academic achievement, but the quiz format differentially related to achievement across cognitive domains. On the other hand, Sheaffer and Addo (2013) measured and compared student performance on constructed-response and selected-response questions in a pharmaceuticals course; and collected student feedback on the use of differing question types. Results showed that students correctly answered more selected-response questions than constructed-response questions and felt more confident in doing so.

Gorjian (2011, 2014) stated that weekly, in-class quizzes are based on some testing specialist have been associated with positive learning outcomes including increased student achievement, attendance, and confidence. Their studies show that frequent quiz reportedly maintains student study effort and promote course engagement; for example, Gorjian's study showed that weekly quizzing (constructed-response) was important in learning English writing skills. The results of the study showed that the students who took weekly constructed-response quizzes would show better retention of grammatical patterns than would students who were not engaged in the weekly graded constructed-response quiz. He believes that weekly quizzes and reviews, it is easier for an instructor to know earlier on how well the students understand each lesson or concept and that is best learning when the instructor actively engages or involves students to learn by doing the quizzes. Therefore, the weekly and frequent quiz can have great impact. Results of Greene's (2000) studies indicated that students perceived daily essay quizzes, had an enhancing both learning and class preparations.

Mirhassani and Rahimpour (2003) examined the relationship between quiz, frequency of administrations, and Iranian EFL learners' performance on summative achievement tests. They found that the frequency of quiz administration improved the performance of Iranian EFL learners. Their study showed that completion quizzes with ten times frequency of administration work better with the improvement of Iranian EFL learners' performance on summative achievement tests. They stated that the more students receive quizzes on the content of the book taught, the more they learn the materials taught in depth. If they fail to perform well on one quiz, they try to make up for the other. Moreover, some education research has confirmed that frequent quizzes do yield benefits; for example, Ballard and Johnson (2004) compared tests' results of students who were exposed to quizzes with a control group who no quizzes. They found significantly higher scores of students who experienced quizzing and concluded that frequent quizzes influence learning performance. The mean scores of these students were significantly

higher than for students in the group who experienced no quizzes. However, studies of science students indicated that students' performance was not strongly affected (Drouza & Fleming, 2003). But study of Tuckman (2008) shows that frequent testing provides incentive motivations. Frequently tested students outperform other students on examinations. He mentions that what it might be drove a student to get information into long-term memory are tests. Tests motivate students because they create the opportunity or necessity to achieve success or avoid failure. In that way, tests provide an incentive to learn and they are a source of incentive motivation. The overall results clearly showed that the frequent tests enhanced motivation for students who have typically performed poorly to get content into long-term memory rather than merely targeting for them what to study. Thus, Hughes (1988) reported the benefits for learning that the introduction of a new test can bring about. However, most recent research in this area has found that language tests affect certain aspects of teaching but not others. Thus, language tests seem to be effective in bringing about changes on teaching content, but might have only limited apparent effect on teaching methodologies (Barati, Ghasemi, & Ravand, 2013).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The impetus for this study is to find answers to the following questions:

1. Do frequent selected-response quizzes affect the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?
2. Do frequent constructed-response quizzes affect the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?
3. Is there any significant difference between the effect of frequent selected-response and that of frequent constructed-response quizzes on the formal grammar in writing skills of Iranian EFL high school students?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 60 senior high school girls with the age mean of 18 majoring in empirical sciences in Dezful, Iran. They were all Persian native speakers and had learned English chiefly in formal EFL classroom contexts. All participants had a common English background; they had taken English courses for at least six years in high schools and junior high schools. The rationale behind selecting senior high school students was to have more proficient students. The participants were administered a Nelson language proficiency test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976) as a pre-test at the outset of the experiment in order to ascertain their homogeneity in terms of general English proficiency prior to the study. The rationale behind selecting participants suitable for this study was to select homogeneous participants who were in the same range or near each other; regarding their grammar language proficiency. To do so, participants with scores one standard deviation above and one below the mean were selected. To make sure of their homogeneity, One-way ANOVA formula was applied in the pre-test level. Then after selecting the students, they were randomly assigned into three equal groups; the first and third groups (odd-numbered ones) as experimental groups who received treatment and the

second group (even-numbered one) was the control one who received a placebo treatment (N= 20 for all groups).

Instrumentation

The following instruments were used in this study to collect data from the subjects: The first instrument was a general language proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) as a pre-test in order to find out linguistic abilities of participants. The test consisted of 50 multiple-choice items. To validate this test, it was piloted to a similar group of 20 students to try out items in order to determine their reliability or effectiveness and to determine the reactions of students to the items (Richards, Platt & Platt, 1992). It enjoyed the reliability index of ($r = .72$) obtained through Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) formula.

The second instrument used in the study was a validated summative achievement test, developed by the instructor according to the course objectives and administered as a post-test in order to check out the effects of the research variables. To validate this test, first it was piloted to a similar group of 20 students and the reliability was calculated ($r = .73$). The test had a total score of 40 and it was validated against the standard test of Nelson. It consisted of 40 completion questions (including open-ended and short-answer items). Situations in the two testing instruments comprised the formal grammar in writing skills. The post-test was rated by two raters, who were familiar with the content of the study, in order to control the rater's variable (subjectivity evaluation). To measure the inter-rater reliability, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula was used. The inter-rater reliability of the two raters' judgments was estimated as the reliability value ($r = .81$).

Materials

Eight paired quizzes of selected-response and constructed-response items, considered as treatment in this study, were extracted from the book "Reading through Interaction One" written by Farhady and Mirhassani (2008); researcher used it as a supplementary reading book in her classes. Farhady and Mirhassani (2008) claim the book (Reading through Interaction One) seems to be an excellent textbook for improving knowledge of students, in general, and Iranian students in particular. The reasons justifying this position are many, a few of which are mentioned here. First, the book was designed on the basis of reading techniques and meets the scientific principles of the reading skill quite satisfactorily. Second, the reading materials seemed quite authentic and the exercises fairly communicative. Third, the idea of the variety of materials and activities that could be one of the major factors to motivate the readers can be observed in the preparation of the book. Finally, the texts were arranged in a progressively difficult order within the chapters. The researcher found out that the book was a new and interesting textbook to the participants, and also it was suitable for their proficiency level.

The instructor taught one lesson every week, and demanded participants to carefully read it in preparation for a quiz on the next week. The ten items in selected-response quizzes consisted of five multiple-choice, two true or false, and three matching items. The seven items in constructed-response quizzes, consisted of a) two "broken sentence" items in which a series of words are given to the examinees to incorporate them into meaningful sentences b) three short-answer items

which examinee was required either to complete a sentence or to compose one of his own according to the directions provided c) two essay items; a traditional method of testing writing abilities in which students were required to express themselves by composing their own relatively free and extended written responses which is ranged from limited number of words to several sentences to problem set by instructor.

Procedure

At the beginning of the study, a general language proficiency test was given to 83 senior high school students (i.e., all female in Shahid Beheshti High School in Dezful, Iran) who were invited to take this test as a pre-test in this study. This test included 50 multiple-choice items which were adapted by the researcher in accordance with an authentic testing book written by Fowler and Coe (1976). After collecting data, the responses of participants were analyzed. Then sixty students whose performance ranged from one standard deviation above and one below the mean were chosen for this study, and then the selected participants, were randomly divided into three groups: two experimental groups and one control group. Treatment was the second phase of the study. This study focused on developing formal grammar in writing skills. Over a ten week period, a spring semester in 2014, the first experimental group received frequent (weekly) selected-response quizzes, the second experimental group received frequent (weekly) constructed-response quizzes, and the third group served as the control group to validate this study. In the control group learners received no treatment (no particular quiz) and they were not exposed to any evaluation except some oral questions. Rather they engaged in reading comprehension exercises. Over all, two experimental groups received eight quizzes which lasted about 15 minutes, during eight weeks. The first week of the study was spent on the explanation of the procedure and also participants were asked to attend and take a language proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). From the second week till the end of the term the participants took weekly quizzes. All sessions occurred weekly for eight weeks (on consecutive weeks), at the same time of the day, covered the same content, used the same textbook, and were taught by the same instructor. The researcher believed treatment period was enough to control the time variable. Following each section, students' quizzes were collected and graded by the researcher, and they were informed that the average of their grades on these quizzes on general English book would count toward their final grade as much as one of the major course examinations (to motivate them to participate actively in the experiment). Post-test was the final phase of the investigation. At the end of the experiment (last week), all the experimental and the control groups sat for the summative test so that their performance could be compared. All of the participants were tested regarding their performance on their formal grammar in writing skills. By using the same instructor for all sessions, the author control variation in instruction and materials coverage also account for variation in their abilities.

RESULTS

Some statistical analyses were performed on the data to answer the research questions posed in this study. As the researcher noted before, the major purpose of this study was to investigate the relative effect of two quiz formats on developing writing performance. To address the research questions, the students' variables were measured. In this study, the independent variable was quiz

format at two levels: (1) the selected-response quizzes and (2) the constructed-response quizzes. To test the research hypotheses, as the study deals with comparing more than two means of quizzes formats in frequent administrations, data were submitted to a parametric technique for analyzing the quantitative data. The results of this study were significant for all the hypotheses at the 0.05 level. The Table 1 below shows the descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test of 20 participants as pilot studies with reliability $r = .72$ and $r = .73$, respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Pilot Tests (Pre-test and Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	20	20.15	6.46	41.73	11	34
Post-test	20	19	5.99	35.88	10	35
Total	40	19.57	6.22	38.80	10	34

In order to ensure the homogeneity of the three groups in terms of language proficiency prior to the experiment, the results obtained from pre-test were analyzed. Our null hypothesis would be that there is no meaningful difference among the groups; that they are just three samples of the same population. Table 2 is a report of the results of pre-test which was administered as the homogeneity test and shows the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in three different groups on pre-test, concerning maximum scores, minimum scores, means, standard deviations (SD), considering their level of proficiency. The mean scores showed that the three groups did not much differ in relation to their background knowledge. The low standard deviation signifies that the students' performance was very close to each other. In other words, their mean scores showed no significant differences.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test (Nelson Proficiency Test)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Min.	Max.
Groups									
Control	20	7.50	1.83	.541	6.35	8.64		4.00	11.00
Selected	20	7.80	1.63	.54	6.25	8.54		5.00	11.00
Constructed	20	7.60	1.63	.36	6.83	8.36		5.00	11.00
Total	60	7.63	1.70	.27	6.94	8.05		4.00	11.00

As shown in the Table 2, the three groups were similar concerning their performance on pre-test and the mean and standard deviations of the groups were approximately similar. But we could not simply look at the mean scores of groups and concluded that they were the same or different and the researcher needed to be certain that they were truly equivalent groups before she began the treatment. Therefore, to determine the difference among the groups, the students' scores on the Nelson test of the three groups was put in One-way ANOVA formula. A simple and common-sense understanding of ANOVA is the comparison of MSW (means within groups) and MSB (means between groups). If the value of the MSB (which includes the treatment effect) is not greater than MSW, then we know that our treatments are all similar. We must recognize the data

as just the samples from the same population. In other words, if the F value is 1 or less, it represents no treatment effect (Hatch & Farhady, 1999).

Table 3: One-way ANOVA(Pre-test)

	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.400	2	.200	.041	.960

As Table 3 shows, the observed F value is .041. Since the critical F value corresponding to the degree of freedom of 2 at the probability level of 0.05 is calculated to be 3.171, which is greater than the observed value of F, and the calculated significance equals .960, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between the three groups concerning their performance on the pre-test ($F_{\text{observed}} < F_{\text{critical}}$) and fortunately, the researcher is quite safe in accepting the null hypothesis. Therefore, the results presented in Table 3 showed that the students' homogeneity in terms of their language proficiency.

At the end of the term, a summative achievement test was administered to the students. Each student's score on the summative achievement test was obtained. The results were three subjective measures of the students' performance. That is the summative achievement test of selected, constructed, and control groups. The next step was to analyze the results obtained from the post-test and the descriptive statistics, mean, and standard deviation of each group were calculated. Results showed that the students' performances in the final examination were drastically different. Table 4 shows the post-test results descriptively.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics(Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Interval	Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Control	20	8.70	2.57	.72	7.18	10.21	4.00	13.00
Selected	20	10.60	2.74	.61	9.31	11.88	6.00	16.00
Constructed	20	15.90	2.28	.50	14.83	16.96	12.00	20.00
Total	60	11.73	4.10	.53	10.67	12.79	4.00	20.00

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

A glance at the Table 4 and comparing the mean of each group with the corresponding mean obtained from pre-test, reveals that the participants' in all groups performed better on post-test and the means of three groups increased. Descriptive statistics provided an indication of the extent of the students' performance of selected-response and constructed-response groups on the post-test. The mean scores have changed signifying; this suggests that the treatment has been

influential. The standard deviation indicated that the dispersion of scores was higher than the scores on the pre-test, which means that the students performed differently on the post-test.

As it is shown in Table 4, the mean score of the group who received constructed-response quizzes indicates that they have performed better than the group who received selected-response quizzes. Whereas the mean of the group who received selected-response quizzes, had not significantly changed, in comparison with their mean score on pre-test. Although the performance of this group enhanced, but not as much as the group who took constructed-response quizzes. This shows that frequent constructed-response quizzes caused an improvement in the students' performance in constructed-response group. Therefore, constructed-response group achieved the highest mean, followed by selected-response group and control group respectively. Regarding the standard deviations of the groups, it was found out that the standard deviations of the selected group were much higher than the constructed and the control group, suggesting that the selected group acted less homogeneous than the other two groups. The low standard deviation in constructed-response group showed that the students' performance was similar to each other than the other groups.

Now the question is whether or not the mean scores are different enough to conclude that the means are indeed different, not due to error variability but to real differences associated with treatment. However, descriptive statistics could not offer the researcher sufficient information on the comparison of the groups to reject or accept the null hypotheses of the research. In order to find out whether the differences among the participants performance on post -test were statistically significant, One-way ANOVA for the groups was applied, and the results of the test were interpreted from two points: Level of significance and F-ratio (Table 5):

Table 5: One-way ANOVA(Post-test of the Three Groups)

	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	556.933	2	278.467	36.173	.000
Within Groups	438.800	57	7.698		
Total	995.733	59			

As shown in Table 5, the null hypotheses can be safely and strongly rejected and the results indicated that the difference among the means was significant and not due to the chance. The results of One-way ANOVA for the constructed group and selected group depicted significant effects of these variables on the writing performance of the sample population. That suggests a strong relationship between frequent constructed-response quizzes and students' writing performance. To find out exactly where the difference lies and which group performed better, a multiple comparisons were performed using the Scheffe's method. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Post-hoc Scheffe Test (Multiple Comparisons)

I)	(J) VAR00001	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
VAR00001					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	Selected	-1.90	.87	.105	-4.1053	.3053
	Constructed	-7.20*	.87	.000	-9.4053	-4.9947
Selected	Control	1.90	.87	.105	-.3053	4.1053
	Constructed	-5.30*	.87	.000	-7.5053	-3.0947
Constructe d	Control	7.20*	.87	.000	4.9947	9.4053
	Selected	5.30*	.87	.000	3.0947	7.5053

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The multiple comparisons of the results show differences between the selected group and the control one, but not significant; however such a difference is observed when comparing performance of the participants in other groups, that is, the control and the constructed groups, and the selected and the constructed groups respectively (Sig= .000).

Since the significance level set for the study is 0.05, it can be concluded that participants in constructed-response group performed significantly better on the post-test comparing the participants in the control group. This means that frequent constructed-response quiz was the most effective quiz format in developing formal grammar in writing skills.

Discussion

This section involves discussion of the results and findings presented in chapter four in order to provide answers to the research questions and thereby to reject or accept the null hypotheses which was introduced in chapter one. The results of One-way ANOVA of post-test showed that there was a significance difference among groups, regarding their formal grammar in writing skills. Thus, it can be concluded that the null hypotheses of the research are strongly rejected. These findings clearly suggest that frequent constructed-response quizzes are important in developing formal grammar in English writing skills. Harris (1996) claimed that it is important to reinforce the learning of specific grammatical points or lexical items in writing exercises. Hedge (2005) states the nature of writing is not interesting enough to motivate English learners to practice regularly. Mastering skills entails much practice, writing is no exception. Learning to write is difficult, especially for those writing in a second or a foreign language and effective writing is considered to be a problem for EFL learners. Teachers' experiences also showed that EFL high school students generally have problem and insufficient knowledge of English writing skills. This has encouraged us to emphasize the importance of constructed-response quizzes as one of the most effective instruments to develop writing skills. This is due to the fact that the treatment applied to the constructed group resulted in higher scores and significantly outperformed the selected and control groups. By comparing the mean differences of the groups and levels of significance in Table 4, and examining the complementary results of the Scheffe test, it is concluded that participants in selected group have performed better in post-test than those in the control group. This means that selected group was in the second place concerning the effectiveness in developing formal grammar in writing skills. But this superiority was not totally tangible. The improvement among the writing abilities of participants was significant where they took constructed-response quizzes. Because the participants took a pre-test at the beginning of the

study, it is possible that the students in these three classes were at the same level of background knowledge and the students in the constructed group were better writers.

The results of this study confirmed our prediction that students who took frequent constructed-response quizzes would show better retention of grammatical patterns than would students who were not engaged in the frequent constructed-response quizzes. The preference of constructed-response quizzes (in which students are free to answer questions and the response required may range from one word answer to one or two sentences) might be that they required the productive skills of language in written form and engaged learners in meaning at a deeper level than selected-response quizzes (in which students simply recall or recognize information required to select the appropriate response and no new knowledge is constructed). This increased attention leads to more focus on the comprehension, which in turn causes more retention of the grammatical forms. Besides, since students are familiar with the test, this prior experience or test witness can affect performance on the test task (Bachman, 1995) and they will be able to match what they want to answer with what they had learned as input; therefore, they have less stress for final examination. As a consequence, frequent quizzes, that is, constructed-response items are more probable to help the students remember the materials, especially grammatical points. Thus, the most important point is the effect of the frequent administration of quizzes, which may lead to enhance students' performance on the summative achievement tests. Classroom tests or quizzes, according to many researchers (e.g., Birjandi, et al., 2006; Farhady, et al., 2003; Heaton, 2000) make students better aware of their course objectives and areas of emphasis, as well as their weakness and thus increase their achievement. It may be that students who did not take frequent quizzes may have been characterized by generally disorganized behavior and also quiz is an important motivation for many students. More studies with different population majoring in other fields of study are needed to improve our understanding of how student's performance is influenced by frequent quizzes, for instance, pre-university students or courses in mathematics.

In this study, it was not possible to distinguish the effects of reading practice of writing practice. Did the students' performances improve because frequent quizzes encouraged them to learn to read more carefully, or because they learn to develop and express their written ideas with more clarity, or a combination of the two? Although the writing performances of the three groups were comparable, it might be that the constructed group learned to read more carefully because they were tested by open ended items at every class period. If that is the case, the better performances of the constructed group may be due, at least in part, to more practice reading as well as more frequent writing. The somehow similarity of final examination scores between the selected and control groups and the fact that all three groups were at the same level, the possibility cannot be ruled out in the results on the basis of this study. In general, little research has been conducted in language testing related to the frequent administration of quizzes (Felix, 2005).

CONCLUSION

The results of this study are limited to a sample population of 60 female Iranian senior high school students majoring in empirical sciences. Whether the same findings would be obtained by other high school students studying in other majors (mathematics, or social sciences), or with

other levels (pre-university or even junior high school students), remains unknown. Therefore, a replication of this study with different population is suggested. Another limitation of the study was that due to some limitation it was not possible to assign male participants. Since male and female students' learning styles have been proved to be different, it is suggested that the possible effect of gender be investigated in a study similar to this one. Students vary in their preferences for different test formats, thus using a variety of methods will help students do their best (Davis, 1999). Hence, a replication of this study using other quiz formats or a combination both formats (constructed and selected) is highly recommended so that more consistent information becomes available. The present study investigated the effect of frequent administration of two quiz formats on developing formal grammar in writing skills. Other studies can explore the effect of frequent administration of quiz formats on other language skills such as listening, speaking or reading. Finally, a variety of student strategies are available to syllabus designers, test designers, teachers, and students; the current investigation focused only on the effect of two quiz formats on the formal grammar in writing skills. A deeper understanding of students' patterns of student behavior is required, for example, the influence of various patterns of learning style on achievement.

REFERENCES

- Bachman, F. L. (1981). Formative evaluation in ESP program development. In R. Mackay and J. D. Palmer (Eds.), *Language for specific purposes: Program designed evaluation* (pp. 106-116). Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- Bachman, F. L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baker, D. (1989). *Language testing: a critical survey and practical guide*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Ballard, C. L., & Johnson, M. F. (2004). Basic math skills and performance in an introductory economics class. *Journal of Economic Education*, 35 (1), 3-24.
- Barati, H., Ravand, H., & Ghasemi, V. (2013). Investigating relationship among test takers' characteristics and response formats in a reading comprehension test: A structural equation modeling approach. Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, *Iranian Journal of Language Testing*, 3(2), Retrieved April 12, 2014, from <http://www.tabaran.ac.ir/>
- Birjandi, P., Bagheridoust, E., & Mossalanejad, P. (2006). *Language testing*. Tehran: Mahdavi.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Longman.
- Davis, B. G. (1999). Quizzes, tests, and exams. Retrieved June 25, 2014, from <http://www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/>
- Drouza, E., & Fleming, M. (2003). A comparison of in class quizzes versus online quizzes on student exam performance. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 14 (2), 121-134.
- Farhady, H., & Mirhassani, A. (2008). *Reading through interaction one*. Tehran: Zabankadeh Publications.
- Farhady, H., Jafarpur, A., & Birjandi, P. (2003). *Testing language skills: From theory to practice*. Tehran: SAMT Publications.

- Felix, U. K. (2005). Do weekly quizzes improve student performance? *Academic Exchange Quarterly Journal*, 15, 221-230.
- Fowler, W. S., & Coe, N. (1976). *Nelson English language tests*. London: Britain.
- Freilich, M. B. (1989). Frequent quizzing, the final exam, and learning: is there correlation? *Journal of Chemical Education*, 66 (3), 219-223.
- Gorjian, B. (2011). The impact of repeated constructed response quizzes on formal organization in general writing skills. Retrieved March 2, 2014 from <http://library.iated.org/view/pp.4004-4011>.
- Gorjian, B. (2014). How to improve student learning education essay? Retrieved July 7, 2014, from <http://www.ukessay.com/essay/education/>
- Greene, P. A. (2000). Assessing and promoting student learning: blurring the line between teaching and testing. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 27, 84-88.
- Harris, D. P. (1996). *Testing English as a second language*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hatch, E. M., & Farhady, H. (1999). *Research design and statistics for applied linguistics* (pp. 129-132). Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- Heaton, J. B. (1988). *Writing English language tests*. London: Longman.
- Heaton, J. B. (2000). *Writing English language tests*. New York: Longman.
- Hedge, T. (2005). *Writing* (2nd ed.). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Hughes, A. (1988). *Testing for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, G. M. (2006). Optional online quizzes: college student use and relationship to achievement. *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology*, 32 (1), 1-8.
- Kheirkhah, H., & Ghonsoly, B. (2014). Qualitative study of Iranian English university entrance examination in the light of positive wash back strategies. *English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 37-57. Retrieved April 22, 2014 from www.scholink.org/ojs/index.php/slt
- Martin, D. (2011). How to be an effective EFL teacher. [online] Retrieved April 24, 2014, from www.eflpress.com/teacher/writing-teacher.html
- Mirhassani, A., & Rahimipour, S. (2003). The relationship between quiz, techniques, frequency of administration, and Iranian EFL learners' performance on summative achievement tests. *English Secretariat Quarterly Journal*, 10, 25-38.
- Mirhassani, A., & Ghaemi, S. (2007). *Language teaching theories: Approaches, methods and skill*. Tehran: kasa karosh.
- Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. London: Longman.
- Sheaffer, E. A., & Addo, R. T. (2013). Pharmacy student performance on constructed-response versus selected-response calculations questions. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, Feb 12, 2013; 77(1):6. Retrieved May 17, 2014, from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3578338/>
- Smith, M. E., Zsidsin, G. A., & Adams, L. L. (2005). An agency theory perspective on student performance evaluation. *Decision Journal of Innovative Education*, 3 (2), 29-47.
- Tuckman, B. W. (2008). Using frequent testing to increase students motivation to achieve. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 66, 141-147.

Werner, E. (1993). Constructed-response test items. Retrieved April 3, 2014, from <http://www.clearhq.org/faq-fac.htm>.

Zhang, L. J. (2001). Uncovering Chinese ESL students reading anxiety in a study -abroad context. *Asia Pacific Journal of Language in Education*, 3(2).

TEACHERS' PROFESSIONALISM AND ITS AFFECTING FACTORS: A REVIEW ON EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS IN INDONESIA

Ahmad Yani

(Dr. in English Language Education, M.A. in Applied Language Studies)

Lilis Rianita

(M.Ed. in English Language Education)

Ria Utami

(M.Ed. in English Language Education)

(School of Foreign Languages, Indonesia Tourism Foundation, Bandung-Indonesia)

ABSTRACT

Teachers are believed to play direct roles on the achievement of education goal. This implies that teachers' professionalism matters, as professional teachers make better achievement. As teachers' professionalism becomes an important issue, it is crucial to trace factors underlying professionalism. This paper tries to elaborate a number of factors that affect teachers' professionalism acquisition. The discussion covers current theoretical issues on the affecting factors of teachers' professionalism and the finding of a study on EFL teachers' perceptions towards the affecting factors of professionalism. This study was conducted to 119 EFL teachers of senior and junior high schools. Data were taken through questionnaire designed in Presence-Absence Questions and Rank-Ordering Questions, to reveal respondents' opinion towards the contribution of the variables used in the study on teachers' professionalism acquisition and to disclose respondents' opinion as to the order of importance of each of the variables towards its contribution to teachers' professionalism. Six variables used in this study were General Knowledge Ability, Focus Training, Knowledge of Subject Matter, Teaching Experience, Certification, and Academic Degree. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The findings of this study suggest that respondents believed that all of the variables have positive contribution to the acquisition of EFL teachers' professionalism. Thus, the writers believed that the six variables have to be considered in developing teachers' professionalism.

KEYWORDS: EFL teachers, professionalism, affecting factors.

INTRODUCTION

Common belief on the role of teachers as one of important contributors towards the achievement of learners is acceptable. It is because teachers are the ones whose job directly affects students' success (Hattie, 2003). According to Hattie, teachers make the second most significant contribution to students' achievement. Hattie argues that the first factor that affects students'

achievement is an internal factor that comes from students themselves which accounts for about 50%, while teacher factor accounts for about 30%, and other factors only account for 20%. Teachers are held responsible for the success of learning. In Indonesia, the issue of teachers' role in education has been widely discussed as the government has officially acknowledged that the job of teaching is a profession. The affirmation of teachers' job as a profession by Indonesian policy makers is mandated by a number of regulatory documents (Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, Government Regulation No. 74/2008 on Teachers, and National Education Ministry Regulation No. 16/2007 on Teachers' Academic Qualification and Competencies).

The effect of teachers on students' achievement suggests that teachers' professionalism is a crucial factor in education. Thus, there is a need for finding out innovative and systematic approaches to teachers' professional development, including factors that have strong contribution to teachers' professionalism building.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Nature of a Profession

To understand teaching as a profession, one cannot separate teaching profession from the basic characteristics of other professions. The term 'profession' is a broad concept that involves many aspects (Sanusi et al., in Saud 2008; Shulman, in Bransford et al., 2005; Hamied, 2009; Sockett, 2009; Banks et al., 2005, and Kaufman, 2009). Sanusi et al., (in Saud, 2008) elaborate a number of terms related to the concept of profession which include the terms *profession* which means that the job requires expertise, *professional* which refers to the performance of the person carrying out the job as required by a profession, *professionalism* which refers to the commitment of members of the profession to improve their ability, and *professionalization* which refers to the process of professional development to meet professional standards.

Another concept of profession is mentioned by Shulman (in Bransford, et al., 2005). Shulman mentions six characteristics shared by all professions. A profession is a job that entails a service to society, requires a body of scholarly knowledge, demands engagement in practical actions, maintains dynamics, takes into account the importance of experience, and grows as the development of a professional community.

Hamied (2009) also mentions a number of characteristics of a profession. According to Hamied, a profession must maintain a significant social function in communities and its members must have expertise which is gained from accountable education or training. He also adds that members of a profession should uphold high discipline and ethical conduct and should gain income from the profession.

Teaching as a Profession

As a profession, teaching also upholds general principles shared by all professions as mentioned in previous sections. However, there are specific aspects that are attributed to teaching profession. In Indonesian context, as mandated by Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, and Ministry Regulation No. 16/2007 on Teachers' Academic Qualification and Competencies,

teachers must qualify for four competencies: pedagogical competency, personal competency, social competency, and professional competency, each of which is measured through a number of indicators (Government Regulation No. 74/2008 on Teachers). The regulation provides the competency standards on each subject for different levels of schools. The standards seem to have been based on theories of good language teaching (Brown, 2001).

Good teaching theories have long become dynamic discussions by educators and education researchers. In discussing teaching as a profession, Bransford et al., (2005) mentions three aspects on essential knowledge required for teaching which comprises knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts, knowledge of subject matter, and knowledge of teaching.

Knowledge of Learners

The importance of knowledge of learners for teachers has been discussed by a number of scholars (Banks, et al., 2005; Luke & Elkin, 1988; Clark & Medina, 2000; Nikitina & Fumitaka, 2009; and Gebhard, 1996). According to Banks et al., (2005), one of the aspects that teachers should know about their learners is learner diversity. Diversity is the nature of human being and students are always different from each other. Their differences can include their culture, economic background, cognitive ability, and motivation. Professional teachers should know how to handle culturally diverse students. Teachers need to have a broad set of teaching strategies to deal with students with different cultural backgrounds. Banks et al., (2005) add that the knowledge of culture can include knowing of self and of others. Besides knowing their students' cultural backgrounds, teachers should also know that learners also live in social setting where literacy practices are always changing. This situation demands that teachers need to be familiar with the uncertainty and dynamics of learners' daily life (Luke & Elkins, 1988; Clark & Medina, 2000).

In addition to such external factors as cultural backgrounds, literacy practices, and discourses, internal factors coming from learners are also dominant aspects that construct diverse learners (Nikitina & Fumitaka, 2009; Gebhard, 1996). Nikitina & Fumitaka (2009) and Gebhard (1996) argue that these internal factors are such factors as motivation and cognitive ability. Different learners may have different motivation when learning. Some learners may have high motivation while others may have low motivation. Similarly, different learners may have different cognitive ability. Teachers should be prepared with the knowledge of learners' diversity and the knowledge of how to deal with the diversity.

Banks et al., (2005) emphasize the importance of knowing the diversity on learners' cultural background, Clark & Medina (2000) and Luke & Elkins (1988) point out the importance of understanding diversity on learners' daily life environment, and Nikitina & Fumitaka (2009) and Gebhard (1996) concern with the importance of knowing learners' diversity on cognitive and motivation differences.

Knowledge of Subject Matter

Bransford et al., (2005) mention knowledge of subject matter as another aspect that a teacher should possess. Knowledge of subject matter includes knowledge of subject being taught and

knowledge of how to teach the subject. Knowledge of subject matter is scholarly knowledge that a teacher has gained from schooling as well as from individual knowledge development.

Grossman et al., (2005) and Darling-Hammond & Berry (2006) also mention the importance of knowledge of subject matter for teachers. According to Grossman et al., teachers should possess deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. Similarly, Darling-Hammond & Berry (2006) also acknowledge the importance of knowledge of subject matter. Darling-Hammond and Berry say that a teacher's knowledge of subject matter has a significant role on students' achievement.

Knowledge of Teaching

Knowledge of teaching is also an important aspect that triggers the success of teaching. Theories of knowledge of teaching have been proposed by a number of researchers (Alatis, 2007; Jenkins, in Bransford et al., 2005; Borko et al., 2009; Harmer, 2007; Pennington, in Brown 2001; and Brown, 2001). According to Alatis (2007), in language teaching, good teaching will be met when the teachers meet the following aspects: competency, encouraging personalities, and care. This statement implies that there are prerequisites for successful teaching. First, it must be done by competent teachers; second, it requires non-discouraging teachers; third, the teachers must use accommodative approaches; and fourth, the teachers must care for the students lovingly. These prerequisites imply that good teaching can be understood as a part of nurturing.

There are many variables that apply across teaching situations (Jenkins, cited in Bransford et al., 2005; Borko et al., 2009). These variables can be grouped into four categories: nature of the content, teaching and learning activities, characteristics of the learners, and criterial tasks. These variables affect the effectiveness of teaching. Jenkins (in Bransford et al., 2005) also mentions that teaching practice happens as a collaborative process of four aspects : content, activities, tasks, and learners – each of which has an important role in the achievement of the practice. Thus, it can also be justified that teachers must know knowledge of teaching content, knowledge of teaching activities, knowledge of learners' characteristics, and knowledge of criterial tasks. Knowledge of criterial tasks is the knowledge on the level to the extent students should attain in their learning. These are such levels as to recognize, to recall, or to practice problem solving.

Jenkins (in Bransford et al., 2005) further elaborates her idea that appropriate levels of difficulty should also be taken into account in selecting and designing teaching materials so that the materials can function as a means of attaining goals, that the teaching and learning activities should be made varied that may include lectures, simulations, hands-on (offering active participation), and problem solving, and that the students should develop motivation and attitudes to foster their achievement in attaining knowledge and skills, while the tasks should include recognition, recall, problem solving, and should create effectiveness of new learning.

EFL Teachers' Professionalism and Its Indicators

On the issue of professional characteristics, a number of writers have elaborated the concept of professional teachers. Brown (2001), for example, identifies qualities of professional language teachers by classifying his ideas into four categories: technical knowledge, pedagogical skills, interpersonal skills, and personal qualities. First, foreign language teachers must be

knowledgeable on a number of aspects such as linguistic system, principles of language learning and teaching, knowledge of language skills, knowledge of how language is learnt, knowledge of the connection between language and culture, and knowledge of issues on language through conference and workshop attendance.

Second, professional foreign language teachers must be skillful in two aspects. These are pedagogical skills and interpersonal skills. Language teachers must be well-informed with theories of language teaching and various teaching techniques. This will help teachers make classroom decisions. They should also be able to design and execute lesson plan. Professional language teachers should not be dependent on others. They must be self-subordinated and they should not be under the control of other teachers. They must be under self-control. Professional teachers must be the ones who are ready to give optimal feedback to their students. They must promote student interaction and create teamwork. They also should be creative, effective, and innovative.

Third, professional foreign language teachers must have interpersonal skills. The interpersonal skills include: the awareness of cross-cultural differences and the sensitivity of students' cultural background, ability to respect students' opinion, a sense of patience, ability to promote students' critical thinking, good cooperation with colleagues, and positive habit of knowledge-sharing.

Fourth, professional language teachers must have personal qualities. They must be well-organized, conscious in meeting commitments, and dependable. They must also be flexible when things go awry. Professional language teachers must always curiously try to create new ways of teaching. Next, professional teachers must have short-term and long term goals for their continued professional growth. Last, they must maintain high ethical and moral standards.

In discussing the qualities of EFL teachers, Allen (in Brown, 2001) mentions nine characteristics of good EFL teachers. According to Allen, a professional EFL teachers must hold a degree in TESL/TEFL, love English language, be critical thinkers, be persistent to upgrade oneself, be independent, get ready to go extra mile, be familiar with cultural adaptability, be a professional citizenship, and love the job of teaching English. From these characteristics, we can argue that in order to become a professional EFL teacher, one must hold an academic degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, must have positive attitudes of English language, must have positive attitudes on language teaching profession, and should be a critical person.

A professional EFL teacher must hold a degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. In Indonesian context, based on Law No. 14/2005, English teachers must hold a four-year college education (undergraduate degree) in English language teaching. This becomes the basis of the licensure for the teachers. This is an important issue since one of the problems of education (in Indonesia) is the fact that there are still many teachers who do not hold this degree. A significant number of them only hold a two-year college or three-year college education. Many of them even do not have degree at all in English education. They are out-of-field teachers. Of 2,783,321 teachers in Indonesia less than 35% of them hold an undergraduate degree in their subject

(Hamied, 2008). Thus, about 65% of teachers have not met the requirement of teaching profession.

Positive attitudes of the English language is also an important factor for EFL teachers (McGroarty, 1996). It becomes the initial and crucial factor for becoming creative EFL teachers. McGroarty also adds that positive attitudes of the English language will raise teacher's and students' awareness to use English. The awareness of using English is an important factor for the success of the teaching process considering that in EFL situations, the opportunity to use English in community is very minimal especially for speaking. Therefore, interaction in the classroom becomes the major opportunity for students and teacher to practice using the language. According to Sockett (2009), positive attitude is part of teaching disposition that becomes one of qualities that a professional teacher must possess along with knowledge and skills. Thus, positive attitude of the English language is part of teaching dispositions for EFL teachers. It is a virtuous aspect that can trigger the teachers to become more creative and to become more motivated in doing their job (Sockett, 2009).

Professional EFL teachers are supposed to be knowledgeable and sensitive to cultural differences that exist between English language and learners' first language (Yeh, 2005; Boyle-Baise, 2005). Language is part of culture. Thus, having positive attitude of the English language includes having positive attitude of the English cultures as teaching language entails teaching cultural aspects of the language. For example, some students feel confident when their errors are corrected directly, while other students like indirect correction (Houten, 1980). Wrong treatment of student's error may hinder interaction.

Professional teachers must promote critical thinking. They are the architects of intellect (Fogarty & McTighe, 1993). Current educational practices move from teacher center to learner center and this requires teacher to give learner more opportunity to express their ideas, argument, and reasoning. Classroom practices should not oppress learners by depositing knowledge to learners (Freire, 1993). Learner center practices require the interaction among learners and learners and interaction between learners and teacher. For this reason, teachers must possess a certain level of cognitive ability since cognitive ability becomes the prerequisite to thinking.

Gebhard (1996) argues that foreign language teachers must create an interactive classroom. Good language teaching should provide opportunities for students to interact. To create an interactive classroom, teachers must understand aspects that can promote students interaction. At the same time, they must also recognize some aspects that may hinder students to interact. Gebhard adds that to do so, teachers must learn from their experience, must realize their role, and must be able to identify the problems that EFL/ESL teachers face in teaching. Knowing the principles of interactive classroom is fundamental for current foreign language teaching as the teaching of foreign language has changed to a new direction, that is shifting from teaching grammar to teaching communicative function.

The previous practices of foreign language teaching had undergone a fashion where teacher-centered model became common traditions (Gebhard, 1996). Besides teacher-centered fashion,

the materials were focused on grammar. This kind of practice did not promote interaction between teacher and students and between students and other students. And when interaction happened the role of teacher was very dominant. In order to promote classroom interaction using the target language, teacher needs to provide opportunities for students to interact. Gebhard also argues that interactive classroom requires teachers to create situation where students talk more and teacher talk less. This can be done only if teachers are creative in making or providing topics which are interesting to students and accommodative to the students' cultural differences.

A professional foreign language teacher must be able to accommodate every student's cultural differences; otherwise, he/she will not be able to create interactive classroom (Yeh, 2005). Interactive classroom is the one that is culturally responsive (Grant & Gillette, 2006; Boyle-Baise, 2005). According to Grant & Gillette, a culturally responsive teaching means that the teachers must accommodate expectations and needs of all learners. Similarly, Boyle-Baise also argues that teachers who practice culturally responsive teaching accommodate learners' experience. Therefore, in their teaching, they see every learner as a student, family, and community member.

Teachers should also let students express their opinion and ideas in their own ways (Gebhard, 1996). This may mean that what is meaningful for teachers may not be so for students and what is not interesting for teachers may be interesting for students. In promoting interactive classroom, students must be given opportunities to negotiate meaning between students. Teachers should let students ask and clarify their opinion. The topics of interactive classroom should not come from teachers only but can also come from student.

Factors Affecting Teaching Professionalism

In this section, the writers elaborate theoretical issues on aspects that affect teachers' professionalism. Drawing ideas from a number of sources on the issue of teachers' professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002; Alatis, 2007; Bransford, 2005; Sweed, 2008; Kealing, 2008) the writers believe that the acquisition of teachers' professional characteristics does not come from one source. The writers believe that at least six aspects play a significant role on teachers' professionalism. These are general knowledge ability, focused-training, teaching experience, knowledge of subject matter, certification, and academic degree.

General Knowledge Ability

One of the aspects that influences the success of teaching is believed to be the teachers' general knowledge ability (Whitehurst, 2002). This is one of the reasons why a teacher candidate is required to hold a specific degree or qualification. According to Whitehurst, general knowledge ability is the cognitive ability to acquire knowledge. It is a mental action or process of acquiring knowledge through thought, experience, and the senses. This general cognitive ability takes an important role in forming teachers' professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002; Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996). A teacher with high cognitive ability is able to design learning activities that inspire learners' interest in order to strengthen learners' motivation (Cochran-Smith, 2003).

Focused -Training

Teacher professional development has an important role on teachers' professionalism (Smith, 2005; El-Okda, 2005; Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009; Levin, Hammer, & Coffey, 2009; Cohen and Hill, in Whitehurst, 2002). Smith (2005) argues that professional development involves learning to improve existing conditions. Similar argument is proposed by El-Okda (2005). According to El-Okda, professional development is part of teacher learning process and it must be conducted continuously along with teacher life-services (El-Okda, 2005). El-Okda also adds that inexperienced teachers must get more training, as there is distinct expertise between experienced and inexperienced teachers. Teacher training is essential for inexperienced and novice teachers because they are often unable to attend students' thinking until they are able to identify classroom routines (Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009). They add that teacher training is also believed to have an important impact on teacher competence (Henze, Driel & Verloop, 2009). According to Levin, Hammer, & Coffey (2009) teacher training must include many aspects of teaching that comprise curriculum, materials development, teaching techniques, and teaching evaluation.

A study by Cohen and Hill (Cited in Whitehurst, 2002) on the role of professional development training suggests that training has a significant contribution on teacher professional development. Whitehurst suggests that training should be focused on subject matters, academic content, and curriculum.

Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is also believed to be one of important aspects that make up teachers' qualities (Johnston et al., 2005; Yeh, 2005). The role of teachers' experience on the acquisition of professional qualities has been studied by Johnston et al., (2005). Their study revealed that teachers' experience takes a crucial role on the development of teachers' professionalism acquisition. Alatis (2007) also argues that experience contributes to teachers' theory building. Alatis mentions several aspects that make up teachers' theory building. These are teachers' experience as a language learner and as a teacher, professional development (training), classroom practices, and teaching reflection. These all become teachers' collection of cognitive information. The collection of cognitive information then shapes the teachers' characteristics and their characteristics are represented in their daily teaching activities along with their teaching career development.

As has been mentioned, teachers' experience is part of aspects that form teachers' characteristics and this in turn affects teachers' personal theory building that affects teachers' classroom teaching practices (Levin & He, 2008). It is a common practice that teachers learn from their daily activities to improve their teaching performances. Teachers' experience can be derived from two periods which include the period of before teaching services and the period of while teaching services (Alatis, 2007; Woods, 1996). According to Woods, experience during services enriches teachers' theory building along their career. Thus, there is a cyclical process involving teachers' experience and their theory building.

Knowledge of Subject Matter

A teacher's knowledge of subject matters is the essence that directly affects students' achievement (Whitehurst, 2002; Grossman et al, 2005). As Grossman et al. argue, this comprises two major aspects (the knowledge of subject being taught and the knowledge of how to teach the subject). A teacher's knowledge of subject matters is gained from many different sources such as from academic institution, training, and self-development.

Certification

It is a common sense that good teachers are the ones who are talented in teaching and educating learners and good teachers might not be made through certification. Thus, good teachers are communities certified teachers. However, from the authority point of view, certification program can be seen as one of government policies aiming at improving teacher quality (Tamir & Wilson, 2005). Teacher certification has long been at issue in education (Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein, 1999; Whitehurst, 2002). In Indonesia, teacher certification has been an important issue. It has been part of professional development policy of the Ministry of National Education which has gained support from the Indonesian law makers (Law No. 14/2005).

Academic Degree

Academic qualification is one of triggers of teachers' professionalism acquisition. The contribution of a teacher's academic degree is in most part resulted from the conceptions of professional teaching standards set up by the academic institution a teacher candidate spent his/her study. The conceptions of professional teaching standards have been designed by policy makers, educators, and teacher educators. The process setting professional teaching standards involves academia from various universities and government agencies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was aimed at answering the following research questions:

- Do respondents agree on the positive role of the six variables used in this study towards the development of EFL teachers' professionalism?
- What is the order of importance of each of the variables?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this were 119 EFL teachers of senior and junior high schools from 3 districts in Cimahi, West Java-Indonesia. Subjects were taken from 31 schools through quota- random sampling.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in two types (Presence-Absence Questions and Rank-Ordering Questions, based on Jackson, 1995). The Presence-Absence questions were to reveal respondents' opinion towards the contribution of the variables used in the study on teachers' professionalism acquisition, while the Rank-Order

questions were used to disclose respondents' opinion as to the order of importance of each of the variables towards its contribution to teachers' professionalism. Six variables used in this study were *General Knowledge Ability*, *Focus Training*, *Knowledge of Subject Matter*, *Teaching Experience*, *Certification*, and *Academic Degree*.

Procedure

Data were taken through a number of steps. First, the researchers chose 31 schools out of 77 schools from three districts. The choice of the schools was based on the status, level, location, and classification of the schools. Of the 31 schools chosen, 14 schools were junior high schools, 10 schools were senior high schools, and 7 schools were vocational schools. The total number of English teachers from the 31 schools was 124. Second, questionnaire was given to 124 teachers with 119 of them responded the questionnaire and 5 of them did not respond it. The final step was analyzing the data using descriptive statistics.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that *Knowledge of Subject Matter* got the most positive response where 100% (119) of respondents said *Yes* and 0% said *No* towards the contribution of this factor to the acquisition of teachers' professionalism, followed by *Focused-Training* with 116 (97.5%) respondents agreed and 3 (2.5%) respondents disagreed. Third place was for *General Knowledge Ability* and *Teaching Experience* with 122 (94.1%) respondents agreed and 7 (5.8%) respondents disagreed. The fourth place was for *Academic Degree* with 101 (84%) respondents agreed and 18 respondents (16%) disagreed, while *Certification* got the lowest agreement from respondents with 87 (73%) agreed and 32 (27%) disagreed. This suggests that respondents believe that all factors discussed above have important contribution to the acquisition of teacher professional characteristics. The results also show that *knowledge of subject matter* is believed to be the most important aspect of the acquisition of teacher professional characteristics while *certification* is the least aspect that contributes to the acquisition of teachers' professional characteristics.

The findings also suggest that most respondents considered *General Knowledge Ability*, *Knowledge of Subject Matter*, and *Academic Degree* have a strong effect on teachers' professionalism acquisition. On *General Knowledge Ability*, 47% respondents put it in the first rank and 11.7% in the second rank, on *Knowledge of Subject Matter*, 45.37% respondents put it in the first rank and 34.45% respondents in the second rank, and on *Academic Degree*, 47.89% respondents put it in the first rank and 10.08% put it in the second rank. In the middle rank were *Focused-Training* and *Teaching Experience*, while the lowest rank was *Certification* where only 24.36% put it in the first rank and 45.37% respondents put it in the sixth rank.

From the findings, it can be said that most respondents believed that all six factors have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers' professionalism. These findings confirm the theories that claim the six aspects to have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers' professionalism (Whitehurst, 2002). Of the six factors, certification is an interesting phenomenon. Although certification is believed to have positive contribution to teachers' professionalism acquisition, the number of respondents who disagree on it is relatively significant

which made up of (27%) of the total respondents. This suggests that certification is not as important as other factors in fostering professionalism development. In addition, although respondents considered that certification has contribution on professionalism, its contribution was relatively minimum.

Respondents agreed on the mastery of knowledge of subject matter as the most contributing aspect of professional EFL teachers because of two reasons. First, knowledge of subject matter is the essence of teachers' qualities. It is the reason for a teacher's presence in the class. Another reason is that teachers without subject knowledge mastery will not be innovative. Knowledge of subject matter can be gained from many different sources such as formal education (academic degree), training, teaching experience, and such individual factors as general knowledge ability, learning motivation, and learning strategies.

General knowledge ability is an individual factor. This deals with a person's level of intelligence. It is believed that smart teachers are able to think creatively and therefore can build their professionalism faster. Teaching experience, academic degree, and focused-training also have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers' professionalism. Experienced teachers are believed to be more professional than inexperienced teachers as they learn from their experience when dealing with students' problems. Academic degree also has positive contribution to teachers' professional development. Holding academic degree takes a long process of learning which has to be gained from a formal institution such as a college or a university. Focused-training is another factor that is believed to have positive contribution to teachers' professionalism. Focused-training includes activities that have to be taken during teachers' in-service periods as part of teacher professional development.

The controversy over the importance of certification on teacher professional acquisition is due to a number of reasons. Respondents who believe that certification has positive contribution to teachers' professionalism development argued that certification program, indeed, motivates teachers to work better. It also reminds them to teach better. In spite of their positive justification about certification, respondents also acknowledged that certification is a controversial program. For them, certification is also a reward that should have been given automatically without taking a test of it. Teachers who believe that certification does not contribute significant professionalism for teachers also have a number of reasons. For them, certification does not change teachers' personalities and behavior. Respondents who have negative perceptions on the contribution of certification acknowledge that certification is a government effort to improve teachers' performance but they believed that the beneficial effect of certification happens to teachers' welfare instead of to their professionalism growth. Certification does not guarantee teachers' professional acquisition.

CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed EFL teachers' professionalism and its affecting factors from both theoretical contexts and research findings. From theoretical point of view, teachers' professionalism is a broad aspect in which in order to acquire professionalism, one must take into

account a number of aspects that are believed to trigger the acquisition. The finding of the study suggests that the variables used in this study (General Knowledge Ability, Focused-Training, Teaching Experience, Knowledge of Subject Matter, Certification, and Academic Degree) are believed to have positive contribution to the acquisition of teachers' professionalism. This means that, in general, the finding of the study confirms the existing theories. Drawing from the findings of this study, the writers offer three suggestions. First, the policy makers in education take necessary measures to control the quality of teacher education. This is to make sure that teacher candidates undergo all standards mandated by the educational regulations. Second, the process of teacher recruitment should apply high academic standards to make sure that the accepted teachers are those who qualify for the job. Finally, on the issue of certification, there should be periodical evaluations to those who have been certified to make sure that they maintain their qualification and that they improve their quality.

The findings have revealed EFL teachers' beliefs on factors having positive contribution on the development of teachers' professionalism and have provided new insights and elaborative explanations on aspects that support teachers' professionalism development. In addition to its positive contribution, this research also has limitations. First, the number of participants was relatively small (119 EFL teachers), and therefore, the findings of this study may not always apply for different groups in a different period. Second, the design used in this study was descriptive quantitative. Thus, to some extent, the findings may be subjective in nature.

REFERENCES

- Alatis, J.E. (2007). *What Language Teaching Is*. A Project of The National Capital Language Resource Center. Retrieved on December 19, 2009. Available at <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials>.
- Banks, J. et al. (2005). Teaching Diverse Learners. . In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing Teachers for A Changing World* pp.232-274. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher,
- Borko, H., Whitcomb, J., & Liston, D. (2009). Wicked Problems and Other Thoughts on Issues of Technology and Teacher Learning. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60 (1) January/February 2009, 3-7.
- Boyle-Baise, M. (2005). Preparing Community-Oriented Teachers: Reflections from A Multicultural Service-Learning Project. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 56 (5), November/December 2005, 446-458.
- Bransford, J. D. et al. (2005). Introduction. In L. Darling –Hammond & J.D. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing Teachers for A Changing World* pp 1-39. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher.
- Brown, H.D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles*. New York: Longman.
- Clark, C., & Medina, C. (2000). How Reading and Writing Literacy Narratives Preservice Teachers' Understanding of Literacy, Pedagogy, and Multiculturalism. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 5 (1), January 2000, 63-76.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2003). Teaching Quality Matters. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 54 (2), March/April 2003, 95-98.

- Darling-Hammond, L., & Berry, B. (2006). Highly Qualified Teachers for All. *Educational Leadership/November 2006*, pp.14-20.
- El-Okda, M. (2005). A Proposed Model for EFL Teacher Involvement in On-going Curriculum Development : *EFL Journal of Volume 7. Issue 4 Article 2*. Retrieved on February 11, 2009. Available at <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/December05PDF.issue.pdf>.
- Fogarty, R. & McTighe, J. (1993). Educating Teachers for Higher Order Thinking: The Three-Story Intellect. *THEORY INTO PRACTICE*, 32 (3), Summer 1993, 161-169.
- Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Gebhard, J.G. (1996). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. Michigan: The Michigan University Press.
- Grant, C.A., & Gillette, M. (2006). A Candid Talk to Teacher Educators about Effective Preparing Teachers Who Can teach Everyone's Children. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57 (3), May/June 2006, 292-299.
- Grenwald, R. et al. (1996). The Effect of School Resources on Student Achievement. *Review of Educational Research*, 66, pp. 361-396.
- Grossman, P. et al. (2005). Teaching Subject Matters. In L. Darling-Hammond & J.D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing Teachers for A Changing World* pp 201-274. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher
- Hamied, F.A. (2009). *Kebijakan Kementerian Koordinator Kesra Dalam Pengembangan Profesi Kependidikan*. Paper presented at the National Seminar on Education, Indonesia University of Education, Bandung-Indonesia, held on 23-25 of October, 2009.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Hattie, J. (2003). *Teachers Make Difference*. A paper presented at Australian Council for Educational Research, October 2003.
- Henze, I. ae al. (2009). Experienced Science Teachers' Learning in the Context of Educational Innovation. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60 (2) March/April 2009,184-199
- Houten, R.V. (1980). *Learning Through Feedback*. London: Human Sciences Press
- Jackson, W. (1995). *Doing Social Research*. Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada Inc.
- Johnston, B. et al. (2005). The Professional Development of Working ESL/EFL Teachers: A Pilot Study. In D.J. Tedick (eds.), *Second Language Teacher Education* pp. 53-72. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publisher.
- Kaufman, D.K. (2009). Teacher Educator Writes and Shares Student Perceptions of a Publicly Literate Life. *Journal of Teacher Education Volume 60 Number 3 May/June 2009*, pp. 338-350
- Kealing, J. (2008). *Training Teachers for Change? Assessing Language Teacher Participation in Workshops and Their Subsequent Adaptation of New Teaching Practices and Attitude*. A paper presented on The Seventh International Conference on Teachers' Competencies and Qualifications for ELT in Indonesia held at Bandung Institute of Technology 15-17 April 2008.
- Levin, B., & He, Y. (2008). Investigating the Content and Sources of Teacher Candidates' Personal Practical Theories (PPTS). *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59 (1), January/February 2008, 55-68

- Levin, D. et al. (2009). Novice Teachers' Attention to Student Thinking. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60 (2) March/April 2009, 142-154
- Luke, A. & Elkins, J. (1988). Reinventing Literacy in New Times. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 42 (1), 4-7.
- McGroarty, M. (1996). Language attitudes, motivation, and standards. In S. L. McKay (Eds), *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching* pp. 3-46. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nikitina, L., & Fumitaka F. (2009). Teacher-Student Relationship and the Conceptualization of the "Good Language Teacher": Does Culture Matter? *Volume 7. Issue 4 Article 3*. Retrieved on December 19, 2009 from <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/December05PDF.issue.pdf>.
- Saud, U.S. (2008). *Pengembangan Profesi Guru*. Bandung: ALFABETA.
- Smith, L.C. (2005). The Impact of Action Research on Teacher Collaboration and Professional Growth. In D.J. Tedick (Eds.), *Second Language Teacher Education* pp. 199-214. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sockett, H. (2009). Dispositions as Virtues: The Complexity of the Construct. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60 (3) May/June 2009, 291-303
- Sweed, J. (2008). *Attitude and Teacher Development*. A paper presented on The Seventh International Conference on Teachers' Competencies and Qualifications for ELT in Indonesia held at Bandung Institute of Technology 15-17 April 2008.
- Tamir, E., & Wilson, M. (2005). Who Should Guard the Gates? Evidentiary and Professional Warrants for Claiming Jurisdiction. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 56 (4), September/October 2005, 332-342.
- Whitehurst, G.J. (2002). *Scientifically Based Research on Teacher Quality: Research on Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*. Paper presented on White House Conference on Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers on March 5, 2002.
- Woods, D. (1996). *Teacher Cognition in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yeh, H. (2005). Teacher Study Groups as a Vehicle to Strengthen EFL Teachers' Professional Identity and Voice. *Asian EFL Journal Volume 7. Issue 4 Article 3 December, 2005*. Retrieved on December 19, 2009 from <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com.international.php>.
- _____. (2005). *Indonesian Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers*. Jakarta: Fokusmedia
- _____. (2007). *Indonesian Ministry of National Education No.16/2007 on Teachers' Qualification and Academic Standards*. Jakarta: Fokusmedia
- _____. (2008). *Indonesian Government Regulation No. 74 /2008 on Teachers*. Jakarta: Fokusmedia

The writers are lecturers at the Department of English Language of School of Foreign Languages- Indonesia Tourism Foundation, Bandung-Indonesia. Ahmad Yani holds an M.A. degree in Applied Language Studies from Carleton University, Ottawa-Canada and a Doctoral degree in English Education from Indonesia University of Education, Bandung-Indonesia. Lilis Rianita holds B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees in English Education from Indonesia University of Education. Ria Utami holds B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees in English Education from Indonesia University of Education.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE REPRESENTATION OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM NEGOTIATION IN NEWSPAPERS: TEHRAN TIMES VS. LOS ANGELES TIMES

Parastoo Azizi

*Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate how The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times manifest their attitudinal representations in the discourse dealing with Iran's nuclear program. The two newspapers were selected non-randomly to cover an Iranian and an American newspaper for the purpose of comparison. To narrow down the scope of the investigation, four macro and five micro features were used based on vanDijk's (2002) framework to analyze 300 pieces of news in both of the newspapers. The frequency of the discourse strategies were calculated by two reviewer to arrive at the inter-rater reliability index through Pearson Correlation Analysis as ($r=.725$). The percentages of the structures were calculated and Chi-square analysis was used to show whether the differences were significant. It was found that the two newspapers represent their ideas differently on the same event. They used the macro strategies (i.e., to show positive or negative attitudes against the West or Iran). Thus at the macro level, the newspapers are significantly different. The Los Angeles Times emphasized the positive things about the West while deemphasized the positive things about Iran. At the micro level, there was significant difference between the frequencies of stability, accusing, authority, threatening and blaming used as micro discourse features in both newspapers. The implications of the study could be used for EFL teachers in teaching reading comprehension and ESP courses in politics.

KEYWORDS: Iran's nuclear program, negotiations, newspapers, Tehran Times, The Los Angeles Times

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension may be enhancing through the understanding of the textual components including the grammatical, lexical, graphic organizers and the attitudes behind the writers' sentences (Fairclough, 1993; Khaghaninezhad, 2012). The present study used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)-based investigation to show the differences between two popular newspapers' (i.e., Tehran Times as an Iranian media and The Los Angeles Times as a sample of the US) attitudes towards presenting positive or negative ideas regarding the nuclear negotiations between Iran and West with the leading power-the USA- and its allies-EU, Russia, and China). Thus it

dealt with discourse features in which the used some macro and micro features from the CDA perspectives.

Using vanDijk (2002) socio-cognitive model, this study tries to reveal how Iran's nuclear program negotiation are represented in the *Tehran Times* and *Los Angeles Times*. Iran's nuclear program negotiations as a political event have attracted the attention of media since 2013. This point should not be ignored that the focus of the study is on the role of language, and the way it is manipulated utilizing the micro and macro- discursive strategies suggested by vanDijk's socio-cognitive model.

The vanDijk's (2002) model was used to analyze the discourse features in the present study. 300 English political pieces of news were critically analyzed both at micro and macro levels in both *Tehran Times* (i.e., 150 news reports) and *The Los Angeles Times* (i.e., 150 news reports). However, the other research conducted by Ahmadian and Farahani (2014a, 2014b) on the same newspapers with the different discourse features among the discourse strategies introduced by vanDijk's model (e.g., hyperbole, distancing, implication, illegality, presupposition, etc. They worked on both micro-level included lexical features based on vanDijk's model and grammatical features based on Fairclough's (2001) framework.

There is a general assumption that the speech of the press shows attitudes against the other sides. Critical Discourse Analysis is an approach aimed at analyzing and describing the attitudinal of discourse features. The CDA practitioners offer need to follow the frameworks through which they check the discourse features at the macro and micro levels to carefully illustrate the ideas behind the pieces of news. These distinctions as macro discourse features are the general ideas of the news in both positive and negative modes (vanDijk, 2004) or at the micro level such as threatening (i.e., shows the threats of the opponents), authority (i.e., shows the power and supporting by legal powers, e.g., the UN, the EU, or The Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), blaming (i.e., blame the other side), accusing (i.e., accuse the other side to violate the rules) or stability (i.e., resist on their policies without tangible change). There are other frameworks to analyze the discourse features of the media (e.g., Fairclough's (2001) framework). These frameworks deal with relational and expressive values of linguistic features are of considerable significance for analysts.

The focus of this study is on the discourse features of the events, actions, states, relationships, people and other participants involved in Iran nuclear program i.e., on the macro or micro level. Thus vanDijk's (2002, 2004) framework was studied and modified to employ the analysis. Using this theoretical framework, this study was to illuminate how an analysis based on a systemic functional approach, and the aims of CDA can be brought into play in looking at political discourses. The study of cross cultural discourse features in written texts has been an area of growing interest in the last decades. CDA is concerned with discourse in forming and being formed by social political practices (Fairclough, 2001). It is a paradigm of research, a program, or as Wodak (2001) suggests, a school, with leading scholars who have different backgrounds of their own and have their own approaches with different analytical tools. According to Wodak (2001), CDA "allows for open discussions and debates for changes in the aims and goals and for

innovation” (p. 8). However, all CDA methods share a view about the “social processes of power, hierarchy building, exclusion and subordination” (Wodak& Meyer, 2001, p. 3). Other issues like racism, gender inequality, sexism, colonialism, employment, war, nuclear weapons and nuclear power (Fowler, 1996) are among the topics in which most of critical discourse analysts are interested. In general, CDA aims to raise the readers’ consciousness of the power of language in changing the events and influencing the readers’ views(Reisegl&Wodak,2001).

CDA hypothesizes that different cultures may have different ways of organizing ideas which become a very important research area. Casting a brief look at the history of CDA studies, one can see that the growing interest in these studies was for its concern with practical pedagogical purposes and pedagogical implication. One area for which teaching English as a foreign language has received criticism is that, students, when placed in professional settings (e.g. studying ESP/EAP, teaching reading comprehension and translation). These insights help the EFL practitioners not only teach political features of the professional genres, but also aware of the discursive realities of them. Furthermore, in the newspaper genres, the knowledge obtained from identifying discourse features of various types of texts can also allow both the language teachers and students to cope with the important cultural elements that affect the nature, usage and production of these texts. The number of CDA studies investigates discourse cultural patterns in which languages such as English are taught as a foreign language comparing with countries in which English is used as a second (L2) language (Caple, & Knox, 2012). The main objective of this type of studies is to present a comparative genre analysis of newspaper reports across two cultures as represented by the newspapers which are released in Iran as a non-native culture (e.g., newspapers released in United States as a source and native culture in regard to English language). The aim is to describe some of the cross-cultural and discursive differences. In particular, these studies investigate a number of discourse and linguistic features in the newspapers mentioned above. Finally, the fact is that the primary goal of CDA has principally been pedagogical interests in EFL contexts to assist non-native Iranian students with the acquisition of English rhetorical strategies. Moreover, the primary goal of this research is to investigate the pedagogical implications to enhance practical genre knowledge of Iranian students teachers, journalists and news translators. Language is an instrument to be manipulated for fulfilling the purposes which may be in spoken or written form. Effectively, language is deployed for transmitting knowledge, ideas and emotions which are loaded with attitudes and perspectives (van Dijk, 1998).

Understanding the macro and micro structures of Newspapers' reports can help EFL learners to comprehend the meaning of the texts. One of the main problems among Iranian EFL learners is the lack of knowledge on the discourse features which make the meaning unclear, especially in the political texts (vanDijk, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009). Although there are several studies (e.g., Ahmadian&Farahani, 2014a) which work on macro and micro discourse features, the features in the present study have not covered in those researches. These discourse features included stability, authority, blaming, accusing, and threatening. The language is manipulated by the newspapers in order to fulfill the objectives and ideologies of supporters of the newspapers. Thus, there is no doubt that newspapers' reports are insightful sources of information that covers different events which are (re)presented based on the perspectives and ideology followed by the

newspapers (Reah, 2002). In order to reveal the utilized biased language and raise the students' consciousness about the way they can elicit the comprehension by which the language is manipulated, the researcher attempts to make a comparative study on the representation of Iran's nuclear program negotiation in two newspapers of *Tehran Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Thus, findings from CDA research can indeed offer valuable information to material writers and language teachers for foreign language classrooms (Behnam&Khodadust, 2010). CDA studies are, for example, capable to provide teachers and students with knowledge about the preferred patterns of writing (Connor, 2003). These studies uncover specific discourse features patterns, which might be culturally and contextually specific. Thus, such knowledge can provide the basis for explicit strategies which Iranian students of journalism, news writers and even news translators might use to comprehend and produce effective English news. The other implications of such studies for the ESP teachers is to know more about the sophisticated practice of writing news in a foreign language. News articles comprise significant resources for language teaching which present authentic materials. Effectively, analyzing the social issues presented in the newspapers may reveal the perspectives and ideologies through which Iran's nuclear program negotiation are represented in the two daily newspapers of *Tehran Times* and *Los Angeles Times* which is beneficial in raising the consciousness of students regarding the manipulated language and the hidden meanings of the texts. Hence, equipping the students with the critical reading helps them to get access to the opaque and obscure meanings of the texts. Accordingly, the results of the study will be insightful for language learners, teachers, teachers' trainers and even course designers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This research investigated The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times discourse features dealing with Iran's nuclear program in a comparative research design. Thus there is a need to take a look at the previous related studies to provide the researchers of the present study with enough theoretical and experimental backgrounds in the analysis these two newspapers. Iran's nuclear negotiations of using discourse features refer back to the history of Iran nuclear history and the two popular newspapers in Iran and the US are introduced briefly as follows:

Iran's Nuclear Program started in the mid-1960s under the authoritarian and pro-American regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi with U.S. support for the program. In 1967, the United States supplied Iran with a 5-megawatt nuclear research reactor to establish the Tehran Nuclear Research Center. Iran signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, known as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), on July 1, 1968, the first day the treaty was circulated for signatures. Iran subsequently ratified the treaty on March 5, 1970, the same day that the treaty was ratified by the United States. The treaty allows the non-nuclear weapon states further the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament" (International develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes under the inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)). The member countries with nuclear weapons (United States, Russia, China, Britain, and France) were allowed to keep the weapons but agreed to refrain from spreading them to other countries and promised to work toward nuclear disarmament. Israel, India, and Pakistan are the only nuclear

countries that are not parties to the NPT. The partially completed reactors were severely damaged due to six separate Iraqi attacks launched between 1984 and 1987. The present study selected 300 pieces of news from both Tehran Times and Los Angeles Times to compare their macro and micro discourse features strategies in Iran's nuclear negotiations (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015).

Tehran Times began in 1979 as a foreign-language newspaper to air the voice of the Islamic Revolution. The policy that the newspaper has been following has been based on the guideline set that it is in English language to be searched online and in paper. It shows the Iranian policies from the beginning of Iranian Revolution. In the calendar year 1390 (21 March 2011) all the newspaper's pages are printed in color. In 2002, Tehran Times established a news agency which later came to be known as the Mehr News Agency (MNA) (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015). Its Web site is: <http://www.tehrantimes.com>. It holds a wide circulation around the world. In the present study, the Archived newspapers from 2011 to 2014 were reviewed to study Iran's nuclear negotiations with 5+1.

The **Los Angeles Times**, commonly referred to as the **Times**, is a daily newspaper published in Los Angeles, California, since 1881. It was the largest metropolitan newspaper in circulation in the United States in 2008 and the fourth most widely distributed newspaper in the country. In 2000, the Tribune Company, parent company of the Chicago and local television station KTLA, purchased the Los Angeles Times. It is currently owned by Tribune. It is a daily newspaper with the circulation of 653,868 daily (Wikipedia, Feb. 15, 2015). In the present study, the Archived newspapers from 2011 to 2014 were reviewed to select the news covering Iran's nuclear negotiations with 5+1. Its Web site is: <http://www.latimes.com/>.

The news reports can influence the readers and persuade them to take actions. A news report is defined as a text in a newspaper that gives the opinion of the news writer or a journalist on a topic or item of news. News report in the journalistic terms is explained as soft news which is a piece of news dealing with editorial comments rather than hard news which is a piece of news that avoids editorial comments since it represents the partial, national and private opinion of journalists. The news editors practice the foreign policies of the country rather than reporting just the events (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). For the purpose of any study in analyzing media and their attitudes towards a social and international event, newspaper reporters select the appropriate audience for a number of reasons including the use of discourse features for their political and social interests. First, news report as an important professional text type with a big size of readership in different cultures, constitute a useful set of data for conducting cross-cultural genre analysis. For the sake of this research therefore, we can say that they are written by professional journalists and therefore, reflect discourse patterns of experienced writers representing the types of writing in the aforesaid newspapers. Second, the news reports typically represents the metropolitan values of a society, evaluating government decisions and practices and even it can influence policy making on various issues. And third, unlike hard news, news reports do not represent straightforward information but they are written in a way that their analysis requires greater effort and knowledge from students for decoding the message of them. This indicates that although news reports are not easy to analyze since they are

subjective. Thus using them in the language classrooms may be problematic in terms of their argumentative and discursive nature.

It seems that news reports can be useful resources for assessing and enhancing the linguistic and cultural knowledge of the foreign language learner (Hernandez, 2008). In this respect, a comparative study of news reports across different cultures can be a useful step toward making the pedagogical connections to enhance the students' awareness of certain subtle differences in written discourse structure. This can be used in teaching any language skills to develop ESL writing, reading and even listening and speaking in the classrooms. It can be an attempt to explain and understand the different discourse strategies found in the compositions written by non-native speakers of English.

Several studies (e.g., Ataei & Mozaheb, 2013) have focused on the narrow view of text analysis by looking at texts as finished products and attempted to adopt a more comprehensive view of text analysis (i.e., text not only as product but as process) by analyzing articles. He then proposed a four move model to analyze article Moves as move 1: Establishing the field by showing centrality, Move 2: summarizing previous research, Move 3: Preparing for present research by indicating a gap, raising a question or extending a finding and Move 4: Introduction of the present research by stating the purpose, or briefly describing present research. These studies mainly focus on a "broader" scope of text analysis as discussed above by exploring the nature of the genre of news reports from various perspectives. Based on what was mentioned above, news reports are key texts for students of journalism and so should be key materials for teachers of journalism in English language in EFL contexts (Ataei & Adriani, 2009). The newspapers are considered as resources for language learning since they are authentic, original, interesting and based on the events which are real and can be seen in the environment (Fairclough, 1992). The CDA may give the teachers invaluable resources to be used in the classrooms (1993). This fact is acknowledged by many language learners, being able to read and write a newspaper in a foreign language without too much difficulty for second language acquisition.

New Reports Analysis

Bell (1998) believes that news reports can be effective in terms of their excerpts as their accessibility, their influence on speech communities, culture, politics, ideological beliefs and social life, their disclosing of a great deal about social meanings and embedded stereotypes and finally their formativeness as exemplar instances of text and talk. However, from the point of view of media experts, this process goes through certain stages of selection and transformation that the commonly held belief about the neutrality of the news cannot be anymore authenticated and relied on (Fowler, 1991). In this regard, the mediating role of language in yielding a piece of information which is loaded with a specific line of thought and a particular way of seeing the world is seen to be highly probable which is in turn a testimony for embarking on specific analytical assets (van Dijk, 2009). Moreover, various forms of linguistic expression, including phonological, syntactic, lexical or semantic, are utilized by news producers for certain purposes. Accordingly, a critical discourse analytic framework is deemed to yield better assessment of the purported corpus in this study than a non-critical

one, because as it is argued by Fairclough (1992) “Critical approaches differ from non-critical approaches in not just describing discursive practices, but also showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants” (p.12).

Behnam and Khodadust (2010) showed how lexical features of repetition and synonymy as well as the structural and thematic feature of passivization, nominalization and predicted theme were utilized by discourse producers to impose their desired ideologies to the viewers with regard to the events of September. In one of the few studies with attention on semiotic resources, Bertrand (2009) discussed racial issues with respect to semiotic resources. Bertrand examined exchanges that occurred within the context of a video-taped Focus group of white males. To analyze the data, Fairclough (2001), vanDijk's (1991) frameworks together with Goodwin and Goodwin's (2001) approach for semiotic resources were used. This composite methodology allows for added insight and helps to show positive self and in-group presentation and negative other and out-group presentation if conducted correctly. The analysis of the data showed the ways the participants relied on place names to index race and framed the differences in school quality relative to the archive of SID. Goodwin's approach indicated that men used a range of semiotic resources to float their efforts to present themselves positively and Others negatively.

The textual analysis through a closer reading of headlines revealed a polarization between scared, implicitly Swedish victims and immigrant-outsider perpetrators. The writer finally discussed the little importance of race and color compared with the mere ‘otherness’ of the muggers or robbers. Also, the Swedish youth robber was seen as a scapegoat, as a symbolic tool in a capitalist society. However, the authors of the present paper believe that the comparisons made between Sweden and the UK are inaccurate because Sweden is not a capitalist country in the sense that the UK is. Hakam (2009) helped to explore how ideology was reproduced and resisted in the English-language Arab press. The choice of lexical items by Arab newspaper was also discussed via concordance programs. The researcher investigated discourse to find salient examples of ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ paradigm.

Some linguistic features were examined in the search for ideological aspects of discourse; modality, naming and description collocation incongruity, presupposition, and signals of affiliation (Rasti & Sahragard, 2012). The data for the study (news reports, editorials, news analyses) came from websites of 19 English language Arab newspapers representing 12 different countries. The results of the research showed that the set of word frequencies and collocations taken from major European news agencies about Arab communities differed significantly from that of Arab-generated or Arab modified samples. Deghat (2009) applied some of the most agreed upon guidelines of CDA to analyze the tape scripts of 2008 presidential campaign speeches of democratic candidates (i.e. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama) in terms of the discursive structures in the text which carry and enforce certain ideologies. She made use of Hodge and Kress's (1979) framework and compared and contrasted the transcribed texts of fifty tape scripts. She concluded that although the effect of

race and gender were evident in Clinton and Obama's speeches, both nominees did not want to inject race or gender in this presidential campaign and in this regard had strived to win the whole American voters.

One of the comprehensive studies carried out in Iran related to the macro-strategies mentioned above was Rahim and Sahragard's (2007). They analyzed some Persian and English texts to find the ideologically laden words of the texts and their ideological effect of the whole texts. They gave particular attention to euphemization and derogation. They resorted to vanDijk's (2004) theoretical framework. The materials used included the emails on the life, achievements and death of the Late Pope and articles from the economist magazine, Tehran Times, Iran News Persian radio program entitled "The analysis of Foreign Radios and the critiques on the movie Shoran (Hemlock). The analysis of the data proved that the categorization of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is an effective tool in the hand of the writers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of the present study are as follows:

RQ1. Is there any difference between the two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive US policy against Iran) concerned with attitudes on Iran's nuclear program negotiation?

RQ2. Is there any difference between the two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive Iran's policy against the West) concerned with attitudes on Iran's nuclear program negotiation?

METHODOLOGY

Data

In order to compare and analyze the macro and micro discourse markers across different newspapers, this study relied on two newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times during January, 1, 2011 to January, 1, 2014. These newspapers were non-randomly selected and the news on Iran's nuclear program was selected based on the availability of the news in the newspapers. In each newspaper, the number of words was the criterion for select the number of pieces of news. Generally, 165 news reports from Tehran Times and 114 news reports in The Los Angeles Times were non-randomly chosen regarding their topics on Iran's nuclear program and the related negotiations in both sides. Thus in Tehran Times, there were 15240 words and in The Los Angeles Times, there were 15450 words. The data included which totally 30690 words were gathered to be analyzed at the macro and micro levels.

While Tehran Times is English and is considered as a domestic newspaper in Iran, The Los Angeles Times is supposed to be a US or foreign newspaper. They could be considered as a non-native or native data. Here, the word data is used since the size of the pieces of news may not be large enough to reach the generalization. There are some reasons behind this selection. First, there is the availability of the newspapers online to be searched very easily. Second the two

different ideas coming from the East (i.e., Iran) and the West (i.e., the US). Finally, the Iran's nuclear program is hot debate in the world and big political powers are now dealing with it seriously.

Instrumentation

The present study employed the vanDijk's (2000) framework for the analysis of the macro and micro levels as discourse features. The framework used was based on the taxonomy of several features. Based on this checklist there are four macro strategies and 28 micro strategies though which 5 ones were non-randomly were selected since the previous studies(e.g., Fairclough, 2001; Gee, 2004; Khaghaninezhad & Rostami, 2014) worked on the other macro strategies and micro strategies.

Procedure

This study began with the collection of English newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times. The pieces of news in each newspaper were selected based on the words in each rather than the number of articles. Thus both newspapers included approximately 30690 words to compare the macro and micro levels as discourse features as discourse devices. Totally, 165 news reports were selected in Tehran Times and 114 news reports in The Los Angeles Times based on non-random sampling. They were chosen with regard to their topics on Iran's nuclear program and the related negotiations in both sides. Thus in Tehran Times, there were 15240 words and in The Los Angeles Times, there were 15450 words. The words were gathered to be analyzed at the macro and micro levels. The analysis included descriptive statistics and the frequency of discourse features and inferential statistics in terms of using Chi-square analysis.

These data were developed by selecting newspapers from 2011 to 2014 and included editorials, columns, and articles published during this period which is more authentic and recent corpora. The authors and columnists were not realized as a factor in selecting the newspapers writings. Just the topics on Iran's nuclear issues were put into consideration. Some samples of these topics were introduced in the Appendix B. The frequency of each macro and micro discourse features was observed by the researcher and a teacher who was expert in finding the related discourse features. The rating was done and the inter-rater reliability of the counting was estimated by Spearman Correlation Analysis as ($r=.892$). However, the counting of the discourse appeared to be a very complicated activity since some instances could be categorized in two categories according to the vanDijk's framework. The meaning of some phrases and sentences had many visible and invisible layers. Thus, preparing higher accuracy could be difficult at the macro and micro levels (Behnam & Moshtaghi, 2008).

There were about 30690 words are generally collected. All the pieces of news were saved on a computer to produce an electronic data in words which showed the number of the words in 179 pieces of news. The counting did not include all the figures and symbols that did not consist of alphabetically letters (e.g., numbers). By doing so, it became possible to make intra-group comparisons. Afterwards, the Word software was used to highlight and count the frequency of each macro and micro discourse features in each newspaper based on the framework presented earlier in this section. Selection of frequency of each macro and micro discourse features was

according to their functions and meaning in the sentences. Although some words appeared to be macro and micro discourse features according to the mentioned framework, they did not function as macro and micro discourse features in the text. So they were not counted as macro and micro discourse features.

The frequency and percentage of each macro and micro discourse feature in each newspaper were calculated separately and then both newspapers were compared with each other. Then, the Chi-square test was used to show whether the differences in the corpora were statistically meaningful or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Macro discourse features

The first step taken in the analysis of the macro and micro discourse features in the mentioned newspapers was to run word count to determine the length of the data. A total of 30690 words were calculated among the pool of data. The total average of macro and micro discourse features uses was 2.5 percent of all the words.

The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the macro discourse features; rows numbered 1 to 4 representing the features applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all features in each of the four categories under study are shown in columns in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and percentage of Macro Structures of Presentations

Features	Emphasize positive things about us		Emphasize negative things about them		Deemphasize negative things about us		Deemphasize positive things about them		Total macro structures	Average
Macro										
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
Tehran Times	320	28.90	347	31.34	200	18.06	240	21.68	1107	55.66%
Los Angeles Times	180	20.40	169	19.16	311	35.26	222	25.17	882	44.34%
Total frequency	500		516		511		462		1989	100

Notes: Us refers to the newspapers' country and them refers to the opposite side

Table 1 shows that the macro discourse features in the newspapers of Tehran Times and The Los Angeles Times. In the categories of "Emphasize positive things about us" and "Emphasize negative things about them, the Los Angeles Times used more macro discourse features than Tehran Times while in the "Deemphasize negative things about us" and "Deemphasize positive

things about them” the Los Angeles Times used less macro discourse features. Table 4.2 shows the Chi-square analysis which was run to reveal the difference between the two newspapers.

Table 2: Chi-square Analysis of Macro Structures of Presentations

	Emphasize positive things about us	Emphasize negative things about them	Deemphasize negative things about us	Deemphasize positive things about them	Total	X ² P
Tehran Times	320 (314.49)	347 (291.22)	200 (210.71)	240 (290.59)	1107	9.467 0.000
Los Angeles Times	180 (185.51)	169 (171.78)	311(124.29)	222 (171.41)	882	
Total	500	516	511	462	1989	

Table 2 shows that the two newspapers are significantly different in using macro discourse features since the critical X² (9.467) with df=4 is less than the observed X² (101.259) at the significant level (p<0.05). Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage of micro structure presentations are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics: Frequency and percentage of Micro Structures of Presentations

Features Micro	Stability		Authority		Blaming		Accusing		Threatening (%)	Total (%)
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq. (%)	Freq. (%)
Tehran Times	98	26.18	59	18.28	88	24.30	49	13.52	6817.72	36241.04
Los Angeles Times	77	14.80	116	22.30	135	25.96	91	17.50	10119.42	52058.96
Total frequency	175		175		223		140		169	882(100%)

Notes: Us refers to the newspapers' country and them refers to the opposite side

The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the micro discourse features; rows numbered 1 to 5 representing the features applied here in this study. The Chi-square analysis of all features under the study is shown in columns in Table 4.

Table 4: Chi-square Analysis of Micro Structures of Presentations

	Stability	Authority	Blaming	Accusing	Threatening	TotalX ²	P
Tehran Times	98 (57.02)	59 (74.29)	88 (130.01)	49 (45.62)	68 (55.07)	362	1.070 0.000
Los Angeles Times	77 (117.98)	175 (153.71)	135 (268.99)	91 (94.38)	101 (113.93)	520	
Total	175	228	223	140	169	882	

Table 4 shows that the two newspapers are significantly different in using micro discourse features since the critical X² (11.070) with df=5 is less than the observed X² (73.364) at the significant level (p<0.05).

Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of macro and micro discourse features in the two newspapers showed significant differences in using the features. Thus there were significant differences in using macro and micro discourse features in the two newspapers.

Discussion

The focus of VanDijk's (2000) framework is on the discourse and language through which the positive points of the West (i.e., our side) which emphasized and the negative points of West (i.e., our side) was de-emphasized. Furthermore, it clearly shows that the positive points of others (i.e., opposite side) were de-emphasized and the negative points of others (i.e., opposite side) were emphasized. The present study reviewed the emphasized issues concerned with CDA at the macro level. For instance, the presentations of the negative point which was emphasized in the Los Angeles Times is "*lack of cooperation in Iran to talk on the nuclear program*" or the deemphasized of a positive point presented by the same newspapers as "Iran responses the world lately". According to vanDijk's (2000) model, the uses of these emphatic presentations could be intentionally done to minimize the role of the opposite side and to maximize their role in cooperation. Thus, the CDA-based study is an attempt to probe into the manipulation of ideologies in translations of political texts.

The results of the presents study is in line with Fairclough (2001) who believes that the newspapers which belong to the government's policies or they are close to those policies are biased in attitudes towards the other side. VanDijk (2004) was adopted to conduct this research. Three hundred English political pieces of news were critically analyzed both at micro and macro levels. At micro-level, lexical features based on vanDijk's(2004) model and at the micro level the discourse features were selected based on the framework and were analyzed. The most common macro discursive strategies of this framework was "*emphasizing the positive things about us*" with the highest frequency and "*deemphasize the negative things about us*" with the lowest frequency". This showed that the news reports in this study along with descriptions according to vanDijk (2000) who supported the results of the study. Therefore, these strategies used to keep face by stating our positive characteristics first, and then focus on their negative attributes. This could be supposed as socio-cognitive devices which may,

for instance, be employed by the use of demonstrative pronouns instead of naming or describing others. In sum, the difference between the uses of these macro strategies was significant since the two newspapers used these macro structures differently.

Sometimes a situation is compared to positive or negative events in history, either as a positive self-presentation or negative other-presentation strategy. This device by which the out-group members are characterized as criminal or law breaker and they try to show that the other side's good activity is negative while their own negative activity is positive. The frequency of the macro structures showed that the macro structures are a means to show that the writers/speakers are firm to be objective in what they are discussing is not just their opinions but 'facts'. This is a prevalent semantic strategy which divides people in two groups of in-group (US) and out-group (THEM). The results of this study showed that the used these macro structures differently. For instance, the two newspapers of the *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* use discourse features at the macro level (i.e., negative vs. positive Iran's policy against the West) differently concerned with attitudes on Iran's nuclear program negotiations or the other side. The *Los Angeles Times* has a specific function in the general strategy of emphasizing the West positive things and deemphasizing Iran's negative ones. They also use some presupposition to the sense that most of the meanings of a text are not explicitly expressed but presupposed to be known by the recipients. Presuppositions are used typically to speak about the controversial ideas or to assume the truth of some preposition when such truth is not accepted at all. These findings are in line with Fairclough (2001) who argued that this strategy may be used to overlook others' ideas and emphasize their own ideas. In this case, speakers/ writers do not have specific information about a subject but implicitly put forward that they know about it but they try to degrade the other roles. This kind of an 'apparent knowledge' generally appears in the presentations, like: "*I do not know, but Iran dislikes solving it.*" or "*The US wants not to solve the problem.*"

The sources for data gathering will be two newspapers of *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times*. In effect, the reports on the representation of Iran's nuclear program negotiation will be collected from the websites of these two newspapers. The main issue in these newspapers is that the *Los Angeles Times* and *Tehran Times* are opposite newspapers from two opposite perspectives. This result is matched with Yaghoobi (2009) who believes that the expressions can convey the meanings behind the surface level. Thus, the analysis examines all the presentations which were supposed as macro discourse features according to van Dijk's (2002) model. The macro discourse features were used in this study included "*stability, authority, blaming, accusing and threatening*" which could be found in words or phrases and they became known as the Iran or West policies on the Iran's nuclear program between the years 2011 to 2014. The pool of data was analyzed to find the negative or positive attitudes against the other side and their frequencies were calculated with their percentages. In the "stability" feature, the highest frequency and percentage belong to the *Los Angeles Times* which tried to show the West stability to solve the problem by a means even the military invention. However, on the other side, *Tehran Times*, get the lower frequency and percentage and tried not show the stability but a kind of flexibility to have the talks rather than to be involved in a war against the West.

The macro discourse features "authority", "blaming", "accusing", and "threatening" were used mainly by Tehran Times more than the Los Angeles Times in a significant way. The Iranian side accused the West to follow the US in War policy and threatened that the US bases in the Middle East would be endangered if they wanted to follow their threats. The Tehran Times also blamed the group of 5+1 to follow the US policy and they did not have an independent policy in making decision to take the steps in solving the problem. Tehran Times also confirm that Iran has the right to enrich uranium based on NPT treaty and do this in future. Thus Iran has the authority to follow its nuclear program in a peaceful manner. This finding is in line with Ataei and Adriani (2009) who, among many other studies conducted a research through the CDA frameworks and found about the biased representations of events and social groups in newspapers. Moreover, the findings lend supports to vanDijk's (2000) belief that "discourses express, confirm, instantiate or constitute ideologies" (p. 86), and to the fact that ideologies are injected in discourse by the use of different kinds of discursive strategies like the ones which are included in the framework. As such, the findings of this study call attention to the importance of being aware of the potentiality of language to manipulate the facts and realities. Accordingly, the findings of the Chi-square analysis showed that there were significant differences between the two newspapers in the representation of their sides against the other sides. Their biased representations could be understood through their expression at the macro and micro discourse levels.

After examining the incorporation of different voices throughout the full text stories of the editorials, it was found that there is a sharp discrepancy between representing the either side of the conflict. While Iranian's voice is negatively heard in Western newspaper of The Los Angeles Times, mostly via quoting Iranian president or nuclear case officials, the voice of the Western side is rampantly heard more than Iranians in which the American, European, and the IAEA's officials at every level either president, vice president, or spokespersons, are frequently quoted. It is interesting to note that the infrequency through which the Iranian's voice is heard implicates in a series of negatively loaded quoting verbs while the other side is represented through positive attitudes or even neutral manners.

Iranian officials are shown to be often accusing the others illegitimately while their Western counterparts are demonstrated to be stating or saying something with regard to the nuclear case in a quite legitimized manner. The kind of analyses which were conducted throughout this research compellingly demonstrated that in order to yield a better examination of discursive events. Thus, one must utilize a critical discourse analytic approach so that according to Fairclough (1992), not only the involved practices are optimally described. However, the theses ideas are involved in the interrelationships of power, ideology and discourse would be efficiently revealed. Accordingly, the analysis of the kind of discourse which was used in the sampled editorials of American newspapers and news agencies reveals that Iran's nuclear issues are given negative representations throughout the newspaper's voice by using certain discursive features. Generally, the biased representations of the both sides could be seen in their representations on the negotiations of Iran's nuclear case.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that there was an existence of a biased reporting arising from the particular world-view of the papers, amounting to legitimization or legitimization of the Iran's nuclear program. Misrepresentation of Iran nuclear program and, the positive image of the West and the negative one in the Iran's side showed hostility towards Iran. Thus in English papers such as the Los Angeles Times the discourse features of positive images of Iran became deemphasized by the West newspaper. On the other hand, It was revealed that the same image was seen in the Tehran Times which tried to emphasize the Iran's authority of pursuing the nuclear program and deemphasizing the role of the US in the negotiations. In addition, The Los Angeles Times showed that in the English newspaper, Iran is mostly portrayed as the illegal power and a social deviant. The dominant pattern that emerges appears to encode a view of a polarized world, a world of us and them, representing the EU and 'Iran' respectively. Reports on the Iran nuclear program often occurred in connection with Iran's secret nuclear activities and its enrichment of uranium for no peaceful purposes (Ataei&Mozaheb, 2013). In particular, the stability of the West on the blockage of Iran's nuclear program and blaming the Iran's officials to pursue ambitious attitudes towards the nuclear programs could be seen so clearly.

The Los Angeles Times clearly accused Iran as a Threat not only to the US but also to the Israel as a close friend. This makes Iran's nuclear program more complicated; however, this issue was seen in Tehran Times as a clear issue in which Iran is authorized to pursue its nuclear program and has the right of uranium enrichment. While The IAEA agency is highlighted the problem and overlooks Iran's legitimate right. The process percentages by themselves were not too illuminating of the messages conveyed; the distribution of the participants and their corresponding number of tokens facilitated the processes of interpretations far more. Both the Iranian conservatives and the reform-seekers agree that Iran is entitled to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and it has fully complied with its international obligations regarding nuclear activities. b) In order to continue its nuclear program, Iran is proceeding on two parallel tracks: a political-diplomatic track with the EU or the UN, and a belligerent track. In its political-diplomatic track with the EU which is mostly taken by the reformists.

Language use and discourse are crucial social practices influenced by ideologies, which in turn also influence how we acquire, learn or change ideologies. Ideologies are not innate, but learnt. We learn most of our ideological ideas by reading and listening to other group members, beginning with our parents and peers (Wodak & vanDijk, 2000). Later, we learn ideologies by watching television, reading textbooks at school, advertising, the newspaper, participating in everyday conversations with friends and colleagues, among a multitude of other forms of talk and text. With respect to the mentioned channels through which ideologies influence us and are reproduced in society, it is suggested that critical awareness of language has to be public knowledge, while the mass media itself may provide discourse study of language in a digestible way to lay people and persuade viewers and/or readers of the value of analyzing mass media itself and other mass print such as textbooks. In the age of globalization and at a time when democratic practices appear to be influx, we believe that the equilibrium that many seek is impossible to create; however, critical language awareness awakens us not to be gulled.

The present study worked on the macro and micro discourse features in a limited way. It is suggested other features come into the inquiry. The Appendix A introduced several discourse features based on vanDijk's (2002) framework. The other international newspapers could be analyzed to study these features deeply.

REFERENCES

- Ahmadian, M., & Farahani, E. (2014a). What is the truth? A demonstration of language manipulation in two newspapers and the pedagogical implications. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 3(7), 89-100.
- Ahmadian, M., & Farahani, E. (2014b). A critical analysis of The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times on the representation of Iran's nuclear program. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(10), 2114-2122.
- Ataei, M., & Adriani, H. (2009). On the representation of Iran's post-resolution nuclear issues in American news editorials: A critical discourse analysis. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 5, 20-45.
- Ataei, M. R., & Mozaheb, M. A. (2013). The representation of Iran's nuclear program in British newspapers' editorials: A critical discourse analysis perspectives. *International Journal of Society Culture and Language (IJCL)*, 1, 25-45.
- Behnam, B., & Moshtaghi, R. (2008). A contrastive critical analysis of Iranian and British newspaper reports on the Iran nuclear power program. *Systemic Functional Linguistics in Use*, 29, 199-218.
- Behnam, B., & Khodadust, M. R. (2010). A critical discourse analysis of the event of September 11, 2001 in American and Syrian print media discourse. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3, 23-50.
- Bell, A. (1998). *The discourse structure of news stories*. London: Benjamin's Publications.
- Caple, H., & Knox, J. S. (2012). Online news galleries, photojournalism and the photo essay. *Visual Communication*, 11(2), 207-236.
- Deghat, S. (2009). *The CDA of the USA 2008 presidential campaign speeches of democratic candidates with respect to their gender and race*. Unpublished MA thesis, Shiraz, Iran.
- Fairclough, N. L. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. L. (1995). *Media discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Fairclough, N. L. (2001). *Language and power*. (2th ed.). London: Longman.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the news: Discourse and ideology in the press*. London: Routledge.
- Fowler, R. (1996). On critical linguistics. In Caldas-Coulthard, C.R. and M. Coulthard (Editors), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Gee, J. P. (2004). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London: Routledge.
- Hakam, J. (2009). The 'cartoons controversy': a Critical Discourse Analysis of English-language Arab newspaper discourse. *Discourse and Society*, 20 (1), 33-57.
- Hernandez, A. A. (2008). SFL and CDA: Contributions of the analysis of the transitivity system in the study of the discursive construction of national identity (Case study: Gibraltar). *Linguistic Journal*, 3(3), 160-175.

- Hodge, R.I.V., & Kress, G.R. (1979). Language as ideology. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. In S. Sarangi, & Malcolm Coulthard (Eds.), *Discourse and social life*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Khaghaninezhad, M. (2012). Manipulation of ideology in translation of political texts: A critical discourse analysis perspective. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 2(1), 12-25.
- Khaghaninezhad, M. S., & Rostami, M. (2014). Investigating the role of discourse in gender representation in Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 6(1), 84-106.
- Koosha, M., & Shams, M., R. (2005). A critical discourse study of news discourse: Iran's Nuclear Issues in the British newspapers. *IJAL*, 8(2), 107-141.
- Rahimi, A., & Sahragard, R. (2007) *Critical discourse analysis*. Tehran: Jungle Publications .
- Rasti, A., & Sahragard, R. (2012). *Actor analysis and action delegitimation of the participants involved in Iran's nuclear power*. Tehran: Rahnama.
- Reah, D. (2002). *The language of newspapers* (2nd ed.). USA: Routledge .
- Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2001). *Discourse and Discrimination. Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism*. London, New York: Routledge .
- vanDijk, T. A. (2002). Multidisciplinary CDA: A plea for diversity. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 95-120). London: Sage .
- vanDijk, T. A. (1991). *Racism and the press: Critical studies in racism and migration*. London: Routledge .
- vanDijk, T. A. (2000). *Ideology and discourse: A multidisciplinary introduction*. London : Sage.
- vanDijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary study*. London: Sage.
- vanDijk, T. A. (2004). *Ideology and discourse analysis*. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11(2), 115-140.
- vanDijk, T. A. (2009). News discourse and ideology. In K. Wahl Jorgensen, & T. Hanitzsch, *Handbook of journalism studies* (pp. 191-204). London: Routledge .
- vanDijk, T.A. (2006). Discourse and manipulation. *Discourse and Society*, 17(3), 359–383 .
- Wikipedia Web site (Feb. 15, 2015). www.wikipedia.org
- Wodak, R. (2001). The discourse-historical approach. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 63–95). London, England: Sage.
- Wodak, R., & M. Meyer (2001). *Methods of critical discourse analysis*. London: Sage.
- Wodak, R., & vanDijk, T.A. (2000). *Racism at the top, Drava*. Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Austria.
- Yaghoobi, M. (2009). A critical discourse analysis of the selected Iranian and American printed media on the representations of Hizbullah-Israel war. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 21, 124-15.

THE EFFECT OF PICTURE-CUED TASKS ON THE ACQUISITION AND RECALL OF SEPARABLE AND INSEPARABLE PHRASAL VERBS BY PRE-INTERMEDIATE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Zeinab Daghari

¹Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of utilizing picture-cued tasks on the learning and recall of English phrasal verbs. A total number of 60 pre-intermediate language learners were chosen from a language institute to take part in this study. The participants were non-randomly divided into control and experimental groups. Then, they sat for a pre-test of the phrasal verbs at the beginning of the study. The results showed that the two groups were homogeneous at the onset of the study in terms of their knowledge of English separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. Both groups were taught phrasal verbs through two different approaches. While the experimental group received picture-cued tasks as their treatment, those in the control group were taught traditionally through translation and dictionary use techniques. After ten sessions, each lasted 45 minutes, the immediate and was given to the participants immediately after the treatment period. Finally, after two weeks interval the delayed post-test was given to the both groups to assess the degree of their recall. The results of Independent Samples t-test showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on both the immediate and delayed post-tests. Moreover, there was no difference between the results obtained for separable and inseparable phrasal verbs on these two post-tests. Thus the picture-cued tasks could affect the participants' retention and recall significantly. This study suggests that using picture-cued tasks helped learners grasp the abstract meaning of English phrasal verbs through concrete pictures. The implications for learners, teachers, and educators are that they can consider this promising technique in their learning/teaching practices.

KEYWORDS:Picture-cued tasks, Acquisition, Recall, Separable and inseparable phrasal verbs

INTRODUCTION

Second language learning is a demanding enterprise since one would encounter a multitude of difficulties in grasping the meaning of the words. Words are supposedly the prime means of communication and, as one might rightly expect, a limited vocabulary repertoire keeps learners from expressing their real thoughts and feelings. Ample vocabulary, on the other hand, provides

them with the opportunity to use the right words at the right time. Vocabulary learning thus is crucial to success in second language learning.

Numerous authors have highlighted the important role of vocabulary in the process of language learning. Many L2 learners see language mastery as essentially a matter of learning vocabulary, so they spend much time on memorizing lists of words and sections of bilingual dictionaries. Harley (1995) also contends that vocabulary acquisition studies show that vocabulary is a unique window on the process of acquisition of language. Having word knowledge should be, according to Willis (1990), prior to learning of sentence structure since it is the word meaning that determines the grammaticality of structures, not the other way round. Burton and Humphries (1992) also herald the significance of vocabulary in language learning: “Good readers and listeners usually become good writers and speakers but none can be possible without learning sufficient vocabulary” (p.73)

A good number of English words are verbs and a lot of verbs in English are phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb is a verb formed from two or sometimes three constituents: a verb and an adverb or preposition. Most of the phrasal verbs are formed from a small number of common verbs (such as get, go, come, put and take) and a small number of adverbs and prepositions (such as away, out, off, up and in). Phrasal verbs constitute a very important aspect of the language learning. They are not only used in spoken and informal English, but are also a common part of written and even formal English. The meanings of some phrasal verbs can easily be guessed (e.g. sit down or look for). However, in most cases their meanings are idiomatic, that is quite different from the sum of the meaning of the verb and the particle(s) they are formed from. For instance, *boil down to* can mean 'to be the main point or cause of something' and this meaning has no obvious connection with the meaning of 'boiling' something. In this case, phrasal verbs create special problems for students, not only because there are a multitude of them in English, but because the juxtaposition of verb and particle(s) makes up a thoroughly new meaning.

Phrasal verbs are often divided into the dichotomy of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. Separable phrasal verbs can remain together when using an object that is a noun or noun phrase. An example could be *He paid back the debt* or *He paid the debt back*. They must be separated when a pronoun is used: *We ran it up by \$50,000* not *We ran up it by \$50,000*.

Inseparable phrasal verbs, on the other hand, always remain together. It makes no difference if a noun or pronoun is used. As an illustration, take the following sentence: *They splashed out on new office furniture* not *They splashed it out*. The objective of the present study is to investigate the effect of picture-cued tasks, as a means of teaching vocabulary, on the acquisition of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

A picture-elucidation task is one type of cognitive awareness-raising task (Skehan, 1998) in which learners' attention is directed toward salient features of one or a series of pictorial sketches, cartoons or photos rendering a more concrete aspect of the meaning of a linguistic expression. This concrete aspect then gradually leads learners to recognize similar salient features in more abstract pictorial elucidations of the linguistic expression in question. The selection of

pictured-cued tasks, as a technique for teaching English phrasal verbs, in this study is due to the fact phrasal verbs appears to be highly demanding for second language learners, while this class of verbs creates less of an obstacle for native speakers as they come across abundant evidence of their use from an early age (Mandler, 2004; Tomasello, 2003). This early, gradually expanding experience undoubtedly aids the native speaker in forming the necessary *image schemas* whose properties would then scaffold the construction of abstract concepts signifying in turn relevant linguistic expressions which embody abstraction in meaning (Geeraerts&Cuyckens 2007).

A number of research studies have illustrated that native speakers are subconsciously aware of such image schemas and constantly manipulate them in their application and comprehension of figurative language (Gibbs, Bogdonovich, Sykes & Barr, 1997). The researchers believe these image schematic patterns are indispensable to appropriate understanding and use of figurative language.

To sum, as it was stated previously, the aim of the present study is to find out whether picture-cued tasks, as a means of teaching vocabulary, has any significant effect on the acquisition of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every language learner is prone to admit that phrasal verbs are remarkably important in the process of language learning. They also contend that inferring the meanings of these vocabulary items and the appropriate use of them present a challenge for language learners. This contention is also approved of by researchers such as Kurtyka (2001) who claims that phrasal verbs in English can cause problems for many learners because they have idiosyncratic meanings. These difficulties are sometimes increased by the way in which phrasal verbs are presented in course books or by teachers advising their students that they will just have to learn them by heart. Another source of difficulty might be the very nature of English phrasal verbs, some of which are separable and some are not. In an attempt to help EFL learners master English phrasal verbs, a number of vocabulary teaching tasks, including translation, sequential contextualization, metaphorical conceptualization, and picture-cued tasks, have been invented and used by the experts in the field. The present research study will be devoted to investigating the short-term and long-term effectiveness of picture-cues tasks in learning separable and inseparable English phrasal verbs. More specifically, the current study is going to find answers to the following research questions.

The Importance of Multi-Word Units and Phrasal Verbs

MWUs, *lexical phrases*, *chunks*, and *prefabs* are some of the preferred terms used by researchers to refer to different types of word-combination. It is estimated that prefabs account for 58.6 per cent of spoken English and 52.3 per cent of written English (Erman& Warren, 2000). There is also convergent evidence that the number of different multi-word items may exceed the number of individual words in the lexicon (Jackendoff, 1995). Willis (2003) for instance, claims that, “much of the language we produce is made up not of individual words, but of strings of words which we carry around with us as fixed phrases” (p. 43).

As far as PVs are concerned, they are ubiquitous in English. It is generally assumed that PVs are mainly used in spoken rather than written discourse and they are very common in informal rather than formal registers, while their one-word equivalents are more often used in more formal contexts. However, De Cock's (2005) comments in her contribution to the pedagogical mid-matter in the *Macmillan Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* that "native speakers of English use approximately half as many PVs in formal writing as in informal speech" (p.17). This is confirmed in corpus statistics set out by Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan (1999), where they find the usage of PVs to be greatest in conversation and fiction with over twice the frequency in academic writing, with news journalism between the two extremes. This suggests that PVs are not completely absent from formal discourse and there are many instances in formal occasions in which the use of PVs is more appropriate and sound more natural in expressing certain ideas (Fletcher, 2005). Apart from that, most PVs are metaphorical in meanings, and it is believed that *metaphoric intelligence* has an important role to play in all areas of communicative competence and can contribute to language learning success (Littlemore, 2001; Littlemore & Low, 2006). This further suggests the importance of PVs to language learners and without having good knowledge of PVs and an ability to use them appropriately, it is almost impossible for learners to gain fluency in English. Thus, it is clear that this particular language form deserves equal attention and better treatment in language teaching and learning.

MWUs and PVS Problematic learners

Despite the importance of MWUs and PVs in language learning discussed above, there is general consensus that they are difficult for L2 learners to master (De Cock, 2005). Many classes of multi-word items, such as PVs, which are the main focus of the present study, are very common and highly productive in the English language as a whole (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). In addition, many multi-word items have multiple meanings themselves. For example, Gardner and Davies (2007) found that the 100 most frequent PVs in the BNC have 559 potential meaning senses, or an average of 5.6 per PV. Thus, learners may find learning MWUs is rather complicated, particularly as there are issues with respect to idiomaticity and semantic non-compositionality, which can be very confusing to learners, as also applies to PVs. Furthermore, the status of particles in PV construction (i.e. preposition or adverb particle), particle movement, and the transitivity of PVs are among other aspects that can cause further confusion for learners. Because of these reasons, most often, learners will avoid using PVs or use their one-word equivalents instead, since these are much easier to learn and understand.

Phrasal Verbs

Many studies have been conducted with respect to PVs (e.g. Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Side, 1990; Schmitt, 2000; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007) and various terms have been used to refer to this particular language form, such as *separable verb* (Fraser, 1994), *two-word verb* (Taha, 1960) and *verb-particle combinations* (Fraser, 1994).

Separable and Inseparable Phrasal Verbs

In addition to the transitivity of PVs, 'separability' or "the inability of the particle to be moved to a position after [] noun phrase" (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, p. 1156) is another important concept with respect to PVs, which is closely related to the notion of transitivity

discussed above. Most transitive PVs are separable and they allow particle movement either before or after the object noun (e.g. Please *turn off* the computer/Please *turn* the computer *off*).

Phrasal Verb Research Studies in Iran

In the context of Iran, many studies have addressed PVs. Some examples suffice to know what Iranian researchers have been interested in. As an illustration, Nassaji and Tian (2010) studied and compared the effectiveness of two types of output tasks (reconstruction cloze tasks and reconstruction editing tasks) for learning English phrasal verbs. They wanted to see if doing the tasks collaboratively led to greater gains of knowledge of the target verbs than doing the tasks individually and also whether the type of task made a difference. The results revealed that completing the tasks collaboratively led to a greater accuracy of task completion than completing them individually. However, collaborative tasks did not lead to significantly greater gains of vocabulary knowledge than individual tasks. The findings, however, showed an effect of task type, with the editing tasks being more effective than the cloze tasks in promoting negotiation and learning.

Khatib and Ghannadi (2011) investigated the effectiveness of interventionist and non-interventionist approaches to the recognition and production of phrasal verbs. The results of the study revealed the superiority of interventionist groups over the non-interventionist group in both recognition and production of phrasal verbs. In addition, the interventional explicit group greatly outperformed the interventional implicit group in both recognition and production.

Behzadi and AzimiAmoli (2014) conducted an experiment to investigate the effect of two task types on phrasal verb's learning on Iranian EFL learners. They selected 60 EFL learners, who were studying in higher levels of English in different language institutes and divided them into two groups. Their study indicated that the context learning condition was more beneficial than the translation learning condition. However, translation learning task was good for short recall learning. Although their participants learned more in translation task group, the retained knowledge was more in context learning group. Moreover, the higher level students preferred not to translate phrasal verbs. Additionally, it was revealed that the translation task was advantageous to learning some complicated phrasal verbs with figurative meanings.

In another study, Ganji (2011) investigated the metaphor's central position in the memorization, retention and prediction of the meaning of phrasal verbs. He selected 45 Iranian EFL learners from Chabahar Maritime University who were divided into three groups. In control group, the phrasal verbs were presented with their Persian equivalents and students were asked to memorize them on their own. One of the experimental groups received the phrasal verbs in the context of a sentence, and students were asked to make new sentences with them in the class. The other experimental group was exposed to the orientational metaphors underlying the meaning of the particles of phrasal verbs. All the three groups took three tests in which the correct particles of the phrasal verbs had to be provided. The first test, carried out just two hours after the instructions, dealt with the taught phrasal verbs. The same test was conducted five weeks later to measure the long term retention of phrasal verbs' meaning. Finally, the third test tested the participants on 20 untaught phrasal verbs which had the same particles as the taught ones. One-

way ANOVA results revealed that the difference between the groups' performances on the immediate test was not statistically significant, while the efficiency of metaphorical conceptualization, and sentential contextualization on the delayed test, and untaught test was considerable. There was, however, an insignificant difference between the two experimental groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. Do picture-cued tasks affect EFL learners' recall of separable phrasal verbs?
2. Do picture-cued tasks affect EFL learners' recall of inseparable phrasal verbs?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Forty EFL learners, studying *American English File 2* in a language school in Ahvaz were asked to participate in this study. The rationale behind choosing pre-intermediate learners was that beginners were highly likely to have unconquerable problem learning phrasal verbs since their vocabulary repertoire was limited and their level of proficiency was not developed enough to learn phrasal verbs. Intermediate and advanced learners, on the other hand, might have encountered and learned the phrasal verbs intended to be taught in the current experiment. The participants of this study were supposed to enjoy the same level of proficiency since they studied at the same level in the institute. However, to further ascertain that they were not very much different in terms of their proficiency levels, the researcher included in the research those whose final scores on *American English File 1* had ranged between 90 and 100. The learners were then randomly assigned to a control and an experimental group.

Materials and Instruments

The pictures, drawings, and photos used in classroom tasks were selected from various sources. Some were conveniently taken from the World Wide Web, while others were drawn by an available cartoonist. One important feature that was kept in mind while choosing pictures or having them sketched was that the pictures had to conspicuously display the intended meaning figured in a certain phrasal verb. For instance, if a schematic image of "hold on" were to be displayed, the researcher made sure the picture chosen contained features that would readily provoke a mental image of "hold on" in the mind of the user.

As for the instruments, pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test of phrasal verbs, were used in this study. All the instruments were researcher-made tests, the reliability index of each was determined in a small-scale pilot study. The split-half reliability indexes of the pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test were found to be ($r=.91$, $r=.86$, and $r=.78$) respectively. Tests of phrasal verbs were fill-in-the-blank tests of the phrasal verbs taught in this study. The pre-test was administered to make sure the learners were not different in terms of their knowledge of phrasal verbs. The immediate posttest was administered upon the completion of the treatment sessions. Finally, the delayed post-test was given to the learners after a two-week lapse of time.

Each of these tests comprised 30 fill-in-the-blank items in which the students were expected to complete the sentences with appropriate verbs and particles. Each test comprised 15 questions on separable and 15 questions on inseparable phrasal verbs.

Procedure

At the beginning of the study, the learners took a pretest on phrasal verbs. The aim of this pretest was to help the researcher make sure that the learners in both groups were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of phrasal verbs. The learners in the experimental group were exposed to picture-cued tasks, while the learners in the control group simply memorized the meanings of phrasal verbs, with their dictionary definitions and Persian translations. At the end of the experiment, the learners sat for an immediate posttest on phrasal verbs. After the passage of a couple of weeks, the learners were asked to take a delayed test to help the researcher see if the learned phrasal verbs could be retained in the learners long-term memory or not. The way the experimental group was treated is explained in the following: The instruction and practice procedures the learners went through essentially included pictures, photos, images, and drawings that were representative of the image-schematic concepts giving rise to a certain phrasal verb meaning. First, students were randomly divided into groups of two or three. Copies of the initial picture and its accompanying sentences containing the use of an English phrasal verb were given to every group. They were told to read the sentences carefully, look at the picture drawing, and try to recognize the meaning of the phrasal verb in context. The teacher would then point out the fact that the picture represented an image which encompassed the meaning they were looking for. After correctly identifying the meaning of the verb, the learners were given time to think over and discuss their explanations of salient picture features before they presented their oral/written, first/second language explanations to the teacher and other groups in class. The purpose for this presentation by students was two-fold: to determine if they had worked out the appropriate meaning of the phrasal verb in focus and to correct any possible misconceptions about the intended features shown in the pictures.

Data Analysis Procedure

The scores of the students on the pretest, immediate posttest, and delayed posttest of phrasal verbs were recorded. Each test had 30 questions, so the scores ranged from 0 to 30. The data were analyzed using the SPSS version 17. Descriptive statistics and Independent Samples *t* -test were employed to see if there were any significant differences between the two groups' performances on these tests, and between separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Pre-test

The purpose of the pre-test was to make certain that the CG and EG was homogeneous with respect to their knowledge of (separable and inseparable) phrasal verbs at the outset of the study. The results of the comparison of the two groups on the separable phrasal verbs pretest are displayed in Tables 1, and 2.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing the CG and EG Pre-test

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Separable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test	CG	20	2.60	1.42	.31
	EG	20	2.40	1.78	.40

Such descriptive statistics as mean and standard deviation are shown for both groups in Table 1. The mean score of the CG ($M = 2.60$) was greater than the mean score of the EG ($M = 2.40$). This difference did not seem to be significant, but to ascertain whether it was or not, one needed to look down the *Sig* (2-tailed) column in the *t* test table below.

Table 2: Independent-Samples *t* Test for Separable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

T-test for Equality of Means										
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
								Lower	Upper	
Equal Variances Assumed	1.06	.30	.391	38	.69	.20	.51	-.83	1.23	
Equal Variances not Assumed			.391	36.2	.69	.20	.51	-.83	1.23	

According to Table 2, there was not a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs pretest scores for CG ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.42$) and EG ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.78$), $t(38) = .391$, $p = .69$ (two-tailed). This was so because the p value was greater than the specified level of significance (i.e. .05). Were the p value less than the alpha level (that is, the level of significance), the conclusion would be that the two groups were heterogeneous prior to the experiment.

Results of the Post-test

The results obtained upon the administration of the separable phrasal verbs posttest are presented in this section. Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the post-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Separable Post-test

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Separable Phrasal Verbs Post-test	CG	20	7.15	1.84	.41
	EG	20	11.15	1.46	.32

As could be seen in Table 3, the mean score of the CG ($M = 7.15$) was less than the mean score of the EG ($M = 11.15$). To make sure whether this difference was statistically meaningful or not, one needed to check the *Sig* (2-tailed) column in the *t* test table below.

Table 4: Independent-Samples *t*-Test for CG and EG Separable Phrasal Verbs Post-test

T-test for Equality of Means										
		t		df		Sig. (2-tailed)		Mean Differ- ence	Std. Error Differ- ence	95% Interval of the Difference
										Lower Upper
Equal Variances Assumed	.97	.32	-7.60	38	.000	-4.00	.52	-5.06	-2.93	
Equal Variances not Assumed			-7.60	36.11	.000	-4.00	.52	-5.06	-2.93	

Based on the information in view in Table 4, there was a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs posttest scores for CG ($M = 7.15$, $SD = 1.84$) and EG ($M = 11.15$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(38) = -7.60$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed). The immediate conclusion could thus be that picture-cued tasks were effective as far as learning separable phrasal verbs was concerned.

Results of the Delayed Post-test

This section presents the results obtained after the administration of the separable phrasal verbs delayed post-test. Table 5 pertains to the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the delayed post-test.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Separable Delayed Post-test Scores

				Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Separable Phrasal Verbs Delayed Post-test	CG				20	4.20	1.43	.32
	EG				20	9.90	1.33	.29

Table 5 shows that the mean score of the CG ($M = 4.2$) was substantially less than the mean score of the EG ($M = 9.9$). However, to make certain this difference was statistically significant, one needed to cast a glance at the *Sig* (2-tailed) column in the *t*-test table which follows.

Table 6: Independent-Samples *t*-Test for the CG and EG Separable Delayed Post-test Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	T-test for Equality of Means							
		F.	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Equal Variances Assumed		.007	.93	-13.00	38	.000	-5.70	.43	-6.58	-4.81
Equal Variances not Assumed				-13.00	37.7	.000	-5.70	.43	-6.58	-4.81

Table 6 indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in separable phrasal verbs delayed posttest scores for CG ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.43$) and EG ($M = 9.90$, $SD = 1.33$), $t(38) = -13.00$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed). It could thus be inferred that the effect of picture-cued tasks on learning separable phrasal verbs could last in the long run. Thus, the difference between the separable phrasal verbs delayed posttest scores of the CG and EG was substantial.

Results of the Second Research Question

The second research question of the study was set up to figure out whether picture-cued tasks could enhance EFL learners' learning and recall of inseparable phrasal verbs or not. To find an answer to this question, like what was done for the first research question, independent-samples *t*-test was conducted three times: the first time for the comparison of the pretest scores of the CG and EG right at the beginning of the study, the second time for comparing these two groups' posttest scores after the completion of the experiment, and the third time to compare the delayed posttest scores of the two groups after the passage of time. The results of the related analyses are presented in this section.

Results of the Pre-test

The rationale behind administering the pretest was to make sure that the CG and EG was homogeneous with regard to their knowledge of phrasal verbs before the commencement of the study. The results of the comparison of the two groups on the inseparable phrasal verbs pretest are displayed in Tables 7, and 8 below.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pretest	CG	20	3.05	1.19	.26
	EG	20	2.85	1.63	.36

Table 7 shows that the mean score of the CG ($M = 3.05$) was greater than the mean score of the EG ($M = 2.85$). Although this difference did not seem to be significant, to make certain whether it was or not statistically meaningful, one had to look down the *Sig* (2-tailed) column in the *t* - test table below (Table 8).

Table 8: Independent-Samples *t* Test for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Pre-test

T-test for Equality of Means									
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
						Lower	Upper		
Equal Variances Assumed	1.85	.18	.443	.38	.660	.20	.45	-.71	1.11
Equal Variances not Assumed		.443	34.77	.661	.20	.45		-.71	1.11

As Table 8 shows, there was not a statistically meaningful difference in inseparable phrasal verbs pretest scores for CG ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.19$) and EG ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.63$), $t(38) = .443$, $p = .66$ (two-tailed). The conclusion could be that the two groups were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of inseparable phrasal verbs prior to the experiment. Thus, the difference between the inseparable phrasal verbs pretest scores of the CG and EG was very small.

Results of the Post-test

The post-test results of the inseparable phrasal verbs are depicted in Tables 9 and 10. Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics for the comparison of the two groups on the post-test.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test	CG	20	7.85	2.10	.47
	EG	20	11.55	1.39	.31

Table 9 indicated that the mean score of the CG ($M = 7.85$) was smaller than the mean score of the EG ($M = 11.55$). To make sure whether this difference was statistically significant or not, one had to check the *Sig* (2-tailed) column in the *t* test table below (Table 4.10).

Table 10: Independent-Samples *t* Test for the CG and EG Inseparable Phrasal Verbs Post-test

T-test for Equality of Means										
	F.	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Equal Variances Assumed	3.66	.06	-6.54	38	.000	-3.70	.56	-4.84	-2.55	
Equal Variances not Assumed			-6.54	32.9	.000	-3.70	.56	-4.84	-2.55	

According to the information displayed in Table 4.10., there was a statistically significant difference in inseparable phrasal verbs posttest scores for CG ($M = 7.85$, $SD = 2.10$) and EG ($M = 11.55$, $SD = 1.39$), $t(38) = -6.54$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed). The conclusion could thus be that picture-cued tasks were effective so far as learning inseparable phrasal verbs was concerned.

Discussion

The first research question of the study was “Do picture-cued tasks enhance EFL learners’ learning and recall of separable phrasal verbs?” The experimental and control groups were roughly equal on the pretest; however, their posttest and delayed posttest results showed that picture-cued tasks were indeed effective since the experimental group outperformed the control

group on these two tests, giving rise to the conclusion that the treatment helped the learners learn and recall separable phrasal verbs. It seems that the enhanced recognition of concrete/abstract meanings in English phrasal verbs has been the result of the participants' establishment of meaningful connections between concrete/abstract image-schematic visual stimuli presented to them.

An encouraging dimension of the experimental group performance is their relative success in the effective retention of meaning of phrasal verbs, compared to the significantly low outcome achieved by the control group. It is evident that both groups have been subjected to memory loss over the time lapse between the immediate and the delayed posttest which is a natural part of any short-term course of language instruction. This is already in agreement with findings from other studies of mnemonic variables in pictorial elucidations motivated through a cognitive linguistic approach (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). Boers and Lindstromberg, for example, examined ways in which pictorial elucidations of concrete linguistic expressions aided learners' recall of their more figurative usage. Similar to the results in this study, they found that pictorial representations of concrete/abstract meanings were highly beneficial to learners who tended to think in pictures; their data also demonstrated, perhaps surprisingly, that such representations further encouraged learners with a tendency to think in words to opt for visual imagery that seemed more motivating and helpful in nature. The results of the current study are, furthermore, in line with the results of Mohammadi, Farsani, Moinzadeh and Tavakoli (2012) who showed that picture-elucidation techniques was conducive to the learning and retention of English phrasal verbs.

Similar to this conclusion was what Ganji (2011) found to be the case. He found that from among the techniques of translation, sentential contextualization, and metaphorical conceptualization, the second and third techniques were superior to translation in delayed posttest and in a test of untaught phrasal verbs. This conforms to the findings of the current study. However, on the pretest, he found no statistically significant difference among the three techniques. This would also mean that translation was as effective as sentential contextualization and metaphorical conceptualization for short-term purposes.

CONCLUSION

As it was previously stated, this study was set up to investigate the effect of using picture-cued tasks on the learning and recall of English phrasal verbs. After the subjects were divided into control and experimental groups they sat for a pretest, the results of which showed that the two groups were homogeneous at the outset of the study. They then were taught phrasal verbs through two different approaches: while the experimental group subjects received picture-cued tasks as their treatment, those in the control group were taught traditionally. The immediate and delayed posttest results showed that the experimental group subjects outperformed the control groupers. Moreover, there was no difference between the results obtained for separable and inseparable phrasal verbs. All this boils down to the conclusion that picture-cued tasks, as a techniques employed for teaching phrasal verbs, came to learners' assistance in forming picture-schematic structures in their minds. To put it differently, picture-cued tasks helped learners grasp the

abstract meaning of English phrasal verbs through concrete pictures which accompanied those phrasal verbs.

As Mandler (2004) points out, humans create mental image schemas and their relevant abstract conceptual patterns through a process of reanalysis of perceptual experience arising from recurring experiential encounters with the tangible events in the surrounding socio-cultural context. It is a serious mistake to assume that this genuine, enduring process can ever be replaced by a few sessions of experience and activity on the part of the foreign language learner in an artificial classroom environment. Nevertheless, the aim of this research was to demonstrate that such a natural process of sensory experience could be mimicked, though minimally and insufficiently, to enhance learners' awareness and raise their consciousness toward bits and pieces of such experience as to render it slightly more meaningful to them.

The same study could be carried out with the students of differing levels of proficiency to see if the same results will be obtained or not. Furthermore, the method of input delivery could be altered (i.e. instruction can take place in a, say, web-based fashion) to observe if the gains will change accordingly or not. What is more, the technique of picture-cued task could be compared with other suggested techniques which were shown to be effective for teaching English phrasal verbs (e.g. sentential contextualization or metaphorical conceptualization, to name just a few).

REFERENCES

- Behzadi A., & AzimiAmoli, F. (2014). The effect of task types on learning phrasal verbs among Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Social Issues & Humanities*, 2(2), 52-56.
- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, England: Longman.
- Boers, F. & Lindstromberg, S. (2008). *Cognitive linguistic approaches to teaching vocabulary and phraseology*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Burton, S. H., & Humphries, J. A. (1992). *Mastering English language*. Hampshire: The Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- De Cock, S. (2005). *Learners and phrasal verbs*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Erman, B., & Warren, B. (2000). The idiom principle and the open choice principle. *Text* 20 (1), 29-62.
- Fletcher, B. (2005). *Register and phrasal verbs*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Fraser, B. (1974). *The verb-particle combination in English*. Tokyo: Taishukan Pub. Co.
- Ganji, M. (2011). The best way to teach phrasal verbs: Translation, sentential contextualization or metaphorical conceptualization? *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(11), 1497-1506.
- Gardner, D., & Davies, M. (2007). Pointing out frequent phrasal verbs: A corpus-based analysis. *TESOL Quarterly* 41(2), 339-359.

- Geeraerts, D., & Cuyckens, H. (2007). Introducing cognitive linguistics. In D. Geeraerts & H. Cuyckens (eds.), *Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (pp. 3-21). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gibbs, R., J., Bogdonovich, J. Sykes & D. Barr (1997). Metaphor in idiom comprehension. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 37, 141-154.
- Harley, H. (1995). *Subjects, events and licensing*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. MIT.
- Jackendoff, R. (1995). The boundaries of the lexicon. In M. Everaert, E. van der Linden, A. Schenk, & R. Schreuder (eds): *Idioms: Structural and psychological perspectives*. (pp. 133-166). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Khatib, M., & Ghannadi, M. (2011). Interventionist (explicit and implicit) versus non-interventionist (incidental) learning of phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(3). 537-546.
- Kurtyka, A. (2001). Teaching English phrasal verbs: A cognitive approach. In M. Pütz, S. Niemeier, & R. Dirven (eds.). *Applied cognitive linguistics II: Language pedagogy*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Littlemore, J. (2001). Metaphoric intelligence and foreign language learning. *Humanising Language Teaching* 3(2). Retrieved from <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/mar01/mart1.htm>
- Littlemore, J., & Low, G. (2006). Metaphoric competence and communicative language ability. *Applied Linguistics* 27(2), 268-294.
- Mandler, J. (2004). *The foundations of mind: Origins of conceptual thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MuhammadiFarsani, H. Moinszadeh, A., & Tavakoli, M. (2012). Mnemonic effectiveness of CL-motivated picture-elucidation tasks in foreign learners' acquisition of English phrasal verbs. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(3), 498-509.
- Nassaji, H., & Tian, J. (2010). Collaborative and individual output tasks and their effects on learning English phrasal verbs. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(4), 397-419.
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. New York: Longman.
- Siyanova, A., & Schmitt, N. (2007). Native and nonnative use of multi-word vs. one-word verbs. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 45 (2), 119-140.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Taha, A.K. (1960). The structure of two-word verbs in English. *Language Learning* 10, 115-122.
- Tomasello, M. (2003). *Constructing a language: A usage-based theory of language acquisition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Willis, D. (1990). *The lexical approach*. New York, NY: Language Teaching Publication.

TRANSLATION TRAINING AND CONSTRUCTIVISM: APPLICATION OF THINK-ALOUD IN IMPROVING STUDENT TRANSLATION COMPETENCE

Mohamad Javad Baghiat Esfahani

Translation studies MA

University of Isfahan

Language and translator instructor at Jahad language Center of University of Isfahan

Corresponding Email ID: Moh.baghiat@gmail.com

Phone No: +989132163029

Postal Code: 8138998395

IRAN

ABSTRACT

Over the last decades think aloud-protocols have been used in translation studies researches extensively as a data collecting method. Researchers tried to access to the mental process of translators as subjects of studies. The present paper argues that think aloud protocols (TAPs) not only can be used as a method for collecting data in empirical translational research, but also it can be used as a technique in translation workshops. Think aloud protocols can be effective to improve student translation competence according to the constructive approach toward a pedagogy of translation training. In this study, there are seventy-five English as a second language (ESL) intermediate students who are taught translation for about fifty-five hours, according to a syllabus which was organized based on structures of general English and general Persian Language. In the following the students attended in a ten hour translation process workshop in which think aloud protocols (TAPs) used as a technique in teaching translation. The teacher and students were using think-aloud protocols in translating texts in groups and in joint translation. The study shows using TAPs in teaching translation may increase student translation competence. In this study, four methodologies have been used; think-aloud protocols, screen recording, sight translation and interview. This study is one of the first steps toward teaching the process of translation rather than translation product, and it useful for translator trainer to help students discover learning by observing and analyzing their teacher mind.

KEYWORDS: Think-aloud protocols, Translation competence, Translation training, Constructivism, Cognitive Translation.

INTRODUCTION

One of the merits of using Think Aloud Protocols in pedagogical approach is its non-prescriptively and practicality. (House, 2000: 152), it is first seen through the process of translation, which is conducted by a professional and then help teachers and theorizer to put those finding in theory and in classroom activity.

So far, Think-Aloud, due to the nature of gathering data, helps teachers, practitioners and researchers locate how and when translators and students solve the problems in a translation process (e.g. Amirian & Baghiat, 2013). This study, however, has a different look toward Think

Aloud-Protocol as one of the techniques in teaching translation. It is found that using think-aloud protocol in the class as a technique for teaching or as a drill in translation workshops may help increase student translation competence.

The application of Think Aloud in classroom teaching as a technique refers to teachers verbalizing and helping students understand the process of translation, which is happening in their mind, and also asking students to do the same. Students and teachers should verbalize much of their thought as; what is the aim of their choices when they are uncertain about which option is the best, the translation brief, consisting; What are their clients' needs, and so on. To get to the best result the text which is translated verbally shouldn't be read by the translators, whether they are students or the teachers of the class. During the verbalization of the teachers, students are allowed to ask questions and have some kind of conversation with their teacher. They also can have a joint translation with their instructor.

This study tries to use of this data collecting method, as a way to teach students to be conscious of their and their peers' process of translation. In the classroom, teachers were supposed to verbalize the translation process to their students and students are allowed to ask questions. In join translation activity, students work with their teachers and partners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Think aloud protocol

Since solely evaluating the translation final product wasn't sufficed in understanding of translation, for the last decade, researchers have increasingly been looking for a translation cognitive aspect of translation, they've wanted to know what is happening inside a translator brain while they are translating.

A number of attempts have been made to reach the process of translation in translator minds; one such attempt has simply asked the translator to express themselves during the translation activity, such method of data collection is called think aloud.

Think Aloud-Protocols refer to a type of data, which are collected in empirical translation process research; in this method, the subjects of study are asked to verbalize whatever cross their minds during the performance. The written transcription of this verbalization is called Think Aloud-Protocols (TAPS).

The theoretical method for TAPs is borrowed from cognitive psychology (Ericsson & Simon, 1984/1993). Accordingly, the information is stored in different locations, some of them in short-term memory (STM) which is characterized easy access and harshly limited storage capacity, and in long-term memory (LTM) which is more difficult to access and larger storage capacity. Only the information which is in STM can be verbalized by the subjects because it can be directly accessed and reported.

The first application of this method to translation was carried out by Gerloff (1986), Kring (1986), Lorsch (1986) which was related to classical verbal report in which the person observes their own process of thought. Ericson and Simon (1984/1993) conducted a more serious regulated method of data collection, they stated that when there is a controlled and instructed method of think aloud protocols, TAPs don't change the process of translation except for slowing down. There exists some limitation to what kind of information Think-aloud reveals according to Ericsson and Simon (1984/1993); the information which is in Short-term memory, the unconscious memory, is inaccessible. Think Aloud-Protocols may enclose a shadow of the cognitive process of translation, but not a complete one. To have an integral and reliable picture of mind of translators, Think Aloud-protocol might be accompanied by the product of the process of translation, screen recording, questionnaire, keyboard logging data like Translog. (Jakobsen, 2003).

Translation competence

Translation competence is an important aspect of the cognitive process of translation, which enables the translators and interrupters to render completely the act of translation successfully. The notion of competence has been used in many disciplines within the field of applied linguistics since 1960s. Literature differentiates between competence as the underlying skills and the ability to communicate in specific cognitive situations. Communicative competence consists of some sub competence like grammatical competence (knowing about how to apply grammatical cods), socio-linguistic competence (knowing how to act in a different socio-linguistic context), discourse competence (knowing how to produce an appropriate spoken and written text), strategic competence (knowing how to communicate effectively in case of starting, planning, execution and assessment of speaking).

Competence is related to the field of cognitive psychology, and it is studying about expert knowledge and skills. Competence defined as “consistently superior performance in a specified set of representative tasks for the domain that can be administered to any subjects” (Ericsson & Charness, 1997 as cited in Shreve 2006). It accordingly studies in the field shows that expert knowledge consists of a wider range of complex structural knowledge, which is required by the subjects during a long period of practice and study, and it may need an application of problem-solving and require a high load of meta cognition. There is a distinction between declarative (know what) and procedural knowledge (know how) which both are focused in studying the notion of competence. In the field of psychology, competence is a complex know how, which is comprised of knowledge, skills, and attitude and so on. In pedagogy; competence defined as “a complex know how to act resulting from the integration, mobilization and organization of a combination of abilities and skills (which may be cognitive, affective, psycho-motor or social) and knowledge (declarative knowledge) used effectively in a situation with common characteristics”. (Lasnier, 2000). This model distinguishes between subject specific competence (specific to particular discipline) and generic competence (common to all disciplines).

Translation competence is a combination of knowledges, attitudes and aptitudes that a translator or interpreter must have to render the product successfully. Translation competence or TC is underlies the work of experts in translation and interpretation activity, which enables them to

carry out the cognitive operation which is needed for the adequate translation process. Translation competence was first introduced in the late 1970s (Wilss, 1976; Koller, 1979), there are some other terms which have been used for translation competence: translation expertise, translation skills and translational or translator competence.

Translation is a complex, heterogeneous activity, since translation is a combination of different skills, which are very distinctive from each other in nature, knowledge of a wider range of different subject is necessary, and every brand new situation of translation needs new information to learn (Neubert, 2000). Because of this complexity and heterogeneity, rendering a definition for translation competence is very hard to reach. One of the first definitions of TC is “knowledge and skills the translator must possess” (Bell, 1991: 43). Translation competence is considered as an expert system which is led primarily by strategic components. (Albir & Alves, 2009: 63).

Most models of translation competence are componential models with sub competence (Hurtado Albir, 2001: Hurtado Albir & Alves, 2009). Some of the most componential models of translation competence are categorized by Bell (1991), Gile (1995a), Hurtado Albir (1996/1999), Risku (1998), Wilss (1976), Presas (2000/2004), Neubert (2000), Kiraly (1995), PACTE (2000/2003), Concalves (2005), Kelly (2005), Shreve (2006), Alves and Goncalves (2007).

PACTE sees translation competence as expert’s knowledge, and it defines translation competence as declarative and procedural knowledge, according to the PACTE translation competence comprises seven sub competences in which strategic competence is the most important one; Bilingual sub competence, extralinguistic sub competence, Instrumental sub competence, Strategic sub competence, psycho-physiological sub competence (PACTE 2003).

Shreve (2006) sees translation competence as expertise studies, and he considers translation competence as the individual ability of using some related cognitive resources to perform the translation activity. He subdivided translation competence in four sub competences; linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, textual knowledge and translation knowledge which is the ability to use translation tools, resources, strategies and procedures.

From the pedagogy approach Kelly (2005, p. 162) explains translation competence as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aptitudes of a translator for translating a specific text. Kelly categorized translation competence in some sub competences as communicative, cultural, intercultural, textual, subject area, professional, attitudinal, psychophysiological, strategic, instrumental, and interpersonal (working with others) competence. Pym (2003) criticized the componential models of translation competence. However, and identified two skills necessary for TC; first, the ability to produce more than one acceptable target text for one source text and second one, the ability to choose only one of them quickly with justified confidence.

Alves and Goncalves (2007) categorized translation competence according to relevance-rhetoric as a general and specific translator competence. General translator’s competence is all the knowledge, abilities, skills a translator possesses to render a successful, viable translation, specific translator’s competence, however, related to maximization of interpretative resemblance

and the metacognitive conscious process of translation. Note that most of the models for translation competence have not been empirically tested; just a few of them have been tested experimentally like PACTE (2005) Alves and Goncalves (2007) and Goncalves (2005),

Constructivism, think aloud and Translation Competence

Kiraly (2000) social constructivism approach in teaching translation argues translators actively construct the text which they are translating just as students who are learning a language. Kiraly's constructive approach stands for practical experience, discussion and consensual understanding. Students should learn by finding their ways in group work, and they should speak about what they are doing. In this study, students try to be actively participating in class and moreover, learn translation by looking into their teacher's mind and then analyses and assesses their improvement in translation.

A wide range of classroom situation might explain why they are several approaches and theories about what have to be done in translation workshops and classrooms. One of the of the useful distinctions is made by Kiraly (2000) is between "translation competence" and "translator competence" which, according to Bernardini (2004) there is a significant difference between "translation training" and "translation education" in translation training, translation competence mostly accompanied by linguistic skills, which are needed to render a translation. Translation education, on the other hand, like translator competence is a broad range of interpersonal skills and attitude which a translator needs to acquire. Moreover, the student needs to how to work with other translators, terminologist, project manager and clients. Students are not simply taught linguistic elements, but also applying them and evaluating them is important points as well. The translator student should also work in an authentic situation and young translators must be allowed to work as a member of a team among professional translators in a long-term training program.

Kiraly in constructive philosophy made a distinction between 'transmissionism' and 'social constructivism'. According to the former, knowledge would pass from a passive container to another container. Translation is like a conduit which flows through some kind of passage and goes to another language. Constructive theory, on the other hand, is understood as an individual activity in which an individual will construct knowledge about the world. According to social constructivism, people should construct their knowledge in an interactive situation with others and themselves. And this interaction is exactly what has to be happening in classrooms. This view is opposite of transmissionism view, which sees individual translators as passive receptacles of knowledge which the knowledge of a teacher pass through a conduit to the student knowledge store. The role of the teacher in constructivism is a facilitator, guiding the student, opening the space and facilitate the situation of learning as in choosing which text to translate, evaluates the activity, deciding on the objectives of studies and so on. According to the Kiraly (2000) the teachers remain the authorities, deciding what should be learned and what should be translated and how a successful evaluation should be like.

For Kiraly, the transmissionism model (equivalence model) as well as some other paradigm of pedagogy like Grammar translation belongs to the past. In constructive theory, a translator, actively makes an interpretation for source text and renders distinct target text according to different purposes. Kiraly doesn't exclude discussion, practical experience and consensus in the translation classroom; his method is based on practice, by which student should learn from their own experience and active role in the translation process. Students interactively work in groups. They get together and talk about what they are doing.

Lots of discussion has been carried out on how to apply constructivism in translation classrooms. The basic model is to let students translate a text and read the translated target text and then have them evaluate the text. Nord (1996) instructs some class activity; partial/complete translation, small-group work, sight translation, use of parallel texts, simulating interpreting situations, gist translation, documentation and reviewing. House (2000) emphasizes on small groups and in pairs. Many scholars have emphasized working on the source text and intended function of the source text situation and also working on the communicative purpose of source texts and target texts. (e.g. Ulrych, 1996; Nord, 1997). Kiraly (2000) and Gouadec (2007) are speaking in small groups, including; translator, reviewer, terminologist, project manager. At the earliest stage of translation, many quite different activities have been suggested; as bilingual crossword puzzles, terminology search, filling the blanks and etc. Gonzalez Davis (2004) as an example suggests some discussion forums and acting out some communicative task like oral presentation of translation.

There is a growing research in translating training one of the reasons for this is the non applicability of theory into translating classes and failing the current teaching training. According to study by Li (2002) there is a desirable need toward authenticity in classroom activities. Translation training should more be based on empirical research and the process of translation rather than products. Using think-aloud protocols, keystroke loggings, screen recordings and eye tracking. There are plenty of researches dealing with the difference between students of translators, bilinguals, professional translators in this matter (Shreve 2006, Amirian and Baghiat 2013). These studies show the skills a translator needs to be taught. The finding offers translators to use paraphrase than literalism (Kusssmaul, 1995; Lorscher, 1991; Jensen, 1999). Translate the text in a larger unit of translation (Tory, 1986; Lorscher, 1991; Tirkkonen-Condit, 1992). Read text faster and focus more on the target text than on source text (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2008). Translating based on top-down processes and translating according to the purpose (Fraser, 1996; Jonasson, 1998; KUnzli, 2004; Seguinot, 1989). The importance of encyclopedic knowledge (Tirkkonen-Condit 1989), incorporate the client into the task and risks (KUnzli, 2004), automaticity in some complex tasks (Krings, 1988; Tirkkonen-Condit, 1991; Englund Dimitrova, 2005). Show confidence, critical reading in their decision-making process (KUnzli, 2004).

It is also not advisable to jump from the empirical research findings to pedagogical practical application. This is not just because that empirical studies have been done on small groups it is also because some of these findings are overlapped and in some cases they're rare contradictory. Some of the findings of empirical research may due to the type and kind of methodologies. In that situation, we need to use more methodologies in one research like

triangulation methodology. Some factors which represent the experts' skills may just because of hours practicing rather than form some clear-cut teaching in classrooms. Just keep doing some jobs of translating and in the end, the product is acceptable. Automaticity is one aspect of experienced translator behavior. According to Jensen (2001) professional translators overcoming trivial problems and they ask fewer questions than the novice translators about the texts they are translating. They indeed may pay attention less to the communicative situation of translation; they accept translation as it is without question about clients' instruction.

Process researches deal with some notions, which are scarcely used in product researches; like speed, risk management, the use of external aids like looking up dictionaries and using other interfaces as the Internet and the rule of revision in translation. One way to teach students in the class is to make them aware of their activity base on the constructive theory of Kiraly (2000). Students by using Think Aloud-Protocols, screen recording, sight translation, and eye tracking movement and working in groups and monitoring each other can be conscious about their own translating and their peer translating. They also in joint translation can be aware of the process which is going on their teacher's mind who is considered a professional translator.

In addition to accessing to that nature of translation process Think-Aloud Protocols were used in translational research for better teaching by understanding the process of translation. In fact, mostly, all the research about the process of translation potentially can be helpful for pedagogical purposes (e.g. Amirian & Baghiat, 2013). As an example, scholars may compare the process of translation of professional translators with novice and bilingual translators and sum up to some rules, general pattern and habit which an experienced translator acquire and apply the findings to the classrooms to make translation teaching more purposeful. What's more, we can also locate the students' errors and mistakes in the translation process and make our teacher aware of those mistakes. And as in Wakabayashi (2003) we can create a profile for each student for understanding their level of learning.

RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

Can think-aloud protocol as technique in teaching translation be helpful in increasing students' translation competence?

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant change in students' translation competence in teaching translation process by the use of think - aloud protocol.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Think Aloud-protocols have been used for decades as a method for data collecting in empirical research in translation studies. This study attempts to see this method as a technique in translation pedagogy. This study was done on seventy-five upper intermediate ESL students. Students pass FCE (first certificate in English) exams with A or B Grade.

Instruments

In this study, four methods were used; screen recording which is carried by Camtasia 8 software, sight translation method, Think Aloud-Protocols, and interview (think aloud retrospectively).

Procedures

Subjects of study passed First Certificate in English test with the score of A or B. They also in a pass a placement test of Grammar structure, which was organized according to Oxford Grammar practice basic by JAHAD Language Center of University of Isfahan. There are four methodologies in this study; screen recording, sight translation, TAPs, and interview. On screen, recording each student was instructed to translate the texts by a software called Camtasia Version 8, students were allowed to use dictionaries, the Internet and other interfaces provided they are observable by the screen of their computers. Sight translation is ostensibly hybrid between translation and interpretation. The students were asked to read the written text and translate the text orally. The students were instructed to record their voices. This study used the two kinds of think-aloud protocols; retrospective or concurrent verbal report and retrospective verbal report. Introspective or concurrent think-aloud is simultaneous verbalization while retrospective, think aloud happens exactly after the translation is finished. In this study, retrospective verbal report is called interview. This study was conducted in one pre-test and two post-tests:

Pre-test

Students each translated some texts, which be organized according to material of Translation workshop, which was going to be taught. Students were asked to translate the texts by Camtasia v.8 software, there were instructed well not to use any other references apart from softwares or other interfaces observable by their computer screen. Students are allowed to use software dictionaries and other interfaces like the Internet. All the thing should be held in their desktop or laptop computer monitor. Their screen recording data, were analyzed by the author of the paper and then in an interview student were asked about the process of translation, which was happening during the translation process. The evaluation was based on comprehension competence, transfer competence and strategic competence of students in the performance.

Posttest A:

Students were instructed through the translation workshops with a book called 'translation technique' by Pazargadi (2010), students were tested by translating some texts parallel with pretest and posttest. There were three kinds of parallel tests. Students were asked to translate them respectively by screen recording method (Camtasia 8 Screen), sight translation Method, and think-aloud method. After each of the methods, students passed an interview like the one in pre-test. The data were evaluated based on comprehension competence, transfer competence and strategic competence.

Posttest B:

Students in an ten-hour translation workshop were taught translation using Think-aloud protocols. The teacher verbally translates the texts, and students were allowed to participate in the translation process in a joint translation. Students themselves in a group verbalized the process of translation to their partners. Students in three kinds of metods were asked to translate the texts,

parallel to pre-test and post tests A, by screen recording method (Camtasia software 8), sight translation method, and thinks aloud protocol method, and after each student was interviewed about the process of translation happening in their mind. In the interview, they were supposed to verbalize the process of translation, (think aloud retrospectively).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The subjects of this study consisted of seventy-five students of upper intermediate English as a second language. The students had passed FCE test with the score of A or B. Every student in this study before the class had passed a placement test, an English grammar test, which had been organized according to Oxford Practice Grammar (Basic) (Norman Coe et al. 2010). The material of the translation workshop was organized according to Farsi and English Grammar structure. The book which taught was 'Translation Technique' by Dr. Aladdin Pazargadi (2010) table 1 illustrates the syllables of the translation workshop.

After fifty-five hours of teaching translation, Persian into English and English into Persian, according to the syllabus, Table 1, students were exposed to ten hour teaching with Think-aloud protocols. First think-aloud protocols were introduced, and students learned how it works. Then the teachers introduced each lesson and translated some text, which hadn't been translated or overlooked before, by using think-aloud protocols. Students were allowed to ask questions during the verbalization of their teachers in addition, students were permitted to translate the texts in joint-translation with their instructors. Moreover Students in their groups were instructed to use think-aloud protocols and ask and answer questions, finally each group should have prepared a verbal report, and then each report was discussed in the class. The PACTE group has devoted years of study and research on translation competence; they focus on theoretical and procedural aspects of translation. The PACTE which stands for Process of Acquisition of translation competence and evaluation, defines translation competence as "underlying system of declarative and procedural knowledge, predominantly procedural knowledge required to translate," accordingly, translation competence is predominantly procedural non declarative, which comprise some interrelated sub competence. PACTE considers the sub competence of translation competence are; the strategic and knowledge about translation sub competence, strategic competence, which is of particular importance guarantees the efficiency of the .translation process. (Hurtardo Albir, 2010).

***Bilingual competence**, predominantly declarative, which comprises the grammatical, pragmatic, socio-linguistic and textual knowledge of each language.*

***Extra-linguistic knowledge**, predominantly declarative, includes the declarative knowledge both implicit and explicit, general world, domain specific, bicultural, encyclopedic knowledge.*

***Translation knowledge competence**, predominantly declarative, is about knowledge of translation methods, processes, practices and procedures.*

***Instrumental competence**, predominantly procedural, refers to documentation by using technological interface tools applied to the process of translation. (e.g. Dictionaries, translation memory tools, etc.)*

***Strategic competence**, Predominantly procedural, which is functioned to carry out the efficacy of the translation project, selecting most appropriate methods, evaluate the process, activate the differentness sub competence and compensate any shortcomings, uncertainty management and problem solving.*

***Psycho-physiological component** is a different kind of cognitive and attitudinal component like memory span, creativity, logical reasoning and synthesis*

Table 1: Syllabus

SESSIONS	MATERIAL OF TEACHING	EXPLANATION
1	INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCING THE BOOKS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, GIVING STUDENTS INSIGHTS. TRANSLATION INTRODUCTION (E.G. WHAT IS TRANSLATION, WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE A GOOD TRANSLATOR)
2	TRANSLATION AT WORD LEVEL, AND TRANSLATION OF WORDS AND EXPRESSION.	WORDS, IDIOMS, COLLOCATIONS, PROVERBS, SLANGS, DIFFERENT GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIZATION OF WORDS (E.G. VERB, ADJECTIVE, ADVERB,...)
3	ENGLISH GRAMMAR TENSE AND ITS USAGES	SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE, PRESENT CONTINUOUS, PAST TENSE, PRESENT PERFECT, PAST PERFECT, PAST CONTINUOUS,...
4	PERSIAN TENSE	ماضی /M Z 1/, مضارع /MÜZ R 3/, مستقبل /MÜSTÆQBL/,..., PERSIAN & ENGLISH TENSE CONTRACEPTIVE ANALYSIS.
5	TRANSLATION AT SENTENCE LEVEL, SENTENCE CONSTITUENT	ENGLISH AND PERSIAN SENTENCES KINDS AND STRUCTURES, (E.G. STATEMENT, INTERROGATIVE, IMPERATIVE,...) AS AN EXAMPLE: AGENT, PATIENT, PREDICAMENT, DOER, EXPERIENCE, INSTRUMENT, ALL KINDS OF SUBJECTS, VERBS, OBJECTS,
6	SIMPLE SENTENCES PERSIAN AND ENGLISH	SENTENCES WITH NO OBJECTS ONE OR TWO OBJECTS; (SUBJECT, VERB, TWO OBJECTS)
7	TRANSLATION OF 'IT', 'THERE'. TRANSLATION OF PASSIVE SENTENCES	'IT' AND 'THERE' IN ENGLISH ROLE AS A FILLER AND THEY DON'T HAVE ANY SPECIFIC SEMANTIC IN MEANING. SOME PASSIVE SENTENCES IN ENGLISH HAVE ACTIVE FORM IN PERSIAN AND VICE VERSA.
8	- FUTURE PERFECT, SIMPLE SENTENCES WITH INFINITIVE TO,	SOMETIMES THE FUTURE PERFECT IS TRANSLATED ماضی نقلی /M Z 1 NÆQLI/ IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE OR مستقبل /MÜSTÆQBL/, IN FARSI TO PLUS INFINITIVE VERB IS TRANSLATED AS "که /K3/" (E.G. DIDN'T HE TELL YOU TO BE THERE BEFORE SIX, مگر او به شما نگفته بود ک قبل از ساعت 6 اینجا باشید؟ /MÆGÆR ʊʔ B ΣOM NÆGOFT 3 BʊʔD K QÆBL ÆZ S T 6 ɪNDʒA B ΣID ?/)
9	PRESENT PARTICIPLE VERBAL NOUN, GERUND	I LIKE SITTING IN THE SUN. [من دوست دارم در آفتاب بنشینم /MÆN DʊʂT D RÆM DÆR FT B BENES ɪNÆM /]
10	COMPOUND SENTENCES; QUESTION PHRASES, CONJUNCTIONS	AND, BUT, ... TAG QUESTIONS.
11	CLAUSES; ADVERBIAL, ADJECTIVE AND NOUN CLAUSE.	HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD SUCCESSFUL. THE MAN WHO WAS SICK WENT TO SEE THE DOCTOR. A DRIVER SHOULD TAKE CARE WHEN HE DRIVES.
12	IF CLAUSE, CAUSATIVES.	ZERO, ONE, TWO, THREE, REAL AND UNREAL TO HAVE, TO GET, TO MAKE.
13	DISCOURSE MARKERS; RESULT, CAUSE AND REASON, AGREEMENT,	AGREEMENT, CONTRAST, CONCLUSION, REFERENCE,... EX: STREETS ARE LIGHTED SO THAT PEOPLE SEE WHERE THEY ARE GOING.

	CONTRASE AND ...	
14	PARAGRAPH WRITING IN ENGLISH AND ITS TRANSLATION	WRITING A PARAGRAPH, OBSERVING TENSE AND PUNCTUATION MARKERS.
15	ESSAY WRITING AND IT'S TRANSLATION	FIVE PARAGRAPH ESSAY WRITINGS.
16	CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORIES	ERROR ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION.
17	SHORT STORY TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION OF SHORT STORIES
18	SHORT STORY TRANSLATION	TRANSLATION OF SHORT STORIES
19	LETTER WRITINGS	COMMERCIAL LETTERS, FORMAL AND INFORMAL LETTERS.
20	TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL TEXTS	LIST OF POLITICAL WORDS AND THEIR TRANSLATION, TRANSLATION NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA.
21	TRANSLATION OF LEGAL TEXTS	LIST OF LEGAL WORDS AND THEIR TRANSLATION. TRANSLATION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS.
22	LITERAL TRANSLATION	VERSE AND PROSE TRANSLATION,
23	FREE TRANSLATION	STUDENT PROJECT.
24	TRANSLATION THEORY	THEORY OF TRANSLATION. EQUIVALENCE, PURPOSE, SYSTEM, DESCRIPTIVE, DECONSTRUCTION AND CULTURAL APPROACH.
25	ETHIC IN TRANSLATION	CODES OF ETHICS IN TRANSLATION
26	TRANSLATION TOOLS	MEMORY TOOLS, MACHINE TRANSLATIONS, DICTIONARIES AND....

As strategic competence is the core competence among other sub competences of the translation, this study mainly argues about translation strategic sub competences. Table 2 shows the overall strategic competence in details.

Table 2: Strategic Competence Specifics.

UNIT OF TRANSLATION		
INDICATORS	PAUSE IN READING THE TEXT, TRANSFERRING AND WRITING THE TARGET TEXTS	
	WORD, BEYOND WORD LEVEL LOWER THAN SENTENCE LEVEL, SENTENCE LEVEL AND BEYOND SENTENCE LEVEL	
TRANSLATION AIDS		
INDICATORS	USING INTERFACES WHICH ARE DISCLOSED IN CAMTASIA SCREEN RECORDING TOOL, VOICE RECORDING IN SIGHT TRANSLATION AND TAPS VERBAL REPORT	
	PROBLEM SOLVING	
PROBLEM RECOGNITION	SOLUTION PROPOSALS	SOLUTION EVALUATION
INDICATORS	PROBLEMS RECOGNITION INDICATORS ARE AN EXTENDED PAUSE, REREADING THE SOURCE TEXT & TARGET TEXT, USING INTERFACES	
	SOLUTION PROPOSALS ARE A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS WHICH IS WRITTEN OR SAID WHEN THE TRANSLATORS ARE TRANSLATING TEXTS	
	SOLUTION EVALUATION IS THE NUMBER OF REWRITING OR RE	

ISSN 2269-2787 & ISSN 2269-8218

www.ijerph.com

EXPRESSED WHEN THE TRANSLATORS ARE TRANSLATING TEXT.		
LOCATION OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIC COMPETENCE		
COMPREHENSION	TRANSFER	PRODUCTION
INDICATORS	COMPREHENSION: LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE, UNIT OF READING, UNDERSTANDING PUNCTUATION, REREADING, AND PAUSE (NOTE THAT SOME OF THE INDICATORS ARE NOT VISIBLE IN ALL METHODS OF GATHERING DATA EX: UNDERSTANDING STUDENT KNOWLEDGE IN COMPREHENSION THE MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT IS POSSIBLE IN VERBAL REPORT NOT IN SCREEN RECODING METHOD. TRANSFER: PAUSE AND EDITING THE TEXT WHILE PRODUCING THE WRITTEN DRAFT. PRODUCTION: WHATEVER WHICH IS RELATED TO THE LAST STAGE OF PRODUCING THE TEXT IS PRODUCED MOSTLY EDITING AND REVISING.	
AUTOMATICITY		
TIME		PHYSICAL FACTORS
INDICATORS	TIME: AVERAGE TIME OF TRANSLATING A TEXT, AVERAGE TIME OF REVISING IN PRODUCTION LEVEL AND IN TRANSFER LEVEL, AVERAGE TIME OF READING & RE READING AND AVERAGE TIME OF USING DICTIONARIES AND OTHER INTERFACES PHYSICAL FACTORS: A NUMBER OF CURSOR MOVEMENT AND A NUMBER OF CLICKS NOTE THAT AUTOMATIZATION IS NOT EXCLUDED TO PHYSICAL FACTORS AND TIME, AUTOMATICITY IS ONE OF THE ASPECT OF EXPERTS' COMPETENCE IN TRANSLATION.	
ERRORS		
SEMANTIC MAJOR ERROR		SYNTACTIC AND STRUCTURAL ERROR
INDICATORS	SEMANTIC MAJOR ERROR: THE ERROR WHICH COMPLETELY CHANGES THE MESSAGE OF THE TEXT IS DUE LACK OF LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE IN ENGLISH OR PERSIAN LANGUAGE OR IT'S DUE TO COMPREHENSION OR TRANSFER LEVEL SYNTACTIC AND STRUCTURAL ERROR IS DUE TO LINGUISTIC STRUCTURAL KNOWLEDGE IS CONSIDERED MAJOR IF IT IS ONE OF THE MATERIAL WHICH WAS TAUGHT DURING THE WORKSHOP. NOTE: PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE MAJOR ERRORS ARE OMITTED FROM THE STUDY.	

Unit of translation

Unit of translation is defined as a communicative, textual and cognitive unity, which is applied by a translator in the process of translation. Textually speaking, there is complex textual unity between parts of a text which a translator at a granted moment pay attention to one particular part of text considering the context. In cognitive perspective, the unit of translation is defined as a comprehension and processing unit which is independent of a particular size or format of the text, the translators at a given moment give attention to a specific cognitive part of a text according to their discerning requirement. In this study, the cognitive perspective of the unit of translation is considered, but the manifestation of it is on the linguistic level. Units of the translations are categorized according to table 3 as word, beyond word, sentence and beyond the sentence level.

Table 3: Unit of Translation

TESTS	WORD LEVEL	BEYOND WORD LEVEL	SENTENCE LEVEL	BEYOND SENTENCE LEVEL	UNCLASSIFIED
PRETEST	43.2%	47.36%	8.44%	0%	1.0%
POST TEST A	35.1%	51%	13.64%	0%	0.26%
POST TEST B	12.3%	45.18%	29.52%	13%	0%

Referring to Table 3, participants who are taught the process of translation by the use of Think-aloud protocol in the process of rendering the text are more likely to translate texts toward the sentence and beyond the sentence level. Table 3, may indicate; students by looking through the process which is happening in a professional translator's mind may get aware to look outside the boundary of textual unit and take the whole text as a unit of reading and translation instead.

Problem solving

Comprehension level

Problem solving metacognitive translational activity may happen in three interrelated translation process stages; comprehension stage, transfer and production stage.

Problem solving in Comprehension location during the process of translation is related to the level of reading the text, understanding the main idea and re express the main idea in mind before utterance or writing on paper. The indicator of recognizing a problem in the comprehension part is extended pause, re-reading, and dictionary looks-up. This location starts from the students' linguistic knowledge about English language structure, words. Students' screen and voice recording and their verbal reports indicate student uncertainty in the comprehension phase of the translation process. Screen recording and voice recording methods show the student way of reading; extended pause, re-reading and checking new vocabulary. Verbal reports show participants' metacognitive activity before their production on paper or utterance (Table 4).

Table 4: Comprehension Level

PARTICIPANTS	PRE TEST	POST TEST A	POST TEST B
UNIT OF READING	WORDS AND TERMS 12%, CLAUSE AND SENTENCES 78%	WORDS AND TERMS 9%, CLAUSE AND SENTENCES 81%	WORDS AND TERMS 11%, CLAUSE AND SENTENCES 89%
GRAMMAR TENSE	83.23%	90%	98.32%
CLAUSES	52.62%	80%	98.32%
PHRASES	68.2%	89.63%	88%
DISCOURSE MARKERS	30%	72%	8.6%
PUNCTUATION	77%	85%	98%
INTERJECTIONS	41.15%	91.2%	98%
SEMANTIC	55.82%	73%	80%
PAUSE	9.2%	6%	4.3%
REREADING	18.6%	10.5%	8.6%
DICTIONARY LOOKS-UP	13.7	9.5	5.6
TOTAL TIME	4:56	3:2	2:54

Participants in posttest B, show the significant difference in linguistic knowledge, which consists of grammatical competence, semantic and syntactic competence; they also respectively show the increase of comprehension competence relevant to decrease a number of pauses, re-reading and total time of reading. Students in post B read the text more holistically at sentence level this means students in translation process workshops acquire the competence of reading.

Transfer level

Whatever happen on paper before the last phase, revising, is called transfer level. This is the most important part in which strategic competence, related to solving problem, applied significantly. Decoding the message into Target language, translators in the process of translating encounter the problems, though, extending pause, re-reading the source text and transfer text, dictionary looks-up and editing are indicators of translators attempt to solve translation problems. Table 5, illustrates the transfer level of the process.

Table 5: Transfer level

participants	Pretest	Posttest A	Post test B
Average number of Pauses 3>	9.2	6	3
Average number of Using a dictionary	8	5.7	4.2
Average number of Using the net	4	3.2	1.9
Rereading the text	25.3	12.5	6.8
Average number of rewriting and revising while translating unit of translation (deleting, adding, and...)	12.2	19.7	24.36
Average number of proposals for problem solving	2.2	4.3	6.8
Average time of reading the translation text	3:20m	3:5m	1:8m
Time of transferring (- reading)	6:50m	4:5m	3:21m
Average time of pause	8 s	5:3 s	2:1 s
Time of writing the last draft	1:58m	1:02m	1:22m
Unit of translation	Lexis 43.2% term 26.4% phrase 06.6 % syntax 14.36% sentential 9.44% macro level 0%	Lexis 35.1% term 29% phrase 11% syntax 11.26% sentential 13.64% macro level 0%	Lexis 12.3% term 14.3% phrase 20.64% syntax 10.24% sentential 29.52% macro level 13%
Number of problem recognition	9.2	10	8.7
Average time of solving problems	10 s	7 s	4.3 s
Average number of clicks	32	29	22
Average cursor movements	182	156	104

Table 5 illustrates student's translation competence, increasing. Students' translation unit in the translation process workshop, post test B, are more towards context, sentence and beyond the sentence level. Moreover, Students with less effort and time manage to solve translation problems; significant lower number of pauses, dictionary looks up, time, clicks, cursor movements and time manifest students confidence and automaticity in problem solving. Student

increasing number of Editing and solution proposals explain students solve the problem of translation on sight, and they don't postpone it to the last level (the production level) as in professional translation according to Angelone (2010).

Production level

Production level or revising the level is the location where students re-read the translation and try to make some amends. Table 6, shows the revising phase in detail.

Table 6 argues participants at the translation process workshop got more aware about the substantiality of production level. They are accordingly more active in revising phase; the increasing number of adding, omitting, replacing and allocation time may confirm the fact.

Table 6: Production level

PARTICIPANTS	PRETEST	POST TEST A	POST TEST B
NUMBER OF OMITTING AND ADDITION PER PERSON PER TEXT	2.5	6.7	9.9
UNIT OF REVISING PER PERSON PER TEXT	SENTENCE 11% TEXT 0% NOT REVISING 89%	SENTENCES 46% TEXT 13.7% NOT REVISING 49.3%	SENTENCES 59.82% TEXT 28.6% NOT REVISING 12.4%
AVERAGE TIME OF REREADING PER PERSON PER TEXT	0:59	2:68	5:4
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PAUSES PER PERSON PER TEXT	1.2	5.1	7.45
TOTAL TIME OF REVISING AND PRODUCTION PER PERSON PER TEXT	1:3	2:9	3:4

Referring to table 7; solving problem levels, students who were teaching translation process by the use of TAPS are solving problems, mostly in transfer level where as students before attending the translation process workshop tend to solve problems in production level.

Table 7: Solving Problem Levels

TESTS	COMPREHENSION	TRANSFER	PRODUCTION	UNCLASSIFIED
PRETEST	14%	30.22%	52%	3.78%
POSTTEST A	17.6%	28%	54.33%	0.07%
POST TEST B	20%	47.32%	29%	3.68%

Problem solving procedure

The first phase of solving problems is recognizing them, which is indicated by an extending pause. Instantly after problem recognition the translator tries to solve the problem by proposing some solutions. Searching on the net, dictionaries and other interfaces show the Meta cognitive attempt of a translator to solve the problems. Translators reread, rewrite the text as many times as they find a better solution. A number of rereading, re editing the text shows the problem. A Number of solution proposals are clearly observable in the translators' ' verbal report. And a

number of problem evaluations can be understood from the translator's screen, voice recording and also TAPs.

Table 8: Translation Problem Solving Procedure

TESTS	PROBLEM RECOGNITION	PROPOSALS FOR SOLVING PROBLEM	EVALUATE THE PROPOSALS	UNCLASSIFIED
POST TEST	31.3%	18%	48%	2.7%
POST TEST A	34.3%	22.5%	41.8%	1.4%
POST TEST B	44.2%	27%	28%	0.8

Table 7 argues that students after participating in the translation process workshop using the verbal reports (TAPs) may act approximately like a professional translator, this means students are getting well aware about what is going to be the problem in the process of translation, and they take more time in comprehending, read and re-reading the text before starting to produce a physical draft.

Students after watching thoroughly the process of translation using TAPs understand that a professional translator gives more time recognizing the problem of translation in the comprehension level. A professional translator read and reread the text before they are going to render any written or spoken format. Participants in the translation process workshop may produce more suggestions, and they are more certain in evaluation due to their professional like behavior requiring during the workshop (table 8).

CONCLUSION

Think-aloud protocols have been used practically as a data collecting method in empirical studies of translation. The theoretical method borrowed from cognitive psychology (Ericson & Simon 1984/1993). Since then scholars have used think-aloud protocols to capture the process of translation activity in professional mind as a guideline for teaching student in a classroom atmosphere. This study considers think aloud protocols not as a data collecting method solely but also as a technique for teaching translation.

Teachers translate a text impromptu for their students to show the real process of translation. Students' role is asking their teacher about the translation process, and they are allowed to help their teachers in translating the text in a joint-translation. Students afterward in groups try to translate texts with their partners, and teachers have an observer role of evaluating student's verbalization. This study has seventy participates, students attended in a translation fifty five-hour translation workshop. Students were intermediate and upper intermediate of ESL (English as a second language). They scored A or B in FCE test. After fifty-five hours of teaching based on organized material, students participated in a ten-hour translation process workshop in which teachers teach the translation process by the use of Think-aloud protocols.

According to the social constructivism approach by Kiraly (2000) translators should actively construct the text they produce just as a student of foreign language actively participates in the process of learning, accordingly using think-aloud as technique of teaching translation may help students in building their knowledge and help them have an active role in the process of

translation. The study argues that TAPs as technique of teaching within the classroom may increase students' competence.

This study argues Think-aloud protocols may be significantly an effective technique in training translators in an increasing student's expert like behavior and competence. Translation classroom approach, designs and practice may be more useful if they deal with the process of translation rather than just product of translation. The translation - process workshops may be the future of translation pedagogy in which students observe, construct and acquire translation competences. Further researches and studies may be needed to find more about how to apply a translation-process workshop in practice.

Limitation of study

As far as validity and reliability of the research concerns this study tries to use four methods to decrease the possibility of student awareness effect of being under study. Students in this study had to record their voices and use screen recording method at home so they may re-record their voices or rewrite their work in order to look nicer toward their teacher's eyes. One of the limitation of this study was non existence of a specific laboratory with an observer to check whether students are following the instructions that they were given correctly. Using think aloud as a technique in teaching translation is a brand new topic in translation training field so lack of prior study was another limitation of this study. So the author had to develop a typology according to the translation competence. Finally, accessing human mind and coming into conclusion is a long run study, which is not going to be covered by a paper on some students in a specific situation. There have to be more theses and papers on this subject to reach to the complexity of human mind of a translator in order to see what have to be taught and learnt in a translation training setting. This study may be one of the first steps toward having more process oriented, student centered classes.

REFERENCES

- Albir, A. H., & Alves, F. (2009). Translation as Cognitive Activity. In J. Munday, *The Routledge Companion to Translation studies* (pp. 54-73). New York: Routledge.
- Albir, H. (1996). La enseñanza de la traducción directa "general". Objetivos de aprendizaje y metodología. In H. Albir, *La enseñanza de la traducción (Coll. Estudis sobre la traducció 3)* (pp. 31-35). Castellón: Universitat Jaume I.
- Albir, H. (1999). *Enseñar a traducir. Metodología en la formación de traductores e intérpretes*. Madrid: Edelsa.
- Albir, H. (2001). *Traducción y traductología, introducción a la traductología*. Madrid: Catedra.
- Alves, F., & Gonçalves, J. (2007). Modelling translator's competence: relevance and expertise under scrutiny. In Y. Gambier, M. Shlesinger, & R. Stolze, *translation studies: doubts and directions. Selected papers from the IV Congress of European society for Translation studies* (pp. 41-55). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Amirian, Z., & Baghiat Esfahani, M. J. (2013). Uncertainty and Uncertainty Management: the Metacognitive State of Problem-Solving of Professional (experienced) Translators and

- Students of Translation Studies. *international journal of english language and translation studies*, 223-242.
- Bell, R. T. (1991). *Translation and Translating*. London: Longman.
- Bernardini, S. (2004). The theory behind the practice: translator training or translator education? In K. Malmkjaer, *Translation in Undergraduate Degree Programs* (pp. 17-29). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Alves, F (2003). Building a translation competence model. In F. Alves, *Triangulating Translation: Perspectives in process oriented research* (pp. 43-66). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Coe, N., Harrison, M., & Paterson, K. (2010). *Oxford practice Grammar*. Japan: Oxford University Press.
- D.Li. (2002). Translator Training: what translation students have to say. *Meta* 47 (4), 31-513.
- Davies, G. (2004). *Multiple voices in the translation classrooms. Activities, Tasks and Projects*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Dimitrova, E. (2005). *Expertise and Explicitation in the Translation Process*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Ericsson, A. K., & Simon, H. A. (1984/1993). *Protocol analysis: verbal report as data*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Farahzad, F. (2008). *ABC to translation*. Tehran: Tehran university Press.
- Fraser, J. (1996). Professional versus student behavior. In C. Dollerup, & A. V, *Teaching Translation and Interpreting*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Gerloff, P. (1986). Second language learners' reports on the interpretive process. In J. House, & S. Blum Kulka, *in interlingual and intercultural communication. Discourse and cognition in translation and second language acquisition studies* (pp. 243-262). Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Gile, D. (1995). *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Gonçalves, J. L. (2005). O desenvolvimento da competência do tradutor: em busca de parâmetros cognitivos. In F. Alves, C. Magalhães, & A. Pagano, *Competência em tradução: cognição e discurso* (pp. 59-90). Belo Horizonte: : Editora da UFMG.
- Gouadec, D. (2007). *Translation as a Profession*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- House, J. (2000). Consciousness and the strategic use of aids in translation. In S. T. Condit, & R. Jaaskelainen, *Tapping and mapping the processes of translation and interpreting: Outlooks on empirical research* (pp. 149-161). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Jakobsen, A. L. (2003). Effects of think aloud on translation speed, revision and segmentation. In F. Alves, *in Triangulating Translation. Perspective in Process Oriented Research* (pp. 69-95). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Jakobsen, A. L., & K.T.H, J. (2008). Eye movement behavior across four different types of reading task. In G. e. Al, *Looking at the eyes. Eye tracking studies of Reading and translation Processing*. Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur.
- Jensen, A. (2001). *The effects of time on cognitive processes and strategies in translation*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen business school.
- Jensen, K. (1999). Time pressure in translation. In G. Hansen, *Probing the Process in Translation: Methods and Results*. Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur.

- Jonasson, K. (1998). Degree of text awareness in professional vs. non-professional translators. In A. Beylard-Ozeroff, J. Králová, & M.-M. B, *Translators' Strategies and Creativity*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Kelly, D. (2005). *A Handbook for Translator Trainers*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Kiraly, D. (1995). *Pathways to translation: pedagogy and process*. Kent, OH: Kent state university press.
- Kiraly, D. C. (2000). *A Social Constructivist Approach To Translator Education, Empowerment From Theory to Practice*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Kiraly, D. (1995). *Pathways to Translation: Pedagogy and process*. Kent, OH: Kent State.
- Kiraly, D. C. (2000). *A social Costructivist Approach to Translator Education, Empowerment from Theory to Practice*. Manchester: St, Jerome.
- Koller, W. (1979). *Einführung in die übersetzungs-wissenschaft*. Heidelberg: Guerin.
- Krings, H. (1988). 'Blick in die "Black Box": eine Fallstudie zum Übersetzungsprozeß bei Berufsübersetzern'. In R. Arntz, *Textlinguistik und Fachsprache: Akten des Internationalen übersetzungswissenschaftlichen AILA-Symposiums* (pp. 393–412). Hildesheim: Olms.
- Krings, P. H. (1986). Translation problems and translation strategies of advanced German learners of French (L2). In J. House, & s. Blum-Kulka, *in interlingual and intercultural communication: discourse and cognition in translation and second language acquisition study* (pp. 263-275). Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Kunzli, A. (2004). 'Experts versus novices: l'utilisation de sources d'information pendant le processus de traduction', *Meta* 46, 23-507.
- Kussmaul, P. (1995). *Training the Translator*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Lasnier, F. (2000). *Essayer la formation par competences*. Montreal: Guerin.
- Lorscher, W. (1986). Linguistic aspects of translation process: towards an analysis of translation performance. In J. House, & Shoshana Blum Kulka, *in interlingual and intercultural communication. Discourse and cognition in translation and second language Acquisition studies* (pp. 277-292). Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Gonçalves. R. (2007). Modelling translator's competence: Relevance and expertise under scrutiny. In Y. Gambier, M. Shlesinger, & R. Stolze, *Translation Studies: Doubts and directions: Selected papers from the IV Congress of the European Society for Translation Studies* (pp. 41–55). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 41–55.
- Neubert, A. (2000). Competence in language, in languages, and in Translation. In C. Schaffner, & B. Adabs, *Developing Translation Competence* (pp. 3-18). Amesterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St, Jerome.
- PACTE. (2000). Acquiring translation competence: hypotheses and methodological problems in a research project. In A. Beeby, E. D, & P. M, *Investigating Translation* (pp. 99-106). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- PACTE. (2003). Building a Translation Competence Model. In F. Alves, *Triangulation Translation* (pp. 43-66). Amesterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- PACTE. (2005). Investigating translation competence: conceptual and methodological issues. *Meta*, 50(2), 19-609.

- Pazargadi, A. (2010). *Translation technique*. Tehran: Amir Kabir press.
- Pochhacker, F. (1994). Sight translation and interpreter training. In Y. Gambier, & M. Snell-Hornby, *Problems and Trends in Teaching of Interpreting* (pp. 37-127). Misano Adriatico: Istituto San pellegrino.
- Presas, M. (2000). Bilingual competence and translation competence. In B. Adab, & C. Schäffner, *Developing Translation Competence* (pp. 19-31). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Presas, M. (2004). Translatorische Kompetenz als Expertenwissen: Eine Annäherung aus kognitiv-psychologischer Sicht. In P. A. Schmitt E. Fleischmann, & G. Wotjak, *Translationskompetenz* (pp. 199-207). Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag.
- Pym, A. (2003). Redefining translation competence in an electronic age: in defence of minimalist approach. *Meta* 48 (4), 481-497.
- ULRYCH, M (1996). Real-world criteria in translation pedagogy. In C. Dollerup, & V. Appel, *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 3* (pp. 9-251). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Risku, H. (1998). *Translatorische Kompetenz: Kognitive Grundlagen des Übersetzens als Expertentätigkeit*. Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag.
- Sandrock, U. (1982). Thinking aloud protocols (TAPs). Unpublished PhD thesis Universität Kassel.
- Shreve, G. M. (2006). The deliberate practice: translation and expertise. *Journal of translation studies*, 27-42.
- Tirkkonen-Condit, S. (1991). 'Interpreter latitude vs. due process: simultaneous and consecutive interpretation in multilingual trials'. In S. Tirkkonen-Condit, *Empirical research in translation studies and intercultural studies* (pp. 55-147). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Wakabayashi, J. (2003). Think-alouds as a pedagogical tool. In B. J. Baer, & G. S. Koby, *Beyond the ivory tower: Rethinking translation pedagogy* (pp. 61-82). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Weber, W. (1990). The importance of sight translation in an interpreter training program. In D. Brown, & M. Bowen, *Interpreting - yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (pp. 44-52). Binghamton: SUNY.
- Wilss, W. (1976). Perspective and Limitation of a didactic framework for the teaching of translation. In R. W. Brislin, *Translation application and research* (pp. 117-137). New York: Gardner.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USING HEDGES IN ENGLISH SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES AMONG ENGLISH NATIVE AND IRANIAN NON-NATIVE RESEARCHERS: THE CASE OF CONCLUSION SECTIONS

Hassan Karimi

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khuzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

Fatemeh Eidian

Department of English, Jundi Shapur University of Technology, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to compare and analyze the use of hedges in research articles (RA_s) from three disciplines of physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics written in English. It aims to find the similarities and differences in using hedging devices by English writers of physics and computer articles. It also tries to compare and contrast the use of hedges in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian authors. To achieve this goal, 424 RA_s from international and national journals from 2005 to 2012 were selected: 165 physics, 93 computer engineering, 77 applied linguistics articles written by English writers, and 89 applied linguistic articles written by Iranian writers. A classification of hedges formulated by Salager-Meyer (1997) was used as a model. After determining the frequency and percentage of each hedging devices, Chi-square analysis was used to see if the differences between these disciplines are significant or not. Findings reveal that computer engineering writers used hedges more than physics writers. The intra- discipline analysis showed that Persian writers of applied linguistics RA_s used more hedges than their English counterparts. The implications of this study will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to teach hedges in writing and reading comprehension activities.

KEYWORDS: Hedges, Scientific articles, Researchers, Conclusion sections

INTRODUCTION

An important feature of academic writing is to evaluate evidence and draw conclusions from the data. Scientific writing is full of mitigating devices and expression that carry the writers' attitudes. That is, academic writing cannot be considered as exclusively objective and factual, but there are features situated in text that encode the writer's point of view (Crompton, cited in Jalilifar, 2011). These features serve as mediators between the information presented in text and

writers' factual information. Metadiscourse markers such as hedges signal the speakers or writers' points of view in using the spoken or written format.

Scientific writing has special characteristics which make it unique among other types of writing. While most readers expect scientific reports to be quite objective, the fact is that there do exist interactive elements whose role is to show a connection between the writers personal opinion and the data presented in the text. One of these interactive elements is hedging which shows the writer's doubt and uncertainty. Clemen (1996, p. 1) maintains that hedging limits the writer's commitment to what he proposes, and helps him to avoid errors. He argues that the writer may demonstrate reserve by emphasizing the universal validity of his statements and if he is unsure, lacks knowledge or belief, or wishes to avoid dogmatism, he can cite higher authority

A better understanding of hedges can provide insights into the interactional and rhetorical nature of the scientific research articles (RAs). Hyland (1994, p .319) argues that “hedging is a substantial means by which the professional scientist confirms his or her membership of the community”. Therefore, this line of research can make an important contribution to our understanding of the practices of practical reasoning and persuasion in science (Hyland,1999). Hedging does not necessarily refer to uncertainty to all contexts. Hyland (1995) mentions that some writers have suggested that hedges are a means of signaling distance between a speaker and what is said or to convey purposive vagueness in writing. Despite the crucial role of hedges in scientific writing, not many studies have been conducted concerning the presence and frequency of hedges in different disciplines or genres. The purpose of the present study is to compare conclusion sections of research articles written by native speakers of Persian and those written by native speakers of English concerning the use of hedges.

Although a number of researches (e.g., Hyland,1995) have been carried out on the existence of hedging devices in different types of texts, many questions are still unanswered in this relation. For example, one might wonder in what genres hedging happens more or to what extent a certain discipline, e.g. applied linguistics, is hedged. Moreover, the lack of comparative research on the use of hedging strategies has created some sort of unawareness as to which disciplines are more hedged compared with other disciplines. There is no perfect answer to questions like these due to the small number of researches carried out in this regard. Hyland (1995, p .34) maintains that there has been little work into how hedges work in academic genres based on analysis of adequate corpora and we know virtually nothing about the expression and function of hedges in scientific research articles. The previous studies on hedges mainly dealt with specifying the types of hedges present in the research articles on a specific discipline e.g. Research Articles on Cell and Molecular Biology Hyland (1995). Comparative studies on frequency and type of the use of hedging have been rare and this requires more studies to be conducted comparing native and non-native writers in the use of hedging as a pragmatic strategy.

Recently, Jalilifar (2011) in a research accounted for metadiscourse variation in the discussion sections of articles written in English and Persian published in Iranian as well as international scholarly journals focuses on type, frequency and function of hedges in discussion sections of the articles. However, still few published studies have specifically looked at the type and frequency

of hedges in conclusion sections of articles written by native researchers (NRs) and non-native researchers (NNRs) in English (Rahimi, 2012, p. 58). Thus in this study, the researcher focused on the types and frequencies of hedges in conclusion sections of articles in hard science and soft science written by English writers and Iranian writers of English. The research articles under study were selected from three disciplines including applied linguistics from soft applied science as well as computer engineering from hard applied and physics from hard pure science.

The present study investigates the frequency of occurrence and types of hedging devices in conclusion section of research articles written in hard sciences, soft sciences, and applied sciences. Although a number of researches have been carried out concerning the role of hedging devices in different disciplines and different sections of research articles, it seems that, only few have dealt with comparing hedges in conclusion sections.

Thus the purpose of the study is to investigate the use of hedges in conclusion sections of articles published by Iranian writers as NNRs and English writers as NRs in computer engineering, applied linguistics, and physics fields of study. As mentioned earlier, the hypothesis is that Iranian researchers underuse hedges in their scientific articles. It is hoped that the results of this study will shed some light on academic writing problems for Iranian researchers. The insights gained from the results of the study may provide English practitioners with better idea on writing scientific papers through using hedges appropriately and adequately. It is also hoped that the results of the present research will be useful for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developers, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) developers, translators, teachers and ESP writers in Iran.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Metadiscourse markers

Metadiscourse is discourse about discourse, intended to address rather than inform readers (Williams, 1981). Metadiscourse includes linguistic elements which do not refer to aspects of external reality (as propositional or referential elements do) but to the organization of the discourse itself and to aspects of the relationship that develops between the author and the reader (Crismore 1989). What Vande Kopple (1985) labels referential 'meaning' is equivalent to what Halliday (1978) calls 'ideational' meaning. Vande Kopple (1985), using the broad definition of metadiscourse, suggests that metadiscourse conveys interpersonal and/or textual meanings. Dafouz-Milne (2008) states that "metadiscourse refers to those features which writers include to help readers decode message, share the writers view and reflect the particular conventions followed in a given culture" (p.97).

Arguing the importance of metadiscourse devices, Camiciottoli (2003, p. 9) states that "metadiscourse markers produce a desired effect, depending on writer's underlying purposes and perceptions of the reader's expectations". They help writers to present information in a clear, convincing and interesting way to promote acceptance and understanding, as well as reader-writer solidarity. They act as persuasive devices to affect and influence the reader's reactions to texts according to the values and established rules and conventions of a discourse community.

Classification of metadiscourse markers

Hyland and Tse (2004, p.169) propose a model of metadiscourse in academic texts which distinguishes interactive and interactional dimensions and recognizes more specific functions within them. This schema is discussed in detail and summarized in the following table:

Table 1: Metadiscourse markers (Adapted from Hyland & Tse, 2004, p.169).

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive resources	help to guide reader through the text	
Transitions	express semantic relation between main clauses	in addition/but/thus/and
Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences,	finally/to conclude/ or text stages my purpose here is to
Endophoric markers	refer to information in	noted above/see Fig/ other parts of the text in section 2
Evidential	refer to source of information from other texts	according to Y (1999), Z states
Code glosses	help reader grasp the function of ideational material	namely/e.g./such as/ in other words
Hedges	withhold writer's full commitment to proposition	might/perhaps/ possible/about
Boosters	emphasize force or writer's certainty in proposition	in fact/definitely/ it is clear that
Attitude markers	express writer's attitudes to proposition	unfortunately/ I agree/surprisingly
Engagement markers	explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader	consider/note that/ you can see that
Self-mentions	explicit reference to author(s)	I/we/my/our

Hyland and Tse (2004, p.168) further note that “interactive resources are those devices are used explicitly by writers in an argument”. They are used to organize the discourse, help and guide the reader through the text. Readers can get the intended meaning and interpretations of all the text through explicit use of these devices which can be recovered from the text. And interactional devices, on the other hand, engage the readers in the discussion by alerting them to the writer's attitudes and propositional information and readers themselves. Metadiscourse from this point of view is used to express attitudes, judgments, the degree of intimacy, and the degree of reader involvement. This part deals with the way that writer presents his ideas and attitudes in the text and the degree of reader and writer engagement in the argument. Hedges, as one of the groups of discourse markers, have been defined by some of the scholars to be presented briefly.

The concept of hedges/hedging

Schroder and Zimmer (1995, p. 45) maintain that the term “hedging research' refers to a complex research area within the fields of pragmatics, linguistics, semantics, logic and philosophy”. In pragmatics, however, the concept of ' hedge/hedging ' is linked to politeness phenomena, mitigating vagueness and modality. A hedge is either defined as one or more lexico-syntactical elements that are used to modify a proposition or as a strategy that modifies a proposition. Schroder and Zimmer (1995, p. 36) argue that “the term hedging is used to refer to the textual

strategies of using linguistic means as hedges in certain contexts for specific communicative purposes, such as politeness, vagueness, mitigation, etc”.

There are only a few entries in linguistic dictionaries dealing with the concept of 'hedge' and 'hedging'. Furthermore, only in Wales'(1989) *Dictionary of Stylistics* there is a specific entry for 'hedging'. The German dictionary entries present a semantic definition of the concepts while the *Dictionary of Stylistics* gives a twofold definition of hedging from the point of view of semantics and pragmatics (including discourse analysis and speech act theory).

The notion of "hedging" was first introduced by Lakoff (1972, p.195) who spoke of "words whose job is to make things fuzzy" and since then the term has been used to refer to devices which qualify the writer's expression. Lakoff (1972) gives an example of what he means, the way we might talk about birds. Eagles, for instance, are birds; so are kingfishers and albatrosses. But what about, for example, a chicken? Lakoff suggests that we might find ourselves saying: A kitchen is a sort of bird. That 'sort of' is a hedge. According to Lakoff, the logic of hedges requires serious semantic analysis for all predicates.

Zadeh (1972) followed Lakoff in using the designation 'hedge' and analyzed English hedges , such as *very ,much, more or less, essentially* and *slightly* and more complex ones like *technically* and *practically* from the vantage point of semantics and logic.

Hedges vary in their dependency on context. Holmes (1988) studies hedges from the point of view of teaching and learning English as a second language. She defines hedges as devices for attenuating the strength of utterance as a part of epistemic modality.

Skelton (1988, p.37) argues that “there are a very large number of ways in which one can hedge in English. He suggests the following categories: The use of a) impersonal phrases b) the modal system c) verbs like: *seem, look* and *appear* d) sentence introductory phrase, like: *I think, I believe*) the addition of “ish” to certain (but not all) adjectives”. Skelton (1988, p.37) gives the following examples of hedging with unhedged version on the left:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. It is good. | It may be good. |
| 2. The world is flat. | It is said that the world is flat. |
| 3. Sarah has red hair. | Sarah has reddish hair. |
| 4. David Gower has a forceful personality. | I doubt if David Gower has a forceful personality. |

According to Skelton (1988), “it is by means of hedging system of a language that a user distinguishes between what s/he says and what s/he thinks about what s/he says”(p.38). Therefore, without hedging the world is purely propositional, a rigid (and rather dull) place. With a hedging system, language is rendered more flexible and the world more subtle. Skelton (1983) believes that it is impossible to avoid hedging, yet describe or discuss the world. Since the early 1970s the concepts of 'hedge' has moved far from its origins, particularly since it was adopted by pragmatics and discourse analysts. Hedges are considered to be of two types: 'shields' and 'approximators'. They suggested that in shields, the speaker is hedged: his or her degree of

commitment to a proposition is stated. On the other hand, in approximators, the proposition itself is hedged: the extent to which it is true is stated. Thus as an instance of shields one might have: *I suspect the moon is not made of green cheese after all*. And as an instance of approximators: *It is made of some sort of rock stuff*.

Yang (2006), focusing on a corpus of 10 texts in material science discipline, explored the use of hedging both by Chinese and English writers. The results of this study showed that RAs written by Chinese writers tend to be more direct and authoritative in tone which may be related to the nature of the language in that particular discipline. Martin (2008) in his study analyzed hedges in English and Spanish written RAs in Clinical and Health Psychology disciplines. The results of his study revealed that there are similarities between the two languages regarding the distribution of hedges across the different sections of the RAs, although a certain degree of indetermination strategy occurs in English texts and showing English RAs in the field of Clinical and Health Psychology provide more protection to the author's face. What is gained is that nationality is less powerful than the discipline in affecting the writing style.

Jalilifar (2011) examined 90 research article Discussion sections' hedges and boosters in two disciplines of Applied Linguistics and Psychology by three groups of writers; English writer, Persian (Iranian writers write in English), and Persian writers (Iranian writers write in Farsi). The results of analyses showed significant differences in frequency, type, and functions of these devices in the texts. Jalilifar claimed that differences might be attributed to lack of awareness of the conventional rules of English rhetoric, limited knowledge of academic English by Persian writers, and lack of explicit instruction and exposure to pragmatic and sociolinguistic rules of English by Persian researchers. It seems that Iranian researchers should be thought enough about the role of hedges in the academic community. To address the theme of the present study, the following research question was proposed.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any significant difference between the types and frequencies of hedges used in conclusion sections of scientific English articles (i.e., including computer engineering, and physics) published by NRs?

METHODOLOGY

Corpora

In order to compare and analyze the hedges across different disciplines, this study relied on RAs from three English native corpora (physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics) and the non-native corpus of applied linguistics in English. There are some reasons behind this selection. First of all, there is a standard typology for the classification of academic knowledge distinguishing between 'pure' or 'applied' and 'hard' or 'soft' disciplines (Becher & Trowler, 2001). In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure, the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied, the humanities are classed as soft-pure and the social professions such as education and law are classed as soft applied. In

accordance with this classification of academic discourse, the researcher decided to work on physics as a hard-pure, computer engineering as a hard-applied, and applied linguistics as a soft-applied academic discourse. The reason for which the researcher used applied linguistics is our familiarity with and good command of that. Furthermore, this is the discipline with the deep affinity to linguistics analysis of texts. We are well-acquainted with this discipline, as anyone in the field of TEFL should be. Hence, it seems that these disciplines, as they represent different academic discourses, are good choices for this study and can represent social science disciplines.

Moreover, the researcher compiled a non-native corpus of applied linguistics in English which included RAs written by Iranian authors to see if there is any difference between native and non-native authors in the same discipline (AL) with regard to the hedging devices. Furthermore, as the current generations of researchers are required to be skilled in writing RAs; accordingly, the selection was pedagogically motivated to be in line with the rapid growth in the number of academic papers; especially, among non-native English researchers.

Disciplines

As mentioned above, this study relied on three disciplines- physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics, each including approximately 37500 words to compare them in terms of hedging devices. Physics discipline comprised of 165 articles with 91 words in the shortest and 823 in the longest conclusion sections. Computer engineering discipline comprised of 93 articles which range in length between 93 words to 1295 words. Applied linguistics discipline consisted of two sections, one written by English native speakers and other one written by Persian native speakers. The first section, articles written by native authors, comprised of 77 articles with 95 words in the shortest and 1287 words in the longest conclusion sections. The latter part, articles written by Iranian writers, comprised of 89 articles which range in size from 78 words to 1354 words in the conclusion sections. On the whole, in all the mentioned disciplines 424 articles which include 150 thousand words were analyzed. These corpora were developed by selecting articles published internationally from 2005 to 2012. In order to compile more reliable and recent corpora, only RAs published since 2005 onwards were selected. The RAs were collected from prestigious journals representing the disciplines in focus. These journals were suggested by experts in the field who have published papers in the journals in each discipline field (see Appendix C for a complete list of the journals). The rationale behind the selection of the RAs was that writing RAs appears to be a very complicated activity with many visible and invisible layers. Thus, preparing to write RAs requires understanding higher levels of discourse (Abdi, Tavangar Rizi, & Tavakoli, 2000).

Instrumentation

The present study employed one framework for the analysis of hedging devices. The framework used was Salager-Meyer taxonomy of hedges based on Salager-Meyer (1997, p. 4). Based on this checklist there are 59 hedging devices among which according to Salager-Meyer (1997) the first category is of the most frequency. On the account that some of hedging devices were not observed in any disciplines, they were excluded from the study. The omitted hedging devices are as follows: 1) fifth category and seventh category which are introductory phrases and compound hedges respectively. Among other categories of hedging devices the following were omitted: *if*

true and occasionally. Accordingly, the rest of the checklist which included 45 hedging devices was analyzed.

Procedure

This study began with the collection of English papers published internationally in prestigious journals to compile three corpora of three disciplines- physics, computer engineering, and applied linguistics. Then a non-native corpus of applied linguistics was compiled by collecting papers written by Iranian authors in English. The selected RAs were obtained directly from the electronic versions of the relevant journals and conclusion sections of the RAs were selected and then converted to Word format. Then the conclusion sections of the RAs were divided into four groupings:

Group A: Articles on Physics written by English native writers (165 RAs).

Group B: Articles on computer engineering written by English native writers (93 RAs).

Group C: Articles on applied linguistics written by English native writers (77 RAs).

Group D: Articles on applied linguistics written by Iranian native writers (89 RAs).

There were about 37500 words in each group. All the conclusion sections of each group were saved on a computer to produce an electronic corpus of about 150000 words which showed the number of the words in all the four groups neglecting all the figures and symbols that did not consist of alphabetically letters (e.g., numbers). By doing so, it became possible to make intra-group comparisons. Afterwards, the Word software was used to highlight and count the hedges in each group based on the checklist presented earlier in this section. Selection of hedging devices was according to their functions and meaning in the sentences. Although some words appeared to be hedges according to the mentioned checklist, they didn't function as hedges in the text. So they were not counted as hedges. Here are two examples in which the word 'about' is used in two different ways:

a) *It leaves unanswered a number of questions **about** the effects of both speaker and listener proficiency in the L2 on intelligibility.*

b) *Concerning the amount of input, the immersion children were supposed to spend **about** 4400 hours on Japanese instruction from kindergarten to the fifth grade.*

In the above examples the word 'about' functions differently: In the first example it is a proposition which means on the subject of or connected with. In the second example it is an adverb which means approximately. In the first case the word 'about' does not function as a hedge while in the second example it does. So in in this study the word 'about' and the like in such examples as example (a) were not taken into account as hedges. Moreover, the researcher calculated the inter-rater reliability through the calculation of correlation between the raters based on Spearman formula to make sure whether he did the analysis in the right way. The results of the inter-rater reliability calculation are presented in the table below:

Table 2: Inter-rater reliability

Disciplines	Computer engineering	physics	Applied native	linguistics	Applied native	linguistics	non-	Total	Inter-rater reliability
Inter-rater reliability (Spearman's rho)	0.97.21**	0.95.23**	0.96.82**		0.99.75**			0.90.00*	

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

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

The frequency and percentage of each hedging devices in each group were calculated separately and then group A and group B were compared with each other. And so were group C with group D. Then, the Chi-square test was used to show whether the differences in the corpora were statistically meaningful or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of quantitative analysis

The first step taken in the analysis of hedges in the mentioned articles was to run word count to determine the length of the corpus. A total of 2951 hedges were identified among 150000 words. The total average of hedge uses was 1.97 percent. Of all the hedges found, 788 were used in computer engineering RAs (37600 words), 511 were used in physics RAs (37200 words), 735 were identified in native applied linguistics RAs (37600 words), and 925 in native applied linguistics RAs (37600 words).

Frequency and percentage of hedges in RAs

The four groups of RAs investigated in this study were analyzed concerning the frequency of occurrence of hedges in each of the 5 categories of the taxonomy used in this study. The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the articles; rows numbered 1-5 represent the taxonomy applied here in this study. The frequency and percentage of all hedging devices in each of the four groups of RAs under study are shown in columns under each discipline as well. Total number of hedging devices is also given.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage of hedges in RAs

Disciplines	Computer engineering		Physics		Applied linguistics native		Applied linguistics non-native		Total hedges in all the discipline	Percentage of the category
Types of hedges	Freq.	Percent.	Freq.	Percent.	Freq.	Percent.	Freq.	Percent.		
1	391	49.61	274	53.72	363	49.38	561	60.71	1589	53.73%
2	227	28.80	120	23.52	175	23.80	185	20.02	707	23.90%
3	102	12.94	69	13.52	121	16.46	92	9.95	384	12.98%
4	33	4.18	34	6.66	41	5.57	35	3.78	143	4.83%
5	35	4.44	13	2.54	35	4.76	51	7.04	134	4.53%
Total hedges in the discipline	788	2.09	510	1.37	735	1.95	924	2.45	2957	
Total words in the discipline	3760		37200		37600		37600			

Rows 1: modal auxiliary verbs 2: modal lexical verbs 3: adjectival, adverbial, nominal modal phrases 4: approximators 5: if clauses.

Frequency of occurrence of hedges in RAs

In the following the five categories of the taxonomy of hedges presented are introduced:

1. Modal Auxiliary Verbs

The first category in the classification used here represented the modal auxiliary verbs. Different modal auxiliary verbs were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers. However, the least amount of this category was found in physics articles. The sum of the occurrence of this category in the four groups equaled 1589 cases (53.73% of all the hedges) among which modal auxiliary “can” had the highest frequency while “might” had the lowest.

2. Modal Lexical Verb

The most frequent modal lexical verb was found in computer engineering texts. While the least amount of this category was found in applied linguistics articles written by non-native researchers. This category had the frequency of 707 cases in all the four groups (23.9% of all the hedges) among which Modal lexical verbs “suggest” had the highest frequency while “speculate” had the least.

3. Adjectival, Adverbial, Nominal Modal Phases

This category occurred 384 times in the four groups (12.9% of all the hedges). The most frequent type of this category was found in texts on applied linguistics by native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles among which the hedge device “possible” had the highest frequency while “apparently” had the least.

4. Approximators

This category was found to be repeated 143 times (4.83%) in the articles studied. Different approximates were found which were mostly situated in texts on applied linguistics by native writers. While the least amount of this category was found in computer engineering articles among which “often” had the highest frequency while “roughly” the least.

5. If clauses

The fifth category of hedges in the classification of hedges in the present study deals with the conditional phrases. The overall number occurrence of this category was 134 cases equal to 4.53% of the hedges highlighted in this study. The most frequent type of this category was found in in texts on applied linguistics by non-native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in physics articles. The amount of inter-rater reliability shows that the recounting of hedges was reliable at ($p < .05$ or $p < .01$)

Descriptive Statistics

There were some differences in the frequency of hedges used by English and Persian writers of the mentioned RAs. Consider the following table to find the details.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Physics	5	100.4000	104.04951	13.00	274.00
Computer	5	157.4000	152.72950	33.00	391.00
Applied native	5	147.0000	134.06715	35.00	363.00
Applied non-native	5	184.6000	218.39254	34.00	561.00

In this table, the researcher calculated Mean and Std. Deviation to find more details. N is the number of items we considered through our study. Physics articles had the least mean while the applied non-native had the most one. But we need to find Chi-Square to see if the differences are significant or not.

Cross-disciplinary variation of hedges in RAs

The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between physics and computer engineering articles in terms of using hedging deices. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X2 stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:

Table 5: Chi-Square analysis

Categories of Hedges	1	2	3	4	5	mean	Std. Deviation	df	X ²	p
Disciplines										
Physics articles	274	112	69	34	13	100.40	104.04	4	13.6	0.009
Computer engineering articles	391	228	100	33	35	157.40	152.72			

Rows 1: modal auxiliary verbs 2: modal lexical verbs 3: adjectival, adverbial, nominal modal phrases 4: approximators 5: if clauses.

The difference between physics and computer engineering articles was found to be significant at ($p < 0.05$) since the Observed X² (13.6) is greater than the Critical X² (7.81) with $df=4$.

Inter-disciplinary variation of hedges in RA

The analysis was done using Chi-square analysis to find the difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers in terms of using hedging deices. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table, where X2 stands for the Chi-square amount and P shows the level of significance:

Table 6: Chi-Square analysis

Category of hedges	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	X ²	p
Disciplines										
Applied native articles	363	175	121	41	35	147.00	134.06	4	29.3	0.000
Applied non-native articles	561	185	92	34	51	184.60	218.39			

Rows 1: modal auxiliary verbs 2: modal lexical verbs 3: adjectival, adverbial, nominal modal phrases 4: approximators 5: if clauses.

The difference between applied linguistics articles written by native writers and those of written by non-native writers was found to be significant at ($p < 0.05$) since the Observed X² (29.3) is greater than the Critical X² (7.81) with $df=4$.

Results obtained from analyzing the types and frequencies of hedges in computer engineering articles and physics articles showed significant differences in using hedges in the two groups. So the Null hypotheses mentioning that there were no significant differences in the types and frequencies between the two groups was rejected and so were articles written on applied linguistics by English and Iranian researchers.

Discussion

In answering the first research question, the researcher proposed the following discussion: The results of the Chi-square analysis showed that there are some differences and similarities between computer engineering, and physics RAs. The most frequent types of hedges used by computer engineering researchers were modal auxiliary verbs, and the least used ones were approximators like following examples:

1. *Codification processes in the scientific communication structure **can** perhaps be considered as the longer-term selectors upon the variation generated by shorter-term S & T-policy program.*
2. *They create large quantities of postings, and these postings are **often** archived.*

In physics articles, the most frequent items of hedges were modal auxiliary verbs, but the least used items were if clauses. In both disciplines, the fourth types of hedges, approximators, occurred approximately the same times like following examples:

1. *This **would** have several advantages, such as reducing the cost for the lasers, and thus the overall cost of patterning systems.*
2. ***If** the laser diode is operated in pure nitrogen, we observe also the buildup of a thick deposition on the facet.*

In computer engineering articles, 788 words out of 37600 were hedges whereas in physics articles they were 510 words out of 37200. Generally, the writers of computer engineering articles used more hedges than those of physics articles.

The differences between disciplines in using hedges have been approached differently by researchers. Some scholars like Markkanen and Schroder (1997) suggest that the differences in the use of hedges between texts in different fields are not as significant as some scholars have assumed.

Markkanen and Schroder (1997) have considered the different bases of argumentation various fields as the major reason for variation in the use of hedges. According to this view, some fields like linguistics and philosophy would favor more hedging than other fields like natural sciences and technology. This could be matched with Spillner, as cited by Markkanen and Schroder (1997), who stated that argumentation in natural science and technology is based on experimental data and concrete evidence, whereas this end is accomplished in other fields (e.g., social sciences) through the styles of writing. The results also agreed with Markkanen and Schroder (1997) who have stated that the use of hedges and other linguistic devices are significant in convincingness of an argument in the texts belonging to "soft" fields (e.g. philosophy and linguistics). On the other hand, the differences in the overall incidence of hedges in different disciplines can be explained by considering the object and general nature of disciplines as well as the kind of materials and methods used in the study. The field of physics, for example, can be categorized under "hard" sciences which by nature are different from psychology as a "soft" science. The "soft" science is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative

nature, whereas in "hard" sciences are "more closely related to the traditional rigorous empiricism of the natural sciences.

Another source of difference can be traced to the nature of the fields. In researches such as physics, the setting of the experiments is more controlled and the material and procedures can be closely measured. The researchers in these fields can explain the procedures of the experiment and also make conclusions with more confidence. This can partly account for the lower occurrence of hedges in this field as compared to computer engineering.

The possible reason for higher occurrence of hedges in computer engineering is that although computer engineering generally represents technological information, it gives information about some issues which are not absolutely technological; for example one of the articles published in *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* was entitled: Social Science Approaches to e-Science: Framing an Agenda. Thus it has some characteristics of "soft" science which is characterized as having a theoretical foundation with tentative nature.

In general, the natural sciences and mathematics are classed as hard-pure; the science-based professions such as engineering are classed as hard-applied. So physics and computer engineering can be considered as hard science; therefore, they are expected to have some common characteristics. This can justify similarity between these two disciplines in terms of using same categories of hedges-in both disciplines modal lexical verbs were of the greatest frequency and also both disciplines use approximators approximately equally.

In the view of the second research question, the analysis showed that there were disciplinary similarities and differences in the use of hedges in applied linguistics RA_s written by English and Iranian authors. In both set of articles, the most frequent were modal lexical verbs. Modal lexical verbs and adjectival, adverbial, nominal modal phrases occur in the second and third position respectively. In applied articles written by native writers the least frequent hedges were *if clauses* while in native counterparts the least frequent ones were approximators. Consider the following examples in which modal verbs are used in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian respectively:

1. The results **may** be interpreted as consistent with a number of recent investigations that have reported intact prosodic processing at the lexical level implicit tasks.
2. However, their perception of the events **may** be very much different from the original event.

As can be seen in examples above the hedging device "may" is used in the two groups of articles. Look at examples in which Modal lexical verbs are used in applied linguistics written by English and Iranian respectively:

1. The results of our study seem to support the use of meaningful output practice as well as meaningful input-based practice in the L2 classroom environment as a means for building fluency and accuracy
2. Most of the sociopragmatics studies seem to be both geographically and culturally restricted to western societies and cultures.

As can be seen in the above examples, the hedging device "seem" is used in the two groups of articles. In computer applied linguistics articles written by native authors there were 735 hedges out of 37600 words whereas in the Iranian ones 924 hedges out of 37200 words. In other words, Iranian writers used 0/06% more than English writers; however, there was not a significant difference.

The results of this study are not consistent with Marandi's (2003) work. Her findings showed that Iranian writers used significantly fewer hedges than English native writers. The results of this study are in conflict with the claim of Hyland (1995). Unlike the results of previously mentioned researchers' findings, the results of this study are in line with Nassiri (2012). The results of his study showed that despite some variations among the types of hedges, no statistically significant differences were observed between the American and Iranian writers in terms of utilizing hedging devices in the discussion sections of their research articles. As it can be seen, both English and Iranian writers in this present study seem to be approximately equally proficient in using various hedging devices to assert their claims in an acceptable manner. This similarity can be attributed to the fact that both sets of articles are from the same discipline or social science. For example, the two groups made the most frequent use of modal lexical verbs which can be indicative of the nature and the rhetorical structures or shared stylistic features of the two groups. This also might be due to their majors which dealt with English language studies and applied linguistics.

Some cultural, social, and educational factors might help to justify the differences between English and Iranian writers in terms of using hedges. The possible reason for the overuse of the hedging devices in RAs written by Iranian researchers can be indicative of the fact that because Iranian writers are not fully mastered in linguistics and are not completely sure of the results, they show this weakness in using more tentative language. They also may be uncertain on the results of their speculations and ideas. Another possible reason is that by using too much hedges, Iranian writers try to avoid the risk of being criticized by readers.

CONCLUSION

This study showed that the distributions of hedges in the RAs are not evenly distributed across disciplines and languages. The writers of physics articles used more hedges compared with the writers of computer engineering articles which showed the different nature between these two disciplines. Iranian researchers of linguistics slightly hedged their statements more than their English counterparts. The difference between this two groups showed variety of differences between the writers of the articles and similarities between these two groups stem from the fact that both of them deal with the same discipline.

Ataei and Sadr (2006) stated that familiarizing and involving students with the rules of academic writing may improve their reading ability and can help them to know what kind of discourse they have to produce and understand in academic settings. If we have a good knowledge and good command of hedging devices, then we will be able to use them adequately and appropriately according to the context and the audiences. Then we know where to hedge and what types of

hedges to use to have a better effect on the audiences and readers in a way that gains readers' attention and creates a reader-friendly text to have maximum interpersonal and persuasive effect.

Finally, the results of this study can be useful for EFL teachers to teach how to use the forms and functions of the hedges in speaking and writing skills.

Further research may be carried out to compare hedges in other disciplines of English articles written by English and Iranian writers to find if these devices are used differently. It is possible to compare scientific articles written by authors with other language background; for example, between German writers and English writers. It is also possible to compare other metadiscourse markers such as boosters in research articles.

REFERENCES

- Abdi, R., Tavangar Rizi, M., & Tavakoli, M. (2000). *Interpersonal metadiscourse markers in social science and natural science research article discussion sections*. Unpublished MA thesis. University of Tehran, Tehran.
- Ataei, M.R., & Sadr, L. (2006). A cross-cultural genre study on hedging devices in discussion sections of Applied Linguistic research articles. *Proceeding of the conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistic*, 42-57.
- Becher, T., & Trowler, P. (2001). *Academic tribes and territories: Intellectual enquiry and the culture of disciplines* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education Open University Press.
- Camiciottoli, B.C. (2003). Metadiscourse and ESP reading comprehension: an exploratory study. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 15 (1), 28-39.
- Clemen, G. (1996). *Hedging in English journalistic economics*. Retrieved July 12, 2014 from <http://www.uwasa.fi/com/publications/interkult/extdoc/6clemen>.
- Coates, J. (1993). *Women, men and language*. New York: Longman.
- Crismore, A. (1989). *Talking with readers: Metadiscourse as rhetorical act*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study on newspaper discourse. *Journal of pragmatics*, 40, 95-113.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The Social Interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Holmes, E. (1988). Doubt and certainty in ESL textbooks. *Applied Linguistics*, 9 (1), 20-44.
- Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25, 156-177.
- Hyland, K. (1993). Hedging in academic textbooks and EAP. *English for Specific Purpose*, 1 (31), 313-357.
- Hyland, K. (1995). The author in text: Hedging scientific writing. *Hong Kong Papers in Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 18, 33-42.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: metadiscourse in introductory course books. *English for Specific purposes*, 18 (1), 3-26.

- Jalilifar, A. R. (2011). World of attitudes in research articles discussion section: A cross-linguistic perspective. *Journal of Technology & Education*, 5(3), 177-186.
- Lakoff, G. (1972). Hedges; A study in meaning criteria and the logic of fuzzy concepts. *Chicago Linguistic Society Papers*, 8, 183-228.
- Marandi, S. (2003). Metadiscourse in English and Persian Master's Theses: A Contrastive Study. *IJAL*, 6 (2), 23-42.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (ed.) (1997). Hedging and discourse. In Nash, W. (Ed.), *The writing scholar: Studies in academic discourse*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Martin, M. P. (2008). The mitigation of scientific claims in research papers: A comparative study. *International Journal of English Studies*, 8(20), 133-152.
- Nassiri, S. (2012). Utilization of hedging devices by American and Iranian researchers in the field of civil engineering. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4 (2), 125-133.
- Rahimi, P. (2012). Stance markers in English and Persian editorials: A case of gender study. Unpublished MA thesis, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Center of Ahvaz.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13 (2), 149-170.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1997). I think that perhaps you should: A study of hedges in written scientific discourse. In T. Miller (Ed.), *Functional approaches to written text: Classroom applications*. Washington, D.C: United States Information Agency.
- Schroder, H., & Zimmer, D. (1995). *Hedging research in pragmatics: A bibliographical research guide to hedging*. Retrieved August, 14, 2014 from <http://www.Sw2.euv-Frankfurt-o.de/publikationen/Hedging/Zimmer/Zimmer.html>.
- Skelton, J. (1983). Teaching and the linguistic critic. *Use of English*, 34(2), 121-148.
- Skelton, J. (1988). The care and maintenance of hedges. *ELT Journal*, 42 (1), 37-43.
- Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36, 82-93.
- Wales, K. (1989). *A Dictionary of stylistics*. New York: Longman.
- Williams, J. M. (1981). *Style: Ten lessons in clarity and grace*. Glenview: Scott, Foreman, Glenview.
- Yang, H. (2006). A comparative study of scientific hedging by Chinese writers and English writers. *Language Education papers*, 3 (3), 58-62.
- Zadeh, L. A. (1972). Fuzzy-set-theoretic interpretation of linguistic hedges. *Journal of Cybernetics*, 2(3), 4-34.

THE EFFECT OF BODILY INTELLIGENCE AND SOUND ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY RETENTION

Shideh Janghorban

Department of English, Khomein Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khomein, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this experimental study was to investigate the effect of bodily intelligence and sound on Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) learners' vocabulary retention. In doing so, 75 female students who enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran took a homogeneity test of Cambridge University Press (2010) and the learners whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the research sample. Sixty female selected participants were randomly divided into two experimental (N=30) and control (N=30) groups. Before period of treatment, the pilot test was given to eight students who were not participated in the study but with the same background. The aim of the pilot test was to assess the reliability of the homogeneity, pre and post- tests, and the time allocated to take the tests. Furthermore, the bodily intelligence and sound programs were matched with the participants' interests in conducting the research procedures. Then, the participants were given a pre-test on vocabulary achievement to assess their vocabulary knowledge at the beginning of the study. Both the experimental and control groups were taught forty vocabularies during eight sessions, 30 minutes. Students in the experimental group were taught vocabularies through bodily intelligence and sounds, while the students in the control group were taught through conventional method by focusing on oral presentations. Finally, a post-test was administered to two groups and data were collected. Data were analyzed through the Interdependent Samples t-test and descriptive statistics utilized to analyze learners' scores. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. This study suggests that the use of bodily intelligence and sound could be more effective activities in teaching vocabulary to the beginners.

KEYWORDS: Bodily intelligence, Sound, EFL learners, Vocabulary retention

INTRODUCTION

Learning vocabulary seemed to be one of the easiest things about learning a language but it is somehow burdensome for some learners and also one of the hardest things to do, especially when the students had reached a certain level of proficiency. Fortunately, the need for vocabulary is one point on which teachers and students agree (French Allen, 1983). Moras (2001) claims that students might had a receptive knowledge of a wide range of vocabularies, which means they can recognize the items and their meanings; nevertheless, their productive use of vocabulary is

normally restricted, and this is one of the areas that need greater attention. Based on Hornby's (2004, p. 1091) definition, retention is "the ability to remember things". Those words that are easy to learn will better retain.

In the classroom of second language acquisition, the teacher teaches students with the same teaching method. However, some students acquired the language successfully while others failed. Why does this happen? It may have something to do with some learning strategies. The same learning strategies may be useful for some students but useless for others (He, 2010). Wenden and Rubin state that learners bring a varied repertoire of learning skills in the process of language learning (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. xvii). It means that the learners should master some learning strategies to make their L2 learning more effective. Many studies also showed that apart from teaching methodologies, learner strategies are another crucial factor that affected foreign language acquisition. They can help learners become more autonomous and made the learning process more effective (He, 2010).

Gardner (1983, 1995) claims that all human beings had multiple intelligences (MI), which are common among all the people, but with different portions. The MI-based instructions can help learners to acquire words faster and improve academic achievement. The basic theory of multiple intelligences is that there are a number of different types of intelligences. Traditionally, schools used logical and verbal intelligences to teach language- English in this case. However, it is also possible to teach English through the use of other types of intelligences, which the bodily intelligence is one of them. The different intelligences are of neutral value; none of them is considered superior to the others. In their basic form, they are present to some extent in everyone, although a person is generally more talented in some than others.

When you think about communication, you probably think of words. When we converse with someone, we exchange about 200 words per minute. But just because we are speaking does not mean that is the only communication that is going on. About half of our communication is non-verbal and occurs without words. Gestures, postures, facial expressions, eye contact and the way we view and use our personal space convey just as much about what we are thinking as the words we speak.

Sometimes our hearing memory worked better than our visual memory. It is true that a number of words in any language are onomatopoeic (echoing natural sounds). From the birth we learnt most of the words by sounds around us. Sounds are associated with other experience and tied to meaning. Sound like, language, is natural to humankind and as such both phenomena are universal. Sounds accompanied our everyday activities, made learning easier and also made effort lighter, and was used as an excellent pedagogical tool in language teaching. The learning to Listen Sounds is sometimes called Sound-Object Associations: a sound is associated with an object. Sounds and music are defined as powerful aids to language learning, memory and recall. However, learning foreign languages is not easy, as many variables need to be considered (Chion, 2009).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Language acquisition has been a major topic of research in linguistics for several decades. In the classroom L2 acquisition, the teacher teaches students with the same teaching method. However, some students can acquire the language successfully while others fail. Why does this happen? It may have something to do with some learning strategies. The same learning strategies may be useful for some students but useless for others. Wenden and Rubin state that learners bring a varied repertoire of learning skills in the process of language learning (Wenden & Rubin, 1987: xvii). It means that the learners should master some learning strategies to make their L2 learning more effective. He (2010) suggests that many studies also show that apart from teaching methodologies, learner strategies are another crucial factor that can affect foreign language acquisition. They can help learners become more autonomous and make the learning process more effective.

Two major kinds of learning strategies have been discussed recently: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive strategies. The cognitive learning strategies refer to the steps or operations used in language learning or problem-solving that requires direct analysis, translation, or synthesis of learning materials, while metacognitive learning strategies refer to the knowledge of cognitive process and regulation of cognition or executive control or self-management through such process as planning, monitoring and evaluating (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 23). The second type of strategy is called "communication strategies". This stresses the effect of practice and focuses on the process of taking part in a conversation (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 27). The third type of strategy is "social strategies". Rubin defined it as the activities that afford learners the opportunities to be exposed to the target language. They are different from the communication strategies. Social strategies do not provide opportunities to practice the knowledge learnt (Wenden & Rubin, 1987, p. 27).

To start with, we are clarifying what we mean when we use the term "vocabulary". According to the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (Owen, 1989), "the vocabulary of a language is the total number of words in it" and "someone's vocabulary is the total number of words in a language that he or she knows" (p.1629).

When learning the meaning of a word, most learners may find it quite difficult. Aitchison states that there are two main arguments about word meaning, the fixed meaning assumption claims that for every word there exists a basic meaning, and when learners acquire the basic meaning of a word, the core of the word is acquired. Unlike the fixed meaning viewpoint, the fuzzy meaning viewpoint argues that word cannot have a fixed meaning (Aitchison, 2003, pp. 41-52). A word has a fuzzy meaning, which means that a word may have different meanings in different contexts, e.g. *skinny*, in a dictionary it means "very thin" when describing a beauty's slim body, however, it also means "so thin as to be unhealthy or unattractive" when describing a starving old man (Schmitt, 2000, p. 31).

Words do not have fixed absolute values. Word meaning changes through history. During its changing process, some words drop away, some change into new meanings, and some survive

and develop multiple meanings. These words become polysemous (Aitchison, 2003, pp. 151-154).

Bodily Intelligence

This intelligence refers to the ability to use the body to express oneself, to handle physical objects dexterously. According to the ancient Roman saying, *mens sana in corpore sano*; working on this intelligence not only affects health and fitness but also is important for cultivating the powers of the mind. In many classrooms, students sit in rows for hours and are asked to pay attention to verbal input. The human need for movement is totally overlooked and therefore, its potential value for creating higher energy levels and maintaining attention is greatly reduced (Morgan & Fonseca, 2004).

Neurophysiologist Hannaford has studied the relationship between learning and the body, and she points to the benefits of taking the physical side of learners into account and incorporating movement in the classroom, including bringing a greater supply of oxygen to the brain and increasing the energy level of students. Hannaford (1995) summarizes one of the main reasons why movement and the body are important for learning:

Intelligence, which is too often considered to be merely a matter of analytical ability- measured and valued in I.Q. points-, depends on more of the brain and the body than we generally realize. Physical movement, from earliest infancy and throughout our lives, plays an important role in the creation of nerve cell networks which are actually the essence of learning (p. 96). The use of role-plays, drama, games, surveys, project work, shadow puppets, and many activities related to group dynamics directly address the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence in the language classroom.

Non-verbal aspects of communication are also very relevant in language teaching. For example, gestures are movements of the body used to communicate an idea, intention or feeling. Speech-independent gestures (emblems) or autonomous gestures are nonverbal acts that can replace speech or help to organize the flow and rhythm of interaction and to maintain attention by adding emphasis (Knapp & Hall, 1992).

Body Language

Knowing how and what to say to whom is a cornerstone of communicative competence. Our aspiration as teachers of foreign or second languages is to challenge our learners to go beyond the grammaticality of being able to put the subject, verb, and object in the correct syntactic order, and achieve what Canale and Swain (1980) called discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic competencies. These communicative abilities, however, demand that learners go beyond the linguistic context and heed the nonverbal cues of their interlocutors (Gregersen, 2007). Gregersen says that communicative competence is the ability to communicate successfully in a wide variety of circumstances. With the emphasis of language instruction moving from grammatical accuracy and phonological correctness to making oneself understood, we need to take a closer look at all of the resources at our disposal that enhance mutual intelligibility. Kinesics, or the way gesture, facial expression and gaze behavior is used to communicate messages, is one of those undercapitalized means. Gregersen research suggests that nonverbal

behavior plays an important role in the overall communicative process, yet little attention has been given to practical teaching techniques that will help teachers incorporate this essential element into their language classrooms.

Simply stated, nonverbal communication includes "all communication other than language" (Andersen, 1999, p. 2). Inherent in this definition is that language is solely a human endeavor and that arbitrary symbols are used to convey meaning. DeVito and Hecht (1990, p. 4) describe nonverbal communication as "all of the messages other than words that people exchange."

A research has been done by Gregersen (2007) about the role of nonverbal communication in second language communicative competence. This study considered the interplay of body language, particularly gestures, facial expression and gaze behavior; and also discussing specific activities that bring the visual and auditory channels together through drama, video, role play and interviews. However, in this case the gestures and drama are elaborating.

Studies on Music and Sound Learning

Music is used in many divers' ways in language teaching. Teachers of English as a second language (ESL) from around the globe enthusiastically report about their successful use of music and associated song lyrics with ESL students. Huy Le (2007), a Vietnamese ESL teacher, observed that music is highly valued by both students of English and teachers in the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Other reports by teachers from the United States (Baez, 1993), Taiwan (Katchen, 1988), Canada (Magahay-Johnson, 1984), Japan (Moriya, 1988), Mexico (Domoney & Harris, 1993) supported the importance and usefulness of music and music activities in the teaching of ESL learners. Indeed, ESL teachers recognize that music animates their teaching and enlivens their classroom.

Shabani and Torken (2014) conducted a study to examine the relationship between musical intelligence and foreign language learning. To this means 140 Persian native speakers (100 females, 40 males) ages 15 to 18 participated in this study. They were students in Kish Mehr institution at intermediate level of English language proficiency. To conduct this study, two instruments were employed: English language proficiency test and a musical intelligence questionnaire (Howards Gardner Multiple Intelligence Questionnaires, 1983). To find the relationship between musical intelligence and foreign language proficiency a Pearson correlation was used. Briefly, the statistical results illustrated that there is positive strong correlation between musical intelligence and language proficiency. In other words, high level of musical intelligence correlated with high level of language proficiency.

Li and Brand (2009) did a research for the purpose of examining the relative effectiveness of use of songs on vocabulary acquisition, language usage, and meaning for adult university-level students in the People's Republic of China. Results of the study showed that for these Chinese students, varying the degree of use of songs produces different English language achievement scores. Specifically, the subjects who were exposed to the most music obtained higher posttest scores immediately following treatment as well as on the delayed posttest three weeks following treatment. Curiously through, the results for the study showed that ESL instruction containing no

music is apparently more effective than instruction containing a mix of music (half music and half no-music).

Also, Zybert and Stepien (2009) research showed that musical aptitude is a determinant and a predictor of success in foreign language learning. It also indicated that musical training had a positive effect on FL learning. Medina (1990) showed that primary students improved their rate of vocabulary recall significantly when they were exposed to stories accompanied by musical and visual stimuli.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The present study aimed at answering the following research question:

Does bodily intelligence and sound learning have any effect on Iranian EFL learner's vocabulary retention?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To select the homogeneous participants, the researcher administered the unlimited placement test, prepared by Cambridge University Press (2010) to seventy five students who enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran. Following that, sixty students who scored one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. The selected participants were female students and their ages were ranging from 11 to 13 years old. Then they were randomly divided into two experimental (n=30) and control (n=30) groups. Participants enrolled in vocabulary achievement sessions during the summer term, 2014, a period of 15 sessions, three times a week.

Instrumentation

Initially, the participants took a homogeneity test (Cambridge University Press, 2010) to determine their level of linguistic knowledge. The test contained fifty multiple-choice items of vocabularies. Based on Cronbach Alpha method the reliability of the test was ($\alpha = .821$).

The second instrument was a researcher-made matching and multiple-choice pre- test of vocabulary; including 30 items (i.e., 10 definitions, 10 pictorials, and 10 aural items) used as a pre- test by the researcher in the first session of the research period. Reliability index of the pre- test was calculated based on Cronbach Alpha as ($\alpha = .721$). Another instrument was a vocabulary post- test which immediately after the treatment (at tenth session) administered. Its contents were modified in format but similar to the pre- test (i.e. 30 vocabulary items; including 10 definitions, 10 pictorials, and 10 aural items). The test reliability index was met based on Cronbach Alpha as ($\alpha = .811$).

Materials

Forty vocabularies were extracted from Institute books "Tiny Talk1A and 2B" written by Susan Rivers (1997); "Pockets 3" written by Mario Herrera and Barbara Hojel (2005) ; "Hip Hip

Hooray (Starter)" written by Beat Eisele, Rebeca York Hanlon, and Barbara Hojel (2001); and "First Friends 1 and 3" written by Susan Lannuzzi (2009). The experimental students were exposed to CD record sounds and body language activities.

Procedure

For the reliability of the test instruments a pilot test conducted on eight students at the same level (beginners) for homogeneity, pre and post- tests. A homogeneity test (prepared by Cambridge University Press, 2010) conducted to the seventy five female students enrolled in Sepahan English Language Institute in Ahvaz, Iran, one week prior to the study. Sixty students whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean (beginner level) were selected as the participants of the study. Sixty participants were divided randomly into two groups of thirty, experimental group and control group. The treatment performed during the summer term, 2014 in a period of fifteen sessions, three times a week.

In the first session a self-designed matching and multiple-choice test of vocabulary were administered as a pretest by the researcher for both experimental and control groups. The pretest was included thirty questions; ten definition questions, ten pictorial questions, and ten auras questions. The first question of each section was answered as an example. The part of auras questions were played twice for the examinees. They had forty five minutes to answer the questions.

During the treatment students were learned forty new vocabularies through eight sessions (five vocabularies each session), as an extra activity beside their book. Each session, about fifteen minutes the teacher had a review on the previous lessons, and then she taught their book through thirty minutes, after that the five new vocabularies were taught to and practiced by the participants in thirty minutes. Through the experimental group the forty new vocabularies were taught via different kinds of strategies such as: body language, physical demonstration, using mime and gesture, role play, imitation, and listening to CD record sounds. For example through the bodily intelligence learning the meaning of a word like "exercise" was demonstrated by stretching hands up, left and right. Another example for learning by means of sound is that participants listened to the sound of raining and then teacher said the vocabulary "Raining". In experimental group instruments were used and repeated several times as to clarify the vocabularies meaning. When the teacher finished her teach, she wrote the new vocabularies on the board and asked of the students to write them down on their note books, and follow that the teacher asked them to imitate her role, mime, and role play in small groups.

Through the control group the teacher used of the traditional method to taught the forty new vocabularies. She wrote the vocabularies on the board, and was used of flash cards and her natural sound for demonstrating their meanings. Then she wrote the vocabularies meanings (in Persian) and reading them aloud several times, students repeated after their teacher. Follow that students read the vocabularies aloud one by one, and then the teacher asked of them to write the vocabularies and their meanings down on their notebooks.

Teacher gave homework to the both experimental and control groups. They were asked to write about half of the page for each new word; by this exception that the students of control groups wrote vocabularies within their meanings in Persian.

Immediately after teaching the forty vocabularies, at ninth session students took a post- test which was identical to the pre- test. Both experimental and control groups pre and post- tests were held in the same time, so that they were unable to collaborate with one another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pre- test was given to both groups of learners and results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	30	8.1333	3.37060	.61538
Control	30	8.7667	2.72515	.49754

The Table 1 shows that the mean of pre-test among the experimental group ($M=8.13$) is nearly the same as the mean of pre-test among control group which is 8.76. There is no much difference between these two tests. In order to find out whether the similarity among the performances of the two groups in pre-test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t- test was applied. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.602	.211	-.800	58	.427	-.63	.79	-2.21	.95
Equal variances not assumed			-.800	55.5	.427	-.63	.79	-2.21	.95

Table 2 shows that the observed t ($O_t=.800$) with $df= 58$ is less than the Critical t ($C_t=2.000$). Thus, the difference between the groups is not significant. This showed that the groups were homogenous before the research period at the pre-test. To analyze the post- test, the researcher presented descriptive statistics in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	30	19.1667	5.76005	1.05164
Control	30	15.6000	6.52105	1.19058

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the experimental and control groups' post- test shows that the mean of experimental post- test ($M=19.16$) is higher than the mean of control one which is 15.60. Therefore, there is a difference between these tests. As the data analysis in this Table indicates that there are significant difference between bodily intelligence and sound treatment (experimental group) and traditional treatment (control group), it reveals that experimental group and control group both performed better in post- test, but bodily intelligence and sound in experimental group outperformed. However, to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups in post- test was statistically significant, Independent Samples t- test was applied. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test(Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.387	.536	2.245	58	.029	3.56	1.58	.38	6.74
Equal variances not assumed			2.245	57.12	.029	3.56	1.58	.38	6.74

As Table 4 indicates that the observed t ($O_t=2.245$) with $df= 58$ is greater than the Critical t ($C_t=2.000$). Thus, the difference between the two groups is significant.

Discussion

The descriptive statistics and means of experimental and control groups showed that there is no difference between these groups and they are homogeneous at the pre- test stage. The mean of experimental post test ($M= 19.16$) was higher than the control one ($M= 15.60$). So, there is a difference between experimental and control group. Within a comparison by the pretests means (experimental group ($M= 8.13$); control group ($M= 8.76$)). Table 1 reveals that the experimental and control groups both performed better in post- test, however, the bodily intelligence and sound

group outperformed. As far as the mean could not indicate whether the difference among the two groups is significant, the Independent Sample t- test was applied results.

The observed t ($O_t=2.245$) with $df= 58$ is greater than the Critical t ($C_t=2.000$); therefore, the difference between the two groups is significant. The mean of pre- test versus post- test of the experimental group was -11.03 and the mean of pre- test versus post- test of the control group was -6.83, which indicates that there is a difference between these groups. The observed t of the bodily and sound group (-14.540) is significantly higher than the control one, which is -6.127. Therefore, students in bodily intelligence and sound group performed better than the students in the control group. So the results rejected the null hypothesis, which claim that bodily intelligence and sound learning do not have any effect on the Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

The improvement of bodily intelligence and sound can be due to that the students are less bored in experimental class since they act constantly in class and collaborate with each other. Using of role-plays and mime makings them eager and it also observed that students fearless volunteer for repeating actions after teacher. Working in small groups was fun and also beneficial for those students who were ashamed to do actions individually. When students are learning a word while acting, it stuck on their heads. In addition, students were eager for listening to record sounds and learning the related vocabularies, while trying to guess the words. The students listened to the CDs and recorded sounds to use later. This reinforced their vocabulary knowledge.

Learning foreign language vocabularies seems to be difficult especially for beginner students who want to start the process of learning with a wide range of vocabularies. Therefore, teachers are always looking for new and the most effective methods to teach the materials to the students. Most teachers still use the traditional methods; however, the main purpose of this study was to find new methods to ease the process of teaching and learning English vocabularies to beginner students. The results rejected the null hypothesis. Beginner students were found to perform significantly through the bodily intelligence and sound group; however, both experimental and control groups had promotion. These findings are in line with the study of Kuo, Hsu, Fang and Chen (2013) who claimed a highly positive level of acceptance toward the proposed learning approach (embodiment-based TPR approach). The results of this part seem to endorse Zybert and Stepien (2009) who emphasized that musical aptitude is a determinant and a predictor of success in foreign language learning. It also indicated that musical training has a positive effect on FL learning.

CONCLUSION

This study began with the assumption that bodily intelligence and sound method could enhance the beginner language learners' vocabulary retention. The instruction lasted for five weeks. During this time, the teacher (researcher) employed bodily intelligence and sound methods and taught the thirty female subjects in the experimental group. The participants ($N=30$) in the control group, on the other hand, did not receive any instruction on the use of these strategies. Having administered the pre, post- tests and analyzing the data through specific statistical analysis of descriptive statistics and Independent Samples, the results indicated that the instruction of using

the bodily intelligence and sound had positive effect on the beginner EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

Results of this study conformed to the studies (e.g., Hsu and Lin, 2012) conducted a study in field of TPR. The immediate and maintaining effects of TPR on listening comprehension for learning English vocabulary were found. Huy Le (2007), a Vietnamese ESL teacher, also observed that music is highly valued by both students of English and (ESL) teachers in the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Other reports by teachers from the United States (Baez, 1993), Taiwan (Katchen, 1988), Canada (Magahay-Johnson, 1984), Japan (Moriya, 1988), and Mexico (Domoney & Harris, 1993) support the importance and usefulness of music and music activities in the teaching of vocabularies to L2 learners.

The application of the body movements and sound resulted in successful vocabulary learning among beginner female EFL language learners. It is suggested that EFL learners intending to promote their vocabulary learning in body language and sound classes, first by listening carefully to the teachers instructions and then by being active in class, taking part in role- plays, and listening carefully to sound record parts (Gorjian, Mombeini & Pazakh, 2013). The implications of the present study may bring out for language teachers for teaching vocabulary to beginners. Language researchers may use bodily intelligence and sound for teaching vocabulary retention and recall.

REFERENCES

- Aitchison, J. (2003). *Words in the mind*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Andersen, P.A. (1999). *Nonverbal communication: Forms and functions*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
- Baez, R. (1993). *Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros choral performance group (Los Cumbancheros): Final evaluation report, 1992- 93*. Brooklyn, NY: Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment; Board of Education of the City of New York. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED371610).
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics* 1(1), 1-47.
- Chion, M. (2009). *Guide to sound*. Retrieved November 23, 2013, from: http://monoskop.org/images/0/01/Chion_Michel_Guide_To_Sound_Objects_Pierre_Schaeffer_and_Musical_Research.pdf
- Domoney, L., & Harris, S. (1993). Justified and ancient: Pop music in EFL classrooms. *ELT Journal*, 47(3), 234-241.
- Eisele, B., Hanlon, R. Y. & Barbara Hojel, B. (2001). *Hip hiphorray (starter)*. US: Pearson Education.
- French Allen, V. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1995). Reflections on multiple intelligences: Myths and messages. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77, 200-209.

- Gorjian, B., Mombeini, S., & Pazakh, A. (2013). The role of encoding and rehearsal strategies in developing EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention. *IJLLALW*, 4(4), 283-302. Retrieved April 13, 2014, from: <http://www.ijllalw.org/finalversion4422.pdf>.
- Gregersen, T.S. (2007). Language learning beyond words: Incorporating body language into classroom activities. *Journal of Reflections on English Language Teaching*, 6, 51-64.
- Hannaford, C. (1995). *Smart moves: Why learning is not all in your head*. Arlington, VA: Great Ocean Publishers.
- He, Y. (2010). *A study of L2 vocabulary learning strategies*. Retrieved April 14, 2014, from: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:326994/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Herrera, M.H., & Hojel, B. (2005). *Pockets 3*. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.
- Hecht, M.L., & DeVito, J.A. (1990). *Perspectives on nonverbal communication: The how, what and why of nonverbal communication*. In J.A. DeVito & M.L. Hecht (Eds.) *The nonverbal communication reader*, 3-17. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
- Herrera, M., & Hojel, B. (2005). *Pockets 1 and 3*. London: Longman.
- Huy Le, M. (2007). *The role of music in second language learning: A Vietnamese perspective*. Retrieved September 30, 2008, from: <http://www.englisclass.canalblog.com>
- Iannuzzi, S. (2009). *First friends 1 and 3: Activity book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Katchen, J. E. (1988). *Mastering English pronunciation through literature*. Kobe, Japan: 14th Annual International Conference of the Japan Association of Language Teachers. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 304 020).
- Knapp, M.L., & Hall, J.A. (1992) (3rd.edition). *Nonverbal communication in human interaction*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Lannuzzi, S. (2011). *First friends 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lannuzzi, S. (2011). *First friends 3*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Li, X., & Brand, M. (2009). Effectiveness of music on vocabulary acquisition, language usage, and meaning for mainland Chinese EFL learners. *Contributions to Music Education*, 36(1), 73-84. Retrieved April 14, 2014, from: <http://krpb.pbworks.com/f/music-esl.pdf>.
- Magahay-Johnson, W. (1984). Music hath charms: Music and student-centered stories in the ESL classroom. *TESL Canada Journal*, 1(1), 81-82.
- Meara, P. (1982). Vocabulary acquisition: a neglected aspect of language learning. *Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 13(4), 22-46.
- Medina, S. L. (1990). *The effects of music upon second language vocabulary acquisition*. Paper presented in TESOL, San Francisco, California.
- Moras, S. (2001). *Teaching vocabulary to advanced students: A lexical approach*. *Karen's linguistic issues*. Retrieved May 31, 2014, from: http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/publications/cl2007/paper/170_paper.pdf
- Morgan, J.A., & Fonseca, M.C. (2004). Multiple intelligence theory and foreign language learning: A brain-based perspective. *An International Journal of English Studies*, 4(1), 119-136. Retrieved July 8, 2014, from: http://rabida.uhu.es/dspace/bitstream/handle/10272/5320/Multiple_intelligence_theory_and_foreign.pdf?sequence=2.
- Moriya, Y. (1988). *English speech rhythm and its teaching to non-native speakers*. Chicago, IL: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 303 033).

- Owen, C. (1989). *Collins cobuild English language dictionary*. New York: Collins Cobuild.
- Rivers, S. (1997). *Tiny talk*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schoepp, K. (2001). *Reasons for using songs in the ESL/EFL classroom*. Retrieved January 6, 2008, from: [Http://iteslj.org/Articles/Schoepp-Songs.html](http://iteslj.org/Articles/Schoepp-Songs.html).
- Schumann, J. (1997). *The neurobiology of affect in language*. Boston: Blackwell.
- Shabani, M.B., & Torken, M. (2014). The relationship between musical intelligence and foreign language learning: The case of Iranian learners of English. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature* 3(3). Retrieved August 27, 2014, from: http://www.academia.edu/6747353/The_Relationship_Between_Musical_Intelligence_And_Foreign_Language_Learning_The_Case_of_Iranian_Learners_of_English
- Wenden, A., & Rubin. J. (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Prentice Hall International: Unite Kingdom.
- Zybert, J., & Stepien, S. (2009). *Musical intelligence and foreign language learning*. Retrieved November 20, 2014, from: www.ijalel.org/pdf/441.pdf.

THE EFFECT OF LEXICAL DENSITY AWARENESS (LDA) ON DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS: HIGH ACHIEVERS VERSUS LOW ACHIEVERS

Zeinab Noroozi Larki

*Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of lexical density awareness (LDA) on reading comprehension skills among Iranian high school students. To do the experimental design, four groups of learners were selected from one high school in Khuzestan Province, Iran. Two homogeneous groups as high achievers as experimental and control groups and two as low achievers of experimental and control groups were chosen. Therefore, third grade of high school students were considered as high achiever groups and first grade ones selected as low achievers because the amount of English knowledge of lexical and grammatical among third grade students are naturally more than first grades. At first 4 pre-tests according to learners' English text books lexical from the reading parts of their text books were administered to high achiever groups and low achievers. The LDA just given to the experimental groups but two control groups just were taught reading without LDA. At the end of each treatment, the learners were tested. In order to test this hypothesis, and at the end of treatment period post tests were administered to check reading comprehension of four groups of high and low achievers. The results showed that there were significant difference between these two experimental groups of high and low achievers than their control groups test scores. The mean score experimental groups were higher than the control groups. The result showed that there were significant differences between experimental groups of both high and low achievers than their own control groups. Implications of this study could be used for effective teaching of reading comprehension.

KEYWORDS: Lexical density awareness (LDA), Reading comprehension, High achievers, Low achievers

INTRODUCTION

In EFL contexts such as Iran, which English used as a foreign language not a second language, language learning is limited to some textbooks at high schools, some courses at university and some English institutes. Iranian EFL learners receive restricted amount of input concerning listening and speaking skills so, they have tendency toward reading. For many years reading

comprehension has drawn the attention of second or foreign language practitioners and researchers and it has been studied from different perspectives. Reading comprehension is an inseparable part of teaching and the most important and irreplaceable skill in learning a foreign language (Mirhassani & Farhady, 2012).

Reading is a valuable input for language learning (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). Reading is gradually being recognized as one of the main sources of language input, particularly for students in learning environment in which fluent speakers of English are generally not available to provide other kinds of language input. Furthermore, reading reinforces the learners' other language skills. Krashen (1985) confirms that those who read more have larger vocabularies, do better in grammar tests, write better, and spell better (Kim & Krashen, 1997). Reading is regarded as a skill of great importance to the learners because (a) it provides them with access to the great quantity of further experience of the language, and (b) it gives them a window onto the normal mean of continuing his personal education (Mirhassani & Toosi, 1996).

Reading according to Rivers (1981), is not only as a source of information and pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending ones' knowledge of the language. In. Rivers (1981) believes that reading texts provide 3 levels of meaning: lexical meaning, grammatical meaning and social-cultural meaning. Reading comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from a text, it becomes more complicated when reader cannot grasp meaning from that piece of text. One reason refers to lexical in the text that hinder comprehension when learners are not mastered on lexical items in the text. Lexical knowledge has been defined as a crucial underlying construct for EFL reading comprehension. For grasping and understanding meaning of a text readers need to connect their background knowledge of lexical words to the new knowledge to comprehend the new one. Vocabulary knowledge is very crucial in reading comprehension and plays the role of background knowledge (Coady, 1979). Thus, deficiency of vocabulary competence would cause reading comprehension difficulties. If learners' knowledge of vocabulary is not enough, it is probable that their reading comprehension will be negatively influenced by lack of lexical knowledge, so we need to consider the effect of lexical awareness on learners' reading comprehension and how students can improve their reading comprehension by receiving LDA and background knowledge of lexical items.

Reading seems to be mainly used by English as foreign language (EFL) learners than the other skills thus, knowing vocabulary is one important feature of comprehending reading. According to Celce-Murcia (2001) learning a second or foreign language involves the acquisition of thousands of words. Traditionally, nouns, verbs, and adverbs are four classes belonging to lexical items since they have autonomous meaning even in isolation and new members can be added to these categories (Yule, 1996). Lexical words are known as content or information words that carry information in a text. Halliday (1975) defines lexical density as "a measure of the density of information in any passage of text, according to how tightly the lexical items have been packed into the grammatical structure. It can be measured, in English, as the number of lexical words per clauses". One significant way to improve reading comprehension seems to be the use of lexical density awareness in teaching this skill and discovering its effect on reading comprehension among EFL learners. The present study addresses the use of lexical density awareness (LDA) on

developing reading comprehension in terms of high versus low achievers among high school EFL learners in Iran. This study also tries to compare reading comprehension skill of two groups of students who are different in terms of proficiency level of lexical density consciousness and discover their differences in achieving meaning of English texts.

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills of a language specifically for EFL students. Richards and Renandya (2002) believe that in many second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a special focus. There are a number of reasons for this. First, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purposes. In fact, in most EFL situations, the ability to read in a foreign language those students ever want to acquire information. Second, written texts serve pedagogical purposes. Extensive exposure to linguistically comprehensible written texts can enhance the process of language acquisition. In Iran, reading comprehension is believed to be one of the most important skills for educated people in general and for university and high school students in particular (Farhady & Mirhassani, 2001). A great deal of attempt has been made to help students improve their reading ability. Nearly half of each lesson in high school English text books is devoted to reading comprehension. Students start their lesson with a list of words in different contexts, then immediately go to a passage followed by a number of explanatory questions. The researcher believes that in spite of the attempts which have been made by the text book writers to encourage the students to read passages and answer the questions many students are not willing to read the passages. The lack of background knowledge and lexical knowledge would be one important reason of students' poor performance. One of the concerns of the researcher (as an English teacher in high school) has been to search more effective ways of teaching reading comprehension at high school level. It seems to the researcher that shifting from traditional ways of teaching reading comprehension toward more communicative ones would help the learners to comprehend better.

In many EFL classes, teachers have made lots of attempt to help students learn vocabularies in order to comprehend EFL texts (Akbari & Mirhassani, 2000). Many students always ask their teachers to give them new techniques for learning lexical words. The problem seems to be whether EFL learners can improve their reading comprehension in a text by having more LDA in a text or not. Many researchers have been done on reading comprehension in foreign language but less is done on the role of lexical density on reading comprehension of lexical density on reading comprehension. So, shedding more light on the effectiveness of LDA on developing reading comprehension of EFL learners seems to be necessary.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading comprehension is one of the main objectives of teaching English in EFL contexts and it is the most tested construct in language teaching. Reading can be defined as the translation of graphic symbols into sounds and words coupled with the ability to gain meaning from individual words and word sequences. Goodman (1973) described reading as "interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and reader decodes language to

thought" (p. 160). He also described the factors involved in the mind of the reader for decoding the language: In written language a message has been encoded by the writer in graphic symbols spatially distributed on the page. The reader does not merely pass his eyes over written language and receives and records a stream of visual perceptual images. Goodman (1973) believes the reader "must actively bring to bear his knowledge of language, his past experience, his conceptual attainment on the processing of language information encoded in the form of graphic symbols in order to decode the written language, through the reader attempts to reconstruct a message from the written" (p. 261). In fact, reading is a receptive skill through which the reader is receiving a message from the writer for decoding the messages that activate the reader's background knowledge. Most recent researchers in reading describe the reading process in a way that it implies active reader intent upon using background knowledge and skills to recreate the writer's intended meaning. Chastian (1988) asserted that "reading is a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. Reading requires that the reader focus attention on the reading materials and integrate previously required knowledge and skills to comprehend what someone else has written" (p. 216). Widdowson (1975) described reading as a "discourse between interlocutors and believes:

Reading is regarded not as reaction to a text but as interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text. Reading is an act of participation in a discourse between interlocutors. It seems to follow from this that reading efficiently cannot be measured against the amount of information contained in a text. This is incalculable since it depends on how much he wishes to extract from it. Rather, reading efficiently is a matter of how effective a discourse the reader can create from the text either in terms of rapport with the writer or in terms of his purpose in engaging in the discourse in first place. (p. 174)

Therefore, reading in a complex communication process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. It can be claimed that reading as one of main skills in language never lost its importance and dominance in language learning. Reading is a basic and complementary skill in language. Second language students need to learn to read for communication and to read greater and greater quantities of authentic materials. Students can probably learn to read more easily than they can acquire any other skill and they can use reading materials as a primary source of comprehension input as they learn the language (Chastain, 1988).

Rivers (1981) points out "in many countries foreign languages are learned by numbers of students who will never have the opportunity of conversing with native speakers, but who will have access to the literature and periodicals, or scientific and technical journals, written in the language they are learning. Many will need these publications to assist them further studies or their work; others will wish to enjoy reading in another language in their leisure time to keep them in touch with the wider world" (p. 260). Celce-Murcia (2001) points out that:

Reading is more important than speaking. She says that: students are not just concerned with speaking; they want to be able to read and write English as well as

speaking it. Even in audio-lingual programs which stress listening and speaking, the student needs to know how to read, for many university foreign students reading skills are perhaps even more important for academic success than speaking ability. Reading is a skill that everyone needs whether she is a student in elementary, secondary, university or adult school. Yet it is a skill that gets slighted in most ESL teacher-training programs (pp.129-130).

Goodman (1973) looks on reading as information processing: The reader, a user of language, interacts with the graphic input as he seeks to reconstruct a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experience and learning on the task, drawing on his experiences and concepts he has attained as well as the language competence he has achieved (p. 162). According to Fries (1963), the student is "developing a considerable range of habitual response to a specific set of patterns of graphic shapes" (p. 121). He also argues that there are three levels of meaning: "lexical meaning (the semantic content of the words and expressions), structural or grammatical meaning (derived from interrelationships among words), and social-cultural meaning (the evaluation that people of our culture attach to the words and groups of words we are reading" (pp. 104-12).

Procedures used for measuring readability mostly, emphasize the role of word length (number of syllables of a word) and sentence length (number of words in a sentence) as determining factors in text difficulty formulas (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). It is, however, believed by some authorities (e.g., that there are so many other factors in determining text difficulty. They criticized these formulas for considering only the average length of words and sentences, ignoring other factors, such as syntactic complexity, textual cohesion, propositional density, and background knowledge of the students. Also they have criticized word and sentence length as determining factor of the difficulty of the texts and mentioned that there are so many texts with so many short sentences and one syllable words that are very difficult to comprehend (Carrell, 1991).

RESEARCH QUESTION

The study attempts to examine the effectiveness of LDA on reading comprehension of EFL learners. Therefore, the following research question is presented.

Is there any significant difference between the students with high and low proficiency levels exposed to LDA on developing their reading comprehension?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study was done at one high school in Khuzestan province. A number of 80 high school students with forty first grade students and forty third grade students took part in this investigation. They were selected among 160 Iranian EFL students at that high school. With respect to the year of study half participants were in first grade and half ones in third grade of high school. The reason why these students were chosen as participants was that they were in two different levels so, according to their grades third grade students naturally have more English

knowledge and this distinction seems reasonable, although some students have self-study or attend English institutes but the selected school was in down town where most students were not rich to access to private teachers or English institutes. Low achievers randomly divided in two groups of experimental and control groups and high achievers randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control groups. Each group included 20 participants. They were just females with the age range between 15 and 16 for low achievers and from 17 to 18 for high achievers.

Instrumentation

Six different instruments were implemented in this research. The first instrument was a reading comprehension which was designed based on their high school textbooks as pre-test. A series of tests were given in the classroom to the experimental and control groups weekly. The last test was a post-test and was administered at the end of the treatment period.

Materials

The participants in the control and experimental groups were taught English high school Text books. Each lesson was taught every other week. The experimental participants were given awareness on lexical density, they were taught vocabularies of each passage by giving definition, pictures, examples and so on but for control groups there is no LDA before teaching reading comprehension and they were taught reading in usual way.

Procedure

A group of 80 students in one of high schools in the Khuzestan province was selected. The first grade students were considered as low achievers due to their less lexical and back ground knowledge of English language according to what they had acquired in their previous English text books and two third grade were chosen a high achievers of English in comparison with first grade due to more lexical and grammatical materials that they had covered in first and second grades of high school text books. This distinction is normal in high school because as students cover one book the next high school book has new words and new materials that are more difficult than previous books although we cannot ignore students who have self- study and attends English institutes to increase their English lexical knowledge in order not to have this interference a high school in the middle of city was selected whose students were average and most them just learned English at school and their knowledge was based on their text books.

As the school, the researcher did her experiment in a natural class of high school as school teacher, so first she administered a lexical pretest of half of English book one for low achievers and another test of half of English book three to high achievers to check their lexical background knowledge. All the students in each group participated in the exam. The papers were collected and scored. Mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. The mean of 9.8 for pretest scores of experimental low group and the mean 10.7 for control low group was achieved and the mean of 10.75 for the pretest scores of experimental high achiever group and the mean of 10.40 for control high group were proved.

After dividing the participants into four groups and determining the pretest scores, the students in the control group were given four passages followed by a set of explanatory, true/false, and

multiple-choice questions. After teaching and practicing each reading passage a treatment test was administered to them, for control groups there was no LDA. It took the researcher four sessions of forty-five minutes to do the activities. On the other hand the students in the experimental groups of both high and low achievers received the same four passages, the teacher introduced them the topic of their English text books and then gave them some background knowledge on vocabulary and tried to increase their lexical knowledge related that specific text and the teacher focused on working on lexical items and reviewed previously acquired vocabularies and the passage was read and comprehended by students and teachers. This kind of activity seemed more motivating for students and they had more willing to learn and review most of the lexical items in their textbook reading passage. The students were not allowed to use their English-Persian dictionaries for translation because they were supposed to learn and practice lexical in the classroom, after giving LDA by teacher they worked on the passage and their comprehension problems were solved by teacher or advanced students, so students had interaction with each other in experimental groups and advanced students helped others in some cases. Then a treatment test based on the reading comprehension administered to students and after that the papers were selected and corrected by the teacher.

After four sessions of instruction, the students in all groups participated in a post- test exactly the same as the pre-tests. Each test composed of 40 multiple-choice questions. The exam lasted for 40 minutes and all the students were present. The papers were gathered and scored objectively. Again, the means, and standard deviations of all sets of scores were calculated indicating that any change in the means of scores was due to the influence of the type of instruction in each group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pretest

The participants in both experimental and control groups were given a pretest. The test had 40 multiple choice reading comprehension questions based on the materials to be taught to the participants in both groups. The aim was to make sure that the participants were homogeneous. The results of the tests are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test, High and Low Achievers)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Experimental(H)	1.00	20	10.75	3.80	.85
Control (H)	2.00	20	10.40	4.03	.90
Experimental(L)	1.00	20	9.80	2.23	.50
Control (L)	2.00	20	10.70	4.72	1.05

Table 1 shows that the experimental group and control group of each set in this research have almost equal mean value. However, the descriptive table cannot prove this homogeneity between

two groups of each set is significant. Thus Independent Samples t-test was used to show the homogeneity between the experimental and control groups in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test, High vs. Low Achievers)

Groups		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Diffe rence	Std. Error Differe nce	95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Upper
							Lower	
Experimental(H) vs. Control (H)	Equal variances assumed	.282	38	.779	.35	1.24	2.16	2.86
	Equal variances not assumed	.282	37.8	.779	.35	1.24	2.16	2.86
Experimental(L) vs. Control (L)	Equal variances assumed	.770	38	.446	.90	1.16	3.26	1.46
	Equal variances not assumed	.770	27.1	.448	.90	1.16	3.29	1.49

As the above table shows the observed t ($t_o=0.282$) is less than the critical t ($t_c= 2.021$) with $df=38$, the difference between high and low achievers in both group are not significance. In other words, the two groups are homogeneous in each set.

Post-test

After the sessions of treatment the same test (the pre-test) was given to both groups. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics(Post-test, High and Low Achievers)

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental(H) Control (H)	1.00	20	16.4500	3.47131	.77621
	2.00	20	14.2000	3.18880	.71304
Experimental (L) Control (L)	1.00	20	17.9000	2.91818	.65253
	2.00	20	14.3000	3.72898	.83382

Table 3 shows the mean value of the low control group improved 3.60 points after the treatment, it was 10.7 improved to 14.30 in post-test and the mean value of high control group improved 4 points after treatment, it was 10.40 improved to 14.20 As it was mentioned before, the control groups were taught in the usual way of teaching reading comprehension in the high school of

Iran; that is the students weren't given LDA and they just were taught reading in a usual ways as most teachers teach in Iran.

The mean value of the experimental groups improved more than the control groups after treatment. The mean value for low experimental group was 9.8 points at the pretest, but it turned to 17. The mean value for high experimental group improved 5.7 as it was 10.75 improved to 16.45. As this descriptive table cannot show the significant difference between each set of groups, an Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the two means of the high and low groups on the pre-tests and post-tests.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test, High vs. Low Achievers)

		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Groups							Lower	Upper
Experimental(H) vs. Control (H)	Equal variances assumed	2.135	38	.039	2.25	1.050	.11	4.38
	Equal variances not assumed	2.135	37.7	.039	2.25	1.05	.11	4.38
Experimental(L) vs. Control (L)	Equal variances assumed	3.400	38	.002	3.60	1.05	1.48	5.74
	Equal variances not assumed	3.400	35.9	.002	3.60	1.05	1.45	5.74

Table 4 shows the mean value of the experimental groups were higher than the mean value of the control groups on post-test. However, a quantitative superiority of the experimental group mean value over the control group mean value was not regarded as a proof for the rejection of null hypothesis. Therefore, the researcher moved to the next step to calculate the t-test which is probably the most widely used test for the comparison of the two means. Again, the researcher used a t-test for the pretest and post-test of the experimental groups to make sure that the differences in the means was statistically meaningful.

The null hypothesis stated that the two samples were from the same population in each set and the difference between the two sample means represented the population means was insignificant. To see whether the observed t-value was statistically significant or not, the researcher checked the t-distribution table. He had 40 participants in each group. This gave her total of 80 and as a result a df=78. The t- observed for group low was 3.40 and for the high group was 2.135 and they were greater than $t_{c=2.021}$, so the two groups in each set are not homogenous after treatment. In other words the null-hypothesis was rejected. Statistically speaking, as the above table showed, the t-observed exceeded the t-critical. It means that the instruction worked well in the experimental group and the LDA really improved the reading comprehension performance of

Iranian high school students. Thus, it can be said that there existed a statistically meaningful difference between the average performance of two groups of low and high achievers on the post-test which could be attributed to the treatment they received rather than sampling error.

Descriptive statistics of High vs. Low Achievers

In the Table 5, the means of all groups in pre and post-tests were analyzed through Paired Samples t-test to see the differences between pre and post- tests means.

Table 5: Paired Samples t-Test (Pre and Post-tests, High vs. Low Achievers)

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Interval Difference LowerUpper			
Pair 1	EX-Pre-test (High) vs. EX-Post-test (High)	5.70	1.86	.41	6.574.82	13.65	19	.000
Pair 2	EX-Pre-test (Low) vs. EX-Post-test (Low)	8.10	2.80	.62	9.416.78	12.90	19	.000
Pair 3	Con-Pre-test (High) vs. Con-Post-test (High)	4.00	1.62	.36	4.753.24	11.02	19	.000
Pair 4	Con-Pre-test (Low) vs. Con-Post-test (Low)	3.60	2.32	.52	4.682.51	6.92	19	.000

Table 5 compares all groups in terms of the effect of LDA on reading comprehension. Among four groups of students, low achievers who have received LDA performed better on the post-test. As it is shown in the table experimental high group the mean value improved 5.30 after the treatment while control group improved 4.20, also the mean value for experimental low group improved 8 points and control low groups improved 3.60 points in this research. The most progress devoted to experimental low group

Discussion

The main research question in the present study was whether lexical density awareness has any impact on the reading comprehension of Iranian high school students. The sample included the students who studied English in the high school-grades 1 and 3. The answer to the research question was very important because they had experienced that lack of lexical knowledge caused to demotivate students to read their textbook passages. They needed to search for new ways of teaching reading comprehension to improve students' understanding of the passages. It was found that lexical awareness as the probable answer to the question. Lexical awareness seemed more motivating than Persian translation of the passages. One reason might be that students in low levels might have more motivation in learning lexical items and they are more active than high achievers.

Groups who were given LDA improved better in their reading comprehension than learners in the control group who haven't been given LDA. It is proposed that other teachers and researchers to give LDA in teaching English texts in order to help students to have a better comprehension. This idea is in line with the Anderson's (2001) findings of the present research. Sometimes students cannot comprehend the texts and lose their motivation in learning and comprehending because of lack of background knowledge so they prefer to use guide books and memorize Persian translation of the texts, this is a very important problem that English teachers have in high schools of Iran. Thus, one solution to this problem can be giving LDA to enhance students' lexical knowledge to encourage them focus on comprehending the texts not memorizing Persian translation. Furthermore, the learners in the experimental groups participated more actively in the learning process than the ones in the control groups, because they found out that by knowing lexical and enough background knowledge understanding of the high school textbooks is not that kind of difficult job that they always thought. For the Experimental groups, the participants were taught reading but there was great focus on LDA, the teacher taught each lesson every other week during school first term, the teacher focused on reviewing previous lexical items to the students and also new vocabularies were practiced by using pictures, definitions, synonyms and antonyms and so on. Then they read the text to find any unfamiliar vocabulary. Thus, they were provided with the meaning if there was any forgotten or new vocabulary which they did not know their meaning then after comprehending the text a treatment test was administered to them. Comparing the two means in the post-tests clearly show that the treatment in the experimental group worked much. On the other side, for both control groups, there was no focus on LDA in the classroom by the teacher and passages were taught as a usual way, the teacher introduced the topic gave explanation on the topic and the text was read and comprehended by students, She did not remind them the vocabularies in the text then at the end a test based on the lexical of the passage was administered to them.

CONCLUSION

The results shows that LDA has positive effect on reading comprehension among Iranian high school students as the average of scores for students who have received LDA on reading comprehension was more than students who did not receive LDA. The result showed that LDA has a direct relationship with reading comprehension the more vocabulary a person knows the better she/he can comprehend the text. Laufer (1998) confirms this idea and believes that most important part of learning a language is learning its vocabulary because according to his idea lexical errors makes disruption in communication than grammar errors: Is there any significant difference between the students with high and low proficiency levels exposed to LDA in developing their reading comprehension? By comparing the result of experimental groups we can conclude LDA is more effective for low achievers as they their mean average after treatment improve eight points in comparison with high group which improved six points. It seems that low achievers have more motivation to learn lexical items than high achievers in this study (Koda, 1999). The learners in the experimental groups participated more actively in the learning process than the ones in the control groups, because they found out that comprehending textbooks is not that kind of difficult job that they always thought. By knowing lexical and enough background

knowledge understanding of the high school texts becomes easier. It is worth mentioning that this research was done in real situation of school class; however, the small size of the research sample and the limits of class hours could be the limitations of this research.

REFERENCES

- Akbari, R., & Mirhassani, A. (2000). *Study skills*. Tehran: SAMT.
- Anderson, N. (2001). Exploring second language reading: Issues on strategies. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 187-203). New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Carrell, P. L. (1991). Second language learning: Reading ability or language proficiency? *Applied Linguistics*, (1991) 12 (2), 159-179.
- Chastian, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice*. New York: Horcourt Brace Jovaovich.
- Coady, J. (1979). A psycholinguistic model of the ESL reader: Reading in a second language. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Farhady, H., & Mirhassani, A. (2001). *Reading through interaction*. Tehran: Zabankadeh.
- Fries, B. (1963). *Linguistic and reading*. New York, Holt, Reinhart and Winston.
- Goodman, K. (1973). Analysis of oral reading miscues: Applied psycholinguistics. In F. Smith (Ed.), *Psycholinguistic and reading*. New York. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Halliday, M. A. K (1975). *Exploration in the functions of language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hulstijn, J., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load Hypothesis. *Vocabulary Acquisition language learning*, 51(3), 539-558
- Kim, H., & Krashen, S. (1997). Why doesn't language acquire take advantage of the power of reading? *TESOL Journal*, 6, 26-28.
- Koda, K. (1999). The use of L1 reading strategies in L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 293-410.
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. London: Longman.
- Laufer, B. (1998). The development of passive and active vocabulary in a second language: same or different? *Applied linguistics*, 19(2), 255-271.
- Mirhassani, A., & Toosi, A. (1996). The impact of word formation on reading comprehension. *Roshd FLT Journal*, 12(44), 59-66.
- Mirhassani, A. & Farhady, H. (2012). *New Reading Through Interaction*, book two. Tehran: Zabankadeh.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rivers, W. M. (1981). *Teaching foreign language skills*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Urquhart, A. H., & Weir, C. J. (1998). *Reading in a second language: Process, Product and practice*. Longman: Addison Wesley.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1975). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

THE EFFECTS OF WORD SORTING TECHNIQUES ON DEVELOPING VOCABULARY RETENTION AMONG PRE- INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Maryam Mahdavi Nikoo

Faculty of Foreign Languages and English Department, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

Mania Nosratnia

Faculty of Foreign Languages and English Department, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to investigate whether using word sorting techniques had any significant effect on pre-intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners' vocabulary retention. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 60 female students among 90 learners within the age range of 19 to 32 years were selected. They were studying English at Narcissus and Talk language school in Dezful, Iran. They were at the pre-intermediate level. The participants were divided into two equal experimental and control groups. Both groups took a vocabulary pre-test designed based on the materials were taught in both groups' classrooms. The same content was taught to both groups throughout the 19-session treatment with the only difference that the experimental group was taught word sorting techniques while in the control group the common approach to teach vocabulary such as definition and explanations were applied. At the end of the instruction, the vocabulary post-test parallel to the vocabulary pre-test was administered to the participants of both groups after an interval of two weeks. Finally, the mean scores of both groups on the post-test were compared through an Independent Samples t-test which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results of this study may be used in teaching word sorting techniques effectively to improve the intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

KEYWORDS: Word sorting; Vocabulary retention; EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION

Word sort is a strategy that helps students learn and better remember new vocabulary. Students work in small groups, with each group given an envelope containing key terms on separate slips of paper. Students are instructed to discuss what they think the relationships among the words might be (Weimer, 2010). Exploring how the words relate to each other means that the students

are building a framework that puts the words in context, also making the words easier to remember in both the short and long terms (Weimer, 2010).

Besides, word sorts (Bear, Invernizzi, Johnston & Templeton, 1996) help students recognize the semantic relationship among key concepts. They are also an excellent method of teaching the complex reasoning skills of classification and deduction. As a method of word study (Scraper, 2002) word sorting deals with a wide developmental range and a variety of needs. Picture sorts are useful tools for phonological awareness in children who are just learning to or have not yet learned to read. Students are asked to perform tasks that construct awareness of phonemes, the very small part of language, by categorizing or matching initial, middle or final sounds. Sorts can help build understanding of graphemes as well, the small parts of written language, by asking students to match particular sounds to their written representations. Research continues to show that this ability to recognize that written words are made up of letters that represents sounds-the alphabetical principles-is one of the strongest predictors of successful reading(Scraper, 2002).Research also suggests that word study and word sorting are effective way of teaching these essential elements. Word study and word sorting are not only for emergent readers. When students have mastered basic sound symbols, correspondences and patterns, they may experience difficulty with morpheme, or unity of meaning such as affixes and base works.

Word sorting activities that want students to compare words by their roots or base words or manipulate words with prefixes and suffixes teach these elements in meaningful way. Research suggests that word sorting is an excellent way to increase vocabulary and reading comprehension skills for an older student. Word sorting works particularly well for students with special needs. Studies indicate that word sorting boost word knowledge, reading and comprehension of children with learning differences and disabilities (Scraper, 2002). Students learning English as a second language can also benefit a lot in reading and word knowledge with word sorting exercises (Strickland, Ganske, & Monroe, 2000).

Vocabulary is so important for EFL learners that Wilkins (1972) claimed that, “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 111). Wallace (1984) added that knowledge of vocabulary spelling, its meaning and application are crucial to learn vocabularies of foreign languages. Though some teachers may assume that vocabulary learning is easy, learning new vocabulary items has always been difficult for the learners. Different ways of learning vocabularies are usually utilized by the learners such as using flash cards, notebook, referring to bilingual and monolingual dictionaries to comprehend the meaning, or giving some synonyms and antonyms to name but a few. In spite of these efforts and invariably experiencing so many difficulties, vocabulary is undoubtedly the most sizable and unmanageable component (Nemati,2009). In many EFL classes, even where teachers have allocated much time to vocabulary teaching, the results have been disappointing, especially where English is not the main medium of communication.

Therefore, it seems that EFL learners need appropriate and efficient strategies to retain the new words and EFL teachers also need to find efficient approaches and practices to equip learners

with those strategies. Based what is mentioned above, the present study investigated whether using word sorting techniques could improve EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies throughout the 1980s and 1990s revealed that vocabulary skills and knowledge are the precondition for most other language abilities and, besides, the main source of variance in the final state of such abilities (Nemati, 2009). It is now clear that vocabulary acquisition does not happen by itself to a satisfactory degree particularly as needed for first language literacy or in second language learning.

Lexical growth must therefore be provided for in language instruction. To reach this goal the best technique of presenting and teaching vocabulary should be used especially in EFL environments. Since instruction can affect lexical growth, and since there are different ways of teaching and learning, those exercises which address deeper engagement of words should be considered and used by the teachers in the classroom. Because learning of the vocabulary of a foreign language is far from initial learning or basic recognition, the aim of teaching and learning is rather long term development of vocabulary. To this aim, exercises must be congruent with the depth of processing hypothesis (Nemati, 2009).

For over a century, researchers and scholars have been writing about the importance of actively engaging students in their own learning process. Dewey (1963) believed in active engagement of the learning process, or “experientialism,” because it is through this active involvement in what one is learning that knowledge is constructed and therefore owned by that person. Lindeman (1926) wrote about the importance of discussions as a method of instruction. He advocated that all students should be taught a set of analytical skills that could be applied to a range of situations, beyond curriculum, and he believed the best way to teach and hone these skills was through small-group discussions. One of the key features of the word-sort strategy is the discussion that occurs among students as they work their way through the terms, discussing the relationships of the words to each other and deciding how to categorize and organize the terms and concepts.

The concept of a word is rather difficult to explain and there are several different views concerning what a word really is. Singleton (1999, p. 9) emphasizes that words have a rather privileged status in the popular understanding of what a language is since they are vital to linguistic communication. Indeed, without vocabulary there is no tool to communicate and everybody realizes it. However, different people see words and vocabulary differently and therefore defining a word has its problems.

On the other hand, according to Singleton (1999), there can be some logical phenomenon in the language which helps to describe the concept of a word. Singleton (1999) mentions the vowel harmony in Finno-Ugric languages to be an example of a logical phenomenon. Carter (1998) offers a slightly different view for the definition of a word in comparison to Singleton (1999). Carter (1998) points out that in some sense, everyone knows what a word is. He argues that the

most accurate definition of a word would be to describe it as the minimum meaningful unit in a language. In this sense, a word is a word which can stand on its own as a reply to any question or statement (Carter 1998).

The grammatical properties of a word include the grammatical category of it, possible and impossible structures associated with the word and idiosyncratic grammatical information. Lexical properties of a word include the word combinations and appropriateness. Also the meaning of a word has its problems since it includes both, a general meaning as well as a specific meaning (Cook, 2001). Whereas a grammar of a language describes the principles or rules of the form and meaning of words, phrases, clauses and sentences and interacts with other components of language (e.g. phonology, graphology, semantics and the dictionary or lexicon), the lexicon for a language deals with the vocabulary. It includes the information about pronunciation, spelling, meaning and grammatical properties of the lexical item. Singleton (1999) accentuates that the traditional distinction between lexicon and grammar is proving increasingly difficult to maintain since the two are closely connected due to, for instance, multi-word items and patterns. However, a distinction between grammatical and lexical words can also be made. Grammatical words work as functional words whereas lexical words (nouns, verbs, adverbs) are seen as content words (Carter, 1998).

To sum up, there are several different views on how to describe a word and it is impossible to create one, absolutely accurate description of a words. Nevertheless, as Carter (1998) mentions, everyone knows what a word is and it can be seen as the minimum meaningful unit in a language and it can operate on its own. This view is adopted in the present study and the different approaches are not discussed in more detail.

Vocabulary Retention

Vocabulary retention has been defined as “the ability to recall or of what has been taught (e.g. grammar rules and vocabulary) may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials” (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). As it is obvious in the domain of vocabulary learning, the problem is not just in learning second language words; rather in remembering them. Bahrack (1984) states that how well people remember something depends on how deeply they process it. Therefore, various procedures have been recommended to facilitate vocabulary retention.

Concentration on features of the new word and its textual environment is supposed to facilitate retention. Learning in context depends on repeating, re-cycling, and re-presenting vocabularies as well as re-noticing them by the learner. It has been suggested (e.g. Hedge, 2000) that retention is related to the condition in which the meaning is yet another aspect to the condition of inferring meaning of the word which enhances vocabulary retention. That is, retention depends in some way on the amount of mental and emotional energy used in processing a word and readers have developed certain strategies that could assist emotional and mental processing such as meta-cognitive strategies.

Vocabulary is now a current focus in ESL pedagogy and research and has been increasingly recognized as essential to language use because inadequate vocabulary can lead to the learners' difficulty in language reception and production (Jenpattarakul, 2012). Vocabulary knowledge is important because it encompasses all the words we must know to access our background knowledge, express our ideas, communicate effectively, and learn about new concept. Vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and context together, making comprehension accessible for the readers. However, it is useless if the students learn a lot of words or possess a large number of vocabularies but they can't remember or retain in their long-term memories (Jenpattarakul, 2012).

Khabiri and Pakzad (2012) stated that as it is obvious in the domain of vocabulary learning, the problem is not just in learning second language words; rather in remembering them. Bahrick (1984) stated that how well people remember something depends on how deeply they process it. Craik and Lockhart (1972) mentioned that according to "Depth of Processing Hypothesis", the more cognitive energy a person exerts when manipulating and thinking about a word, the more likely it is that they will be able to recall and use it later. This hypothesis implies that it is not important how recently learners have learnt something. What is of more importance in learning is, in fact, the depth of processing; in other words, students must be taught on how to process information deeply. Such implications extend to pedagogy as well, suggesting that exercise and learning strategies which involve a deeper engagement with words should lead to higher retention compared to shallow activities. Marefat and Ahmadi Shirazi (2003) stated that "Language learning strategies are any set of actions, plans, tactics, thoughts or behaviors that the learners employ to facilitate the comprehension, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (p. 47).

Word Sorting

Using appropriate presentation methods enables learners to obtain a deeper impression of and richer information about the target words to make them enter the long-term memory (Zhang, 2008). Cognitive psychologists and language acquisition scholars working within the framework of cognitive psychology believe that retention and recall of information is determined by the way in which the information is processed (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001).

Carlisle (1993, pp. 97-105) also writes "effective vocabulary instruction include such practices as building semantic relationships, providing ways to remember basic word meaning, integrating information with prior knowledge, and facilitating multiple exposures to words".

According to Lauritzen (2010), word sorting is defined as "an instructional technique in which students organize words printed on cards into columns on the basis of particular shared conceptual, phonological, orthographic and meaning related-features"(para, 5). Gehsmann (2008) described word study in the following paragraph:

Word study is an approach to teaching phonics, vocabulary and spelling and is supported by nearly four decades of research, beginning with the work of Charles Read and Edmund Henderson in the 1970s and continues through the work of many today (Gehsmann,

2008). Underlying this approach is an understanding that English orthography, or spelling, has three layers: alphabet (sound), pattern, and meaning. (p. 1)

Gehsmann continues:

Students uncover the layers of orthography with each new word they learn to read and spell. For instance, when a beginning reader matches the letters of “cat” to the sounds she hears (/c/-/a/-/t/), she is demonstrating knowledge of the *alphabetic layer* by establishing 1:1 correspondence between letters and sounds. Later, as the reader discovers sound and spelling contrasts between words such as “fit” and “fight,” or “cap” and “cape,” she moves into the *pattern layer* of orthography. Over time and with considerable practice and instruction, the student will eventually discover that groupings of particular letters represent meaning units – prefixes, suffixes, base words, and roots, thus uncovering the meaning layer. The mature reader carefully orchestrates his or her understanding of the three layers of English orthography when reading, writing, listening, and speaking (p. 1).

Word sort is a strategy that helps students learn and better remember new vocabulary. Students work in small groups, with each group given an envelope containing key terms on separate slips of paper. Students are instructed to discuss what they think the relationships among the words might be. The strategy was developed for use in science courses, where terms have more precise meanings and fit more readily into categories. Students do this initial sort before reading about the terms or hearing them defined and discussed in lecture. After exposure to the words in the text or lecture, students get back into their groups and re-sort the words; comparing their new arrangements with the ones they first constructed (Weimer, 2010).

Word sorting activities provide instructors with a framework for more individualized instruction at students’ developmental spelling levels. In word sorting activities, students organize word cards into columns on the basis of a shared conceptual, phonological, or orthographic feature (Zutell, 1996, 1998). Word sorting is based on four principles outlined by Zutell (1996). First, the English language is not arbitrary. There are extensive sound, visual, and meaning patterns. Second, more than rote memorization, learning to spell includes a strong conceptual component. Children learn how words work. Third, spelling development follows a set of stages in which children produce more accurate spellings and more sophisticated misspellings. Fourth, relationships are first recognized in familiar words, and then extended to less familiar words, which become more memorable as the child fits the new words into the scheme of the old words (Zutell, 1996). While word study is supported by all four of the principles, the fourth principle outlines the rationale for word sorting activities (Fresch, Wheaton, & Zutell, 1998).

Recent research indicates strong evidence that students in grades first through fifth show an increase in word knowledge after participating in word sorting activities. Additionally, children with learning and cognitive disabilities participating in word sorting activities also show an increase in spelling ability (Fresch et al. 1998). In 1998, Fresch et al. asked children to “think aloud” while they sorted words into categories. This allowed researchers to analyze the thought process of students as they sorted words. The results of the study implied that less sophisticated spellers placed words into categories based on either auditory or visual features of words. As

spellers became more sophisticated, they chose the categories for the words based on both auditory and visual features of words, thereby suggesting that they were realizing the connection between the two. The think aloud process also gave students a reason to talk about words and use the “language of language” (long and short vowels, prefixes, suffixes, syllables, etc.). Fresch et al. suggested that think aloud sorting can guide teachers to a better understanding of children’s misconceptions about words, which in turn drives future instruction. The developmental spelling level suggests the type of words the student needs to sort. Word sorting takes place at a less difficult level than a student’s reading or writing level. Just because a student can read and write a word does not mean that he or she can accurately analyze the word in relation to spelling patterns. Finally, when word sorts are designed to teach toward strengths, students are able to build on prior knowledge and develop new approaches for spelling words (Fresch et al., 1998).

RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research question was formulated:

Does using word sorting techniques have any significant effect on EFL learners' vocabulary retention?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present study were adult EFL learners aged within the range of 19 to 32 years. They were at the pre-intermediate level of English language proficiency studying at Talk and Narcissus language schools in Dezful, Iran. In the present study, the sample selection was done at two stages. At the first stage, a larger sample of 90 pre- intermediate EFL learners was selected non-randomly and a piloted language proficiency test, sample Preliminary English Test was administered to them. Following the administration of PET, 60 EFL learners, whose scores fall within the range of one standard deviation above and below the sample mean, were chosen as the participants to take part in the second stage.

At the second stage, in order to have a homogeneous sample in terms of vocabulary knowledge and to make sure that the target sample did not know the target vocabularies, which were supposed to be covered during the study, the 60 selected participants took part in a piloted teacher-made vocabulary test. Those participants who answered less than 25% of the questions were assumed not to know the majority of the target vocabularies and were thus selected as the target sample (N=60).. The selected participants were thus randomly divided into two groups, one experimental and one control with 30 learners in each. Since 30 is too large a number for the students in one English class, all the participants were seated in a collection of two classes of 15 for each group. That is, two classes of 15 and 15 for the control group and two classes of 15 and 15 for the experimental group. It should be noted that, 30 pre intermediate students formed the pilot group participants who were studying English at the same language schools where the main study was conducted and had the same characteristics and language proficiency level as those of the target sample.

Instrumentation

Vocabulary pre-test

An 83-item vocabulary test, which was designed and piloted by the researcher based on the materials of the treatment were used at the onset of the study to test the participants' degree of familiarity with the target vocabularies. This test consists of multiple-choice items, each of which tests one single vocabulary. It is worth mentioning that for these multiple-choice items, the students had to find the most appropriate word from among the alternatives to complete the stem. The pretest was used to homogenize the participants in terms of their vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary post-test

The post-test included two sections: a) A 65-word list and b) A piloted 65-item teacher-made vocabulary test which was a parallel form of the 83-item vocabulary pre-test which used at the onset of the study for homogenizing the participants, with the only difference that the vocabularies which the participants answer correctly at the homogenization stage were omitted from this test (18). The purpose of the word list which contained the same vocabularies as the test was to make sure that the students did not mark the correct answer in the test by chance. The post-test was administered two weeks after the termination of treatment. The procedure of designing the tests is fully described in the procedure section.

Materials

One of the text books used in this research was Top Notch 2A by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher (2011). This textbook is used in Talk and Narcissus language schools for pre-intermediate learners and it consists of 5 units. It is usually taught in a semester of 19 sessions. The goal of Top Notch course is to make English unforgettable through multiple exposures to language, numerous opportunities to practice it, and systematic and intensive recycling. Top Notch emphasizes the cultural fluency which enables students to navigate the social, travel, and business situations that they will encounter in their lives.

Procedure

In experimental group, in the first session, word sorting techniques were presented and described explicitly by the teacher. Then, it was explained to language learners why, when, how these techniques could be used. Teacher asked students to sort new words based on their conceptual and phonological, orthographic and meaning related features. To do this, the teacher used two basic ways to conduct the sorts: close and open sort. In close sorting (teacher-directed), the students sorted words based on categories (and the specific features of each) provided by the teacher, usually shown by keywords that head columns. The students then matched the words with the features to create the word collections. In open sorting (student-centered), the students decided how to categorize the words and the teacher provided only the list of words. Students could work together to discern the common features and to describe the categories for collecting the word groups. Steps to a Word Sort were:

First the teacher listed between 10 and 20 key vocabulary words from the target material on the board or on index cards in every session. Then she divided the class into small groups of 3 or 4 students and distributed the index cards.

For a Closed Word Sort, she provided students with the categories into which they could sort the vocabulary words. For an Open Word Sort, she instructed the student teams to suggest categories for organizing the words. Next she allowed 10 to 15 minutes for the student teams to assign the words to the appropriate categories.

And finally she conducted a class discussion with each group presenting their word list for one of the categories requires the students to defend their sorting of terms by asking about the common features of the categories and how each specific word meets these criteria. Every session before the new instruction the teacher reviewed the previous categories.

On the other hand, the control group was taught through the traditional techniques of teaching vocabulary which is the typical method of teaching vocabulary in the mentioned language schools. According to Gairns and Redman (1986), traditional techniques of teaching vocabulary are classified in to three categories: visual, verbal and translation. Visual techniques concern with visual memory such as photographs, blackboard drawings, wall charts, realia, mime and gesture. Verbal techniques include illustrative situations, synonym and definition, contrasts and opposites, scales and examples.

Two weeks after the termination of the treatment, the post-test was administered to both groups. Interval of two weeks was chosen because less than this time the students might use their short-term memory to answer the questions and in more than two weeks further learning may occur (Pishghadam, Khodadady, & Khoshsabk, 2010). The posttest included two sections. The same 65 target vocabularies which none of the participants knew at the onset of the study were presented in two forms, one a vocabulary checklist in which the participants were required to write a synonym or a definition in L1 or L2, and the other in the form of a vocabulary test with multiple choice which was a parallel form of the vocabulary pre-test. The reason for having the two forms for the post-test was to make sure that the students did not mark the correct answer in the test by chance. It took 30 minutes to administer the vocabulary list and 65 minutes was allotted to administer the vocabulary post-test. Every individual was awarded a score of one for each vocabulary in the post-test provided that he/she had both selected the correct response from among the alternatives on the vocabulary post-test and provided the correct synonym or definition in Persian or English on the post-test checklist indicating retention of that vocabulary. If only one of these were correct, the candidate could have guessed the answer on the multiple choice test and would receive a score of zero on that vocabulary indicating lack of retention. At the end, the obtained data were analyzed to test the null hypothesis of the study.

Data Analysis

Various descriptive and inferential statistics were employed throughout the study. First, descriptive statistics were used for the homogenization process, pre and post-test. The reliability of pre and post-test were estimated. To address the null hypothesis, an Independent Sample T-test was run to study the effect of word sorting techniques on improving EFL learners' vocabulary retention. The result of the analysis will appear in the next chapter.

The data gathered from the pretest and post-test of both groups was analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Cronbach α was employed for calculating the reliability of the test scores gained by the participants on the PET. An Independent Sample T-test was run to compare the two groups' means on the pretest of vocabulary in order to prove that they were homogenous in terms of the vocabulary knowledge prior to the main study. An Independent Sample T-test was run to compare the two groups' means on the posttest of vocabulary in order to investigate the effects of word sorting techniques on EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of vocabulary pre-test is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Pre-test of Experimental and Control groups

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre-test	30	3.00	11.00	6.6000	2.40115	5.766
Valid N (listwise)	30					

Table 1 shows the 60 descriptive statistics of vocabulary pre-test among the participants who were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control. Table 2 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the scores.

Table 2: T-Test of the Vocabulary Test Pre-test of Experimental and Control groups

t-test for Equality of Means								
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval of the Difference Lower	Confidence of the Difference Upper
Equal variances assumed		1.748	58	.086	.633	.36	-.09	1.35
Equal variances not assumed		1.748	57.92	.086	.63	.36	-.09	1.35

Table 2 shows the results of the *t*-test with the assumption of the homogeneity of the variances ($t = 1.748$, $df = 58$, $p = 0.650 > 0.05$) indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups' mean scores on the vocabulary pre-test prior to conducting the main study. As a result, the researcher being confident with the required conditions of the research continued the study by conducting word sorting techniques in the experimental group and employing the typical method of teaching vocabulary in the control group.

Descriptive Statistics of the Vocabulary Post- Test Administration

When the treatment was over and after a two-week interval, the post-test including the 65-item checklist along with the 65-item vocabulary posttest was administered to both experimental and control groups. Prior to running an independent-samples *t*-test, the normality of the distribution of post-test scores in both experimental and control groups had to be checked. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups' post-test scores.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Vocabulary Post-test of Experimental and Control Groups

Groups	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
Control group	30	18	50	30.80	8.29	68.71	.61	.42	.18	.83
Experimental group	30	27	64	41.60	8.06	65.07	1.05	.42	1.21	.83

Table 3 shows the mean score of the experimental group came out to be 41.60 and higher than 30.80, which was the mean score of the control group; moreover, the skewness ratios fell within the acceptable range of ± 1.96 signifying that the score distributions in both groups represented normality. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of the control and experimental groups' post-test scores

Table 4: T-Test of the Vocabulary Test Post-test of Experimental and Control groups

t-test for Equality of Means								
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Upper
Equal variances assumed		5.114	58	.000	10.80	2.11	6.57	15.02
Equal variances not assumed		5.114	57.95	.000	10.80	2.11	6.57	15.02

Table 4 displays the results of the Independent Samples *t*-test run on the post-test mean scores of the two groups. Results show a significant difference between the two groups.

Discussion

As reported in the results section, the data strongly suggested that using word sorting techniques can increase the pre-intermediate learners' vocabulary retention. It is worth mentioning that the results were obtained under the condition that the same amount of vocabularies had been taught to both groups the only difference was the application of word sort techniques in the experimental group. As it was shown in the result section the experimental group outperformed

the control group. One reason for obtaining a better result in the word sorting group might have been that sorting activities are active, thoughtful; problem solving tasks (Fresch, 2000). Word sorting gives hands-on opportunities for students to work through the complexities of language. It also promotes word analysis, which can benefit students in other reading and writing activities (Fresch, 2000). They can be beneficial for helping students to spell words, recognize words, make word connections, become aware of the phonemic structure of words, and gain meaning of words (Joseph & Orlins, 2005).

A word sort is an active-learning, critical-thinking strategy that involves students in small groups of three or four actively discussing words that have been provided for them by the instructor (Vacca & Vacca, 2002). So grouping students is one of the most important elements of word sorting instruction that promotes literacy success, especially for at-risk students. These groups should always remain flexible and dynamic. Teachers should regroup when necessary to best meet the changing needs of students (Invernizzi & Hayes, 2004).

It is worth mentioning that prior knowledge also plays a significant role in active learning. Freire (1970) maintained that students don't come to school "blank slates" or "empty vessels" waiting to be filled with information from their instructors' lectures. Instead, all students come to class with prior knowledge and life experiences. In addition, there is a need to find ways to tap into that prior knowledge so are able to help students make connections between their prior knowledge and what they are learning in classes. During the word sort, students use their individual and collective prior knowledge to make meaning of the terms and to understand the relationships between and among the words and to make decisions regarding their initial categorizations; consequently, the content and depth of their discussions within their small groups directly reflect this as well.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, this research presents the following implications for EFL teachers, learners, syllabus designers while dealing with language learning, teaching, and developing EFL materials. Many language teachers in EFL contexts treat the vocabulary teaching in a traditional way. In addition to, in teacher-centered classes where the students have a passive role in learning, teachers are considerably remiss in teaching this paramount component of language, overlooking the insight that they can give language learners by using language learning strategies in general and cognitive strategies in particular. As teachers, they should endeavor to abandon taking the full responsibility of teaching and engage the learners in the process of learning and bring up independent and autonomous language learners.

Teachers should try to familiarize their students with innovative vocabulary teaching strategies such as the one explored in this study, that is, word sorting techniques. However, before teaching students how to use strategies effectively, teachers should be trained in strategy instruction and assessment. They should be equipped with appropriate strategies to be able to propose to students the appropriate ones and can deal with difficult academic tasks. If, for instance, one strategy does not work they should be able to suggest another alternative. What is more, teachers should design

activities that will require them to make use of a variety of strategies and after the completion of the task they should held a discussion session with students talking about the strategies they use, whether these strategies proved to be useful or not. In this way, while the teachers will have the opportunity to see to what extent each of the students is successful in the orchestration of the strategies, the students will be able to hear or see what strategies their peers use. Thus, they will be given the opportunity to make self-evaluation, decide which is better for them, or learn an alternative way of doing a particular task.

The findings of this study suggest that EFL learners need to take more responsibility for their learning and rely less on teachers and adopt cooperative learning. Learners' autonomy is the ultimate goal of language teaching. Language teaching learners' autonomy implies that in the absence of language teachers and classes, language learners continue their learning. If learners are solely and completely depend on their teachers and classes to be involved in language learning activities, as soon as they will be left by themselves, they easily quit their learning. Strategy training is a useful way to eliminate this problem. Language learning strategy training is the path through which learner autonomy can appropriately be achieved. As a result, learners are also recommended to get familiar with innovative vocabulary teaching strategies, especially concept sort and its underlying principles in order to benefit from its advantages. Language learners are recommended to gain some knowledge concerning concepts such as mental map, schematic knowledge and conceptual mapping.

Curriculum and material developers should infuse strategy training into materials in teacher training courses. Also, EFL practitioners should arrange some in service courses for EFL teachers to familiarize them with strategies and their benefits and advantages in teaching. Through these courses EFL teachers can properly exploit strategies and in improving their teaching success. Consequently, curriculum developers and material producers should collect feedback from teachers and students in order to identify the weaknesses and strengths of their products. This will enable them to produce better and developed materials. All in all, curriculum developers and material producers should work cooperatively with teachers and students so that they can design a better program with appropriate materials and tasks that will promote a more efficient and a more effective language learning atmosphere. According to the findings of this study, it is suggested that material designers develop teaching materials based on strategy-instruction, especially on word sorting techniques.

This study can be replicable to male learners and the results can be compared with the females to see whether using word sorting techniques are more effective for males or females. More comprehensive research on different variables such as participants' cultural background and different proficiency levels of English is necessary. In addition, learners with different language proficiencies could be studied to investigate the effect of word sorting strategies. Future studies can investigate the comparative effect of different word sort techniques such as picture sort, sound sort and digital word sort on vocabulary retention and recall.

REFERENCES

- Bahrick, H. P. (1984). Semantic memory content in permastore: Fifty years of memory for Spanish learned in school. *Journal of Experiment Psychology: General*, 113(1), 1-31.
- Bear, D., Invernizzi, M., Johnston, F., & Templeton, S. (1996). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, spelling and vocabulary instruction*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Carlisle, J. (1993). Selecting approaches to vocabulary instruction the reading disabled. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 8 (2), 97-105.
- Carter, R. (1998). *Vocabulary: Applied linguistics perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Cook, V. (2001). *Second language learning and language teaching* (Third edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Craik, F. I. M, & Lockhart, R. S. (1972). Levels of processing: A framework for memory research. *Journal of Verbal Language*, 11, 671-684
- Dewey, J. (1963). *Experience and education*. New York: Collier. Educational Technique Department. (2002). *Foreign Languages Management Manual*. Bangkok : Educational Technique Department, Ministry of Education.
- Fresch, M. (2000). What we learned from Josh: Sorting out word sorting. *Language Arts*, 77 (3), 232-240.
- Fresch, M., Wheaton, A., & Zutell, J. (1998). Thinking aloud during spelling word sorts. *The National Reading Conference Yearbook*, 47, 285-294.
- Gairns, R. & Redman, S. (1986). *Working with Words. A Guide to Teaching and Learning Vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gehsmann, K. M. (2008). What is Word Study and How Can I Get Some? Bringing Word Study Instruction to Scale. *The New England Reading Association Journal*, 44 (1), 1-8.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hulstijn, J., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 51(3), 539-558.
- Invernizzi, M., & Hayes, L. (2004). Developmental-spelling research: A systematic imperative. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(2), 216-228.
- Jenpattarakul, W. (2012). An examination of the usage of vocabulary retention techniques (VRTs) of Thai undergraduate EFL students. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(2), 443-456.
- Joseph, L., & Orlins, A. (2005). Multiple uses of a word study technique. *Reading Improvement*, 42(2), 73-79.
- Khabiri, M., & Pakzad, M. (2012). The effect of teaching critical reading strategies on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. *The Journal of Teaching Language skills (JTLS)*, 4(1), 73- 106.
- Lauritzen, C. (2010). *Word sorting: why and how?* Paper presented in International West Regional Conference.
- Lindeman, E.C. (1926). *The meaning of adult education*. New York: New Republic.
- Marefat, H., & Ahmadishirazi, M. (2003). The impact of teaching direct learning strategies on the retention of vocabulary of EFL learners. *The reading matrix*, 3(2), 47-62.

- Nemati, A. (2009). A strategy-based scheme for promoting vocabulary retention among language learners. *Language in India*, 9, 119-137.
- Pishghadam, R., Khodadady, E., & Khoshabsak, N. (2010). The impact of visual and verbal intelligences-based teaching on the vocabulary retention and written production of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *MJAL*, 2(5), 379- 395.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd Ed.). London: Pearson Education.
- Saslow J., & Ascher, A. (2011). *Top notch 2A*. London: Longman.
- Scraper, K. (2002). Word study through sorting. *Educators Publishing Service*, a division of Delta Education, LLC.
- Singleton, D. (1999). *Exploring the Second Language Mental Lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strickland, D.S., Ganske, K., & Morroe, J. K. (2002). *Supporting struggling reader and writers: Strategies for classroom intervention 3-6*. New York, DE: International Reading Association.
- Vacca, R.T., & Vacca, J. A. L. (2002). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum*. 7th ed. Allyn & Bacon, Boston, MA.
- Wallace, C. (2003). *Critical reading in language education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Weimer, M. (2010). *Word Sort: An Active Learning Critical-Thinking Strategy*. Retrieved January 12, 2014, from <http://www.insidetheschool.com/articles/word-sort-an-active-learning-critical-thinking-strategy>.
- Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Zutell, J. (1996). The directed spelling thinking activity (DSTA): Providing an effective balance in word study instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 50 (2), 98- 96.
- Zutell, J. (1998). Word sorting: A developmental spelling approach to word study for delayed readers. *Reading & Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*, 14 (2) 219-239.

USING DISCOURSE STRUCTURE-BASED GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS IN DEVELOPING EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

Somayyeh Khoshakhlagh

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Khalil Bavizade

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on pre-intermediate students' reading comprehension. The purpose of the study was to determine whether students who used discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity would perform better on post-test compared to those who were involved in conventional method of reading comprehension activities including question and answer, true/false, cloze tests, etc. This study also explored the differences between using graphic organizers and the conventional comprehension method in developing English as foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension. Two pre-intermediate-level EFL classes were randomly selected at oxford foreign language school and were assigned to experimental and control groups. Data were collected through the administration of a pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension on the materials covered in 10 sessions. The reliability coefficients of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula. The experimental group structured their own graphic organizers for reading texts studied in the class hour and presented them to their classmates in groups while the control group received conventional reading comprehension activities as a reading aloud, explaining the new words and answering the questions of the items. The statistical analysis included Paired and Independent Sample t-tests. Results revealed that the students who completed discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity performed significantly better in the post-test than the students who participated in the conventional method. The implications of this study could be used in reading comprehension classroom to familiar the learners with graphical structures of the reading passages.

KEYWORDS: Discourse structure; Graphic organizers; Reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

In both first and second language (L1 and L2) contexts, reading is an essential skill to master for students. In formal educational settings, critical importance is attached to reading skill because students' success mostly depends on their reading comprehension skills (Jiang, 2007). Most of the input students are exposed to be in written form and this necessitates that they develop effective reading strategies. In an L2 situation, students should be provided with special attention because reading in L2 is naturally more challenging and demanding than reading in L1 (Jiang, 2007). In order to scaffold EFL learners in their approach to reading tasks, the discourse structures of reading passages might be exploited. Since focusing on discourse structures facilitates following the flow of ideas in a text in an effective manner, teachers might guide their students to be alert to text structures and text organization.

While comprehending a passage, most students mentally translate the content into their first language. Students may even respond to the comprehension questions through the time-consuming process of thinking in their first language and then translate it into English. Students cannot verify the accuracy of their translation of the meaning of the passage into their mother tongue (Lin & Chen, 2006). Using graphic organizers gives students alternatives to these inefficient methods of reading or comprehending a passage. In contrast to their usual approach to reading or comprehending a passage, they classify the content of the passage and then try to decode it (Lee & Schallert, 1997). This study explores how classifying a reading passage using graphic organizers has shown better results compared with reading a passage without using these organizers.

Learning through visuals helps students in comprehending passages more effectively than other reading strategies like skimming, scanning, note making, etc. According to Slavin (2011), research in pedagogy and psychology demonstrates that visual learning is among the most effective methods for teaching comprehension skills to students of all ages. Helping students organize the content helps them to comprehend texts for information such as main ideas supporting details, facts, opinions, comparisons and contradictions. According to Keene and Zimmerman (1997), students must be encouraged to make connections with the text they read to increase the effectiveness of reading. Graphic organizers can play a vital role establishing the connections. The text will be very clear to students when a graphic organizer is incorporated depicting the theme or content of a text they read. Moreover, graphic organizers using diagrams illustrate concepts and relationships between concepts discussed in a text.

Graphic Organizers

A graphic organizer is a diagram that represents a relationship directed by a thinking-skill verb. The verb "sequence" calls for a diagram of a series of boxes connected by arrows that shows the "event" of one box leading to the "event" of another box (Hibbard & Wagner, 2003). In 1992, Jay McTighe in his book, *Graphic Organizers: Collaborative Links to Better Thinking*, outlined three main ways teachers may use graphic organizers in their teaching and a number of ways that students can use them to aid their learning process. In the reading process, graphic organizers can be used at three levels: Before instruction, during instruction and after instruction. Before instruction, graphic organizers are used to understand the level of the students in terms of the

content. During instruction, graphic organizers allow students to approach the content cognitively because they assist thinking. It also allows students to construct maps that are appropriate to their learning styles. After instruction, they help students as a summarization tool or technique and they help the students to understand their improvement in terms of understanding passage. If a student can connect prior knowledge with what was learned and identify relationships between those ideas, it means graphic organizers have successfully assisted them in the course of their learning process.

The strategy that has received the most attention from the research community is the graphic organizer (Barron, 1969). Graphic organizers are representations, pictures or models used for processing textual information. They facilitate understanding of knowledge when there is a large amount of information to work with, in a given limited time Lee and Schallert (1997). There are various functions of graphic organizers. In reading comprehension, they assist learners to clarify and organize information into categories (main idea, supporting details, topic sentence, facts opinion, etc), organize information in a paragraph for better understanding, construct meaning of difficult words and sentence dividing into lexis, understand the context by associating with prior knowledge and identify conceptual and perceptual errors that may occur in the course of reading a passage.

Graphic organizers have been classified into five major categories according to their structures: star web, chart matrix, tree map, chain, and sketch. Graphic organizers have also been classified into eight categories according to their purposes for learning. The eight categories of graphic organizer are KWL chart, history frames, word map, zooming in and zooming out – concepts, zooming in and zooming out-people, Inquiry chart, venn diagram, column notes. KWL charts can be used as a teacher-led activity to introduce a new topic at any grade level. A history frame allows students to look at historical events and break the information down to understand its significance, the people and places involved and any other pertinent information. A word map helps students analyze a new or complex vocabulary word from many different angles. Zooming in and out-concept graphic organizer allows students to delve deeper into a more complex concept. There is a box in the middle of the page for the concept; then there are five other boxes branching out from the middle, and zooming in and out organizer is similar to the one for concepts, but focuses on people instead. The center box is for the name of a person and the surrounding boxes include spaces for the most and least important information, similar people, related events, surprising facts and a summary statement. An inquiry chart or I-chart is a way to organize information obtained during research. It contains four columns across the top, each for a different question. A Venn diagram is used to compare two ideas, events or people. It contains two overlapping circles. A column notes organizer is simple to set up and versatile in its applications. To organize notes, all a student needs to do is divide a piece of paper into two sections, each with its own heading (Jiang, 2007).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is a well-accepted fact that reading is of utmost importance. In our modern world, where we are inundated by print, being a good reader is a prerequisite to deal with large amounts of

information that is made available to us. In short, possessing reading skills is a means of survival. However, being a skilled L1 reader is not enough to be an active and successful participant of society. If one is to pursue a career and achieve advancement, L2 reading skills constitute a significant challenge. Therefore, a very large percentage of people around the world are encouraged to learn to read a second language as students in formal academic settings. Most school systems around the world demand that their students learn English because it is a global language that could guarantee the capacity for economical and professional competition (Grabe, 2009).

Reading has varying definitions and interpretations in the literature. Aebbersold and Field (1997) define reading as “what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text” (p. 15). Grabe and Stoller (2002) add one more component into this definition. In their interpretation, reading comes forward as “the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret the information appropriately” (p. 9). However, these definitions fail to reflect the complex nature of reading. A more comprehensive viewpoint is necessary if we are to fully define what reading is. Grabe (2009) claims that in order to appropriately define what reading is, one needs to clarify the characteristics of reading by fluent readers. Under the umbrella of his interpretation, the true definition of reading comprises some salient characteristics which could be observed in the act of reading performed by fluent readers. Firstly, reading is a rapid and efficient process which aims at comprehending; that is, understanding what the writer has intended to convey in writing. Reading is also interactive in the sense that it is an interaction between the writer and the reader. Another feature of reading is its strategic nature because a reader has to employ a number of skills and processes to anticipate text information, select key information, and organize and mentally summarize information. Reading is at the same time a flexible process. A fluent reader adjusts his or her reading processes and goals to the shifting purposes and interests in reading. The evaluative quality of reading stems from the fact that it is combined with readers’ attitudes and emotional responses to the text as well as a strong set of inferencing processes and the use of background knowledge. Apart from the aforementioned qualities, reading is inherently a linguistic process because the processing of linguistic information is central to reading comprehension. Finally, all reading activity is a learning process in one sense or another.

According Grabe and Stoller (2002), in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of reading, it is important to dwell on the nature of reading. When people read, they read for a purpose and this purpose is usually determined by the genre of what they are reading. To exemplify, people do not read newspapers in the same way they read research articles. They highlight seven purposes for reading, which include reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, reading to write, reading to critique texts and reading for general comprehension. Good readers of a language activate two kinds of processes while reading. These are lower-level and higher-level processes. While the lower-level processes are more automatic linguistic processes and are typically seen as skills-directed, the higher-level processes generally require comprehension processes that make use of the reader’s background knowledge and inferencing skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Lower-level processes include lexical access, syntactic parsing, semantic proposition formation and memory activation. In lexical access, the reader focuses on a word and recognizes its meaning in an automatic way. If the ultimate aim in reading is to achieve comprehension, then the importance of word recognition cannot be underestimated. Grabe and Stoller (2002) use a metaphor to explain the relation between word recognition and reading comprehension. Word recognition is “like the gasoline of the car which is made up of reading comprehension skills” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 22). Syntactic parsing makes it possible for the readers of a language to clarify the meanings of words that have different meanings in different contexts. Readers combine words in order to derive basic grammatical information and support clause-level meaning. Semantic proposition is the task of putting together word meanings and structural information in order to form basic clause-level meanings (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). When the aforementioned processes are operating well, they work together effortlessly in working memory, which is best understood as “the network of information and related processes that are being used at a given moment” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 24). Grabe and Stoller (2002) liken the working memory to the “engine of the car which is called reading comprehension” (p. 25).

Higher-level processes related to reading include the text model of comprehension, the situation model of reader interpretation, background knowledge use, and inferencing and executive control processes. One of the salient higher-level processes is the text model of reading comprehension. During the processing of text information, the reader starts to see the ideas that are repeatedly used and that facilitate useful linkages to other information as the main ideas of the text. In short, the text model amounts to an internal summary of the ideas present in a text. In this model of comprehension, attempts are made by the reader to link the main idea from the first sentence to the one emerging in the second one, while the less important ideas get “pruned off” in the process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 26). However, in the situation model of reading comprehension, the reader interprets the information from the text in terms of his or her own goals, feelings and background expectations. Both the background knowledge and inferring skills of the reader have important functions in this interpretation process. Readers are likely to be misguided in cases where they interpret the text wrongly, have insufficient background knowledge or draw wrong inferences. Executive control processing represents the way in which the readers of a language assess their understanding of a text and evaluate their success, so it can be argued that, as readers, how well we comprehend a text depends on an executive control processor (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Models of the Reading Process

The literature suggests that three reading comprehension models have been influential in reading research: bottom-up, top-down and interactive (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2004; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Nunan, 1999; Nuttall, 1996). Different cognitive processes are emphasized in these models. In the bottom-up model, the reader deals with letters, words and then sentences in an orderly fashion. If the idea is taken to an extreme, the reader can be thought of as processing “each word letter-by-letter, each sentence word-by-word and each text sentence-by-sentence” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002 p. 32). In this model, there is little influence from the reader’s background knowledge. Overreliance on text-based or bottom-up processing is referred to as “text-based processing” or “text-boundedness” (Carrell, 1996, p. 102). As a result of this text-boundedness,

readers may remember only isolated facts without integrating them into a cohesive understanding, which in turn brings the drawback of focusing on trees rather than paying attention to the whole forest (Nunan, 1999; Nuttall, 1996). This model has been criticized from the perspective that it underestimates readers' ability to think and the effects of background knowledge on the reading process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Whereas the bottom-up model emphasizes lower-level processing at the textual level, the top-down model of reading is concerned with higher-level processing. In this model, the reader relies on his intelligence and experience while using the text data to confirm or deny the hypotheses he or she brings to the text (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2004). According to Nuttall (1996), a reader using top-down processing assumes an eagle's eye view of the text so it can be claimed that it is useful in order to understand the overall meaning of the text. Not only does the reader's background knowledge about the content area of the text play a significant role in this top-down view of reading but also the rhetorical structures of the text are to be considered as important. It can be argued that there is a clear distinction between the bottom-up and top-down models of reading. In the former, the reader processes the text word for word, accepting the author as the authority, while in the latter the reader puts a previously formed plan into practice and has the option of omitting parts of the text which seem to be irrelevant to his or her purpose in the reading process. The top-down view of reading, also known as Goodman's model or the reader-driven model, has also been criticized by some researchers on the grounds that what a reader can learn from a text is questionable if the reader must first have expectations about all the information in the text. As a result, few reading researchers support strong top-down views.

The literature review showed that graphic organizers used across several content areas (science, social studies, mathematics, Spanish as a second language, vocabulary, reading, and writing), multiple grade levels (first through senior high school), and different student populations (regular education students and students with learning disabilities). Thus in the 29 experimental and quasi-experimental SBR studies cited throughout this chapter. All of the studies included in this review have shown that using graphic organizers led to improved student performance as measured by various forms of assessments (classroom-based, observation, textbook, and standardized).

Graphic organizers also have been found to result in superior student performance when compared with more traditional forms of instruction (e.g., lecture, linear note taking, question/answering). SBR supports the use of graphic organizers at the upper elementary and middle level grades (sixth through eighth) (Alvermann & Boothby, 1986). Some SBR (Brookbank, Grover, Kullberg & Strawser, 1999) also exists to support the use of graphic organizers in the lower elementary grades (kindergarten through third). Positive results have been shown with secondary grade level (ninth through twelfth) students as well (Doyle, 1999). For the special population of students with learning disabilities, graphic organizers have been used with success (Boyle & Weishaar, 1997). Students with learning disabilities typically have difficulty comprehending content area texts and lack reading comprehension skills (Scanlon *et al.*, 1992). Graphic organizers have been found to be effective tools for helping these students organize information and make connections with existing schemas. As a result, for the students with learning disabilities studied, comprehension and recall of information was enhanced.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study will investigate the following research questions:

Do discourse structure-based graphic organizers affect students' reading comprehension?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study was conducted in Oxford Language Institute in Ahwaz. The participants of the study were 50 learners at pre-intermediate level and with age ranging from 13 to 16 years old. They were selected out of the research population ($n=90$) after administering a teacher-made homogeneity test. Fifty learners who got the scores within one standard deviation (SD) below and one (SD) above the mean were selected as the participants of the study. Then they were randomly divided in two experimental and control groups through systematic random sampling.

Instrumentation

In this study, two tests were used including the homogeneity test was used as the pre-test to determine the learners' level of reading comprehension of selected texts at the beginning of research period and a post-test to determine the effect of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students' reading comprehension of selected texts. The reliability of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula as ($r=.720$, and $r=.798$ respectively).

Materials

The materials used in this study were four reading texts (School on Water, Marital Art, Pet Heros, and Old San Juan) that were chosen from a reading text book, Connect (Jack C. Richards, 2009). While selecting the reading passages, the researcher made an effort to create a combination of texts that had different discourse structures as the aim was to expose the students to as many discourse patterns as possible during the course of the study. The text structures of the four reading passages that were used in the study included *description*, *definition*, *sequence*, *procedure*, *cause-effect*, *classification*, and various graphic organizers that reflected the discourse structures of these texts, a homogeneity test, that was used as the pre-test and a post-test were administered.

Procedure

As mentioned previously, the text structures of the four reading passages that were used in the study included *description*, *definition*, *sequence*, *procedure*, *cause-effect*, *classification*. In each text, two or three of these structures were nested within one another. The researcher developed graphic organizers that directly reflected the discourse structures of the selected texts. In order to understand whether these graphic organizers were appropriately designed, the opinions of five teachers were sought. They all agreed on the appropriateness of the graphic organizers developed by the researcher. In order to test the practicality of the graphic organizers, four reading teachers from the pre-intermediate level were asked to sit down and complete the graphic organizers with the texts; they all successfully completed the graphic organizers.

Before the experiment started, the participant teacher had tried to make the students familiar with the procedure of the study by using several samples of text structure-based graphic organizers for some texts in their course books and by asking the students to fill them in. Both the selection of the texts and the development of the related graphic organizers were done by the researcher. The participants of the study participated in both the graphic organizers and the conventional treatments, so it can be claimed that they acted as their own experimental and control groups. After the preparation sessions, in the first week of the experiment, a homogeneity test, that was used as pre-test was administered. The test included 20 open -ended questions extracted from the reading texts, the test material was designed based on the scope of the study. It was made up of 4 passages, totaling 20 questions which can be classified into four types of reading questions: (1) Identifying the main idea, (2) finding the supporting details, (3) understanding vocabulary and (4) making inferences. Out of 20 questions, there were 8 main idea questions, 4 supporting detail questions, 4 vocabulary questions and 4 inference questions. Each question was worth 1 mark and the sum total of the test was 20, students answered these questions during 90minutes. The learners who got the scores within one standard deviation below and above the mean were accepted as the participants of the study. Then two experimental and control groups were selected through systematic random sampling. During 10 sessions of instruction, 90 minutes each, the texts were worked.

In the experimental group at the beginning of the instruction, the researcher familiarized the students with what graphic organizers are and how to use them effectively while reading a text. The students were also trained to use different organizers for different types of passages. The students learned a variety of existing graphic organizers and they also started creating their own organizers. In the following 10 sessions the participants in the experimental group structured their own graphic organizers for reading texts studied in the class hour and presented them to their classmates in groups. Some of the graphic organizers were also presented by the students to the whole class by drawing on the board. Then, reading comprehension questions were answered by the participants and checked by the instructor. The instruction material and content provided for both the experimental and control groups were the same but the control group was not exposed to the use of graphic organizers and implementing the same in reading process. The control group adopted conventional methods where students were made to read the passage again and again to understand the content and answer the comprehension questions. They were able to understand the meaning conveyed in the paragraph or passage but they could not classify a paragraph into main idea, topic sentence, supporting details, etc. In the final session, after 10 sessions of treatment, a post-test was administered, pre-test was modified for the post- test. It was 20 open-ended questions from reading texts for each group. They replied those questions during 90minutes. The reliability of the tests were calculated through KR-21 formula Then the data was statistically analyzed.

Data Analysis

In this study, data were collected through the administration of post-tests. In the analysis of this quantitative data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used. In order to examine the effects of the discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students' reading comprehension, parametric statistical methods were used for the analysis as the data were

normally distributed. Independent and Paired Samples t-test were conducted in order to explore how the discourse structure-based graphic organizer treatment affected the participant students' comprehension of each text as well as the students' overall reading performance in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study discusses the effect of using graphic organizers on the EFL learners' scores derived from different types of comprehension questions. Paired and Independent Sample t-tests were performed to evaluate the impact of the two instructional approaches – using graphic organizer and the conventional comprehension method on all participants' answers to comprehension questions. Before administering the pre-test, it was important for the researcher to examine whether the proficiency level of the students in both the experimental and controlled groups were the same or different. In the first session of the experiment, a pre-test was given to all the participants in the two groups. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics in the pre-test.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	25	14.28	2.606	.521
Control	25	13.84	2.478	.496

The means presented in Table 1 showed that the mean of experimental (M=14.28) and control (M=13.84) groups were same. The results of the pre-test also proved that the comprehension skills of both the groups were at the same level. The results of the pre-test were illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

t-test for Equality of Means							
						95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differe nce	Std. Error Differe nce	Lower	Upper
Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control	.612	48	.544	.440	.719	-1.006	1.886

The mean scores of the experimental and control groups were compared by using an Independent Samples t-test. Since the observed t (.612) was less than the critical t (2.064) with $df = 48$, the differences between the groups' pre-tests were not significant. Table 3 shows the results on the post-test.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	25	16.7600	2.61852	.52370
Control	25	14.7200	2.20832	.44166

The means presented in Table 4.3 showed that the experimental group received higher scores on the post-test than the control group. The graphic organizer group performed significantly better than the control group. Thus, it could be claimed that the graphic organizer group outperformed the control group. The mean scores of the experimental and control groups were compared the difference by using an Independent Samples t-test in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

t-test for Equality of Means							
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.97	48	.005	2.04	.685	.662	3.41

Since the observed t (2.978) was greater than the critical t (2.021) with df 48, the differences between the groups' post-tests were significant at the level of ($p < 0.05$) and the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on the post-test. It was thought that it would be appropriate to make one single comparison by comparing pre and post- test scores of experimental group with pre and post- test scores obtained by the control group. The aim was to arrive at a final conclusion about the effectiveness of the graphic organizer treatment.

Discussion

The findings of the current study regarding the effects of discourse structure-based graphic organizers on students' reading comprehension of selected texts will be presented and discussed with reference to the literature. Then, the findings related to the differences between using graphic organizer and the conventional comprehension method will be presented and discussed. Suzuki (2006) supports the findings of the study and noted that graphic organizers might work well when students are required to find key points and note information in the text. Graphic organizers improve active processing and reorganization of information so it is recommended

that they should be exploited as a support or an alternative to note-taking and summarizing. The success of the experimental group could be explained from two perspectives on the basis of this information. While completing the graphic organizers, the students felt an urgent need to find the key points in the text so they had an opportunity to reorganize the information in the reading passage. The graphic organizer treatment caused the participant students in this study to perform significantly better on the post-tests.

The findings of the current study are also in line with the propositions of the Paivio (1991) Dual Coding Theory. The theory posits that enhanced processing of information can take place if linguistic input is presented with congruent visual input because this facilitates dual coding of information. Since the graphic organizers used in the present study included lines, arrows and spatial arrangement, the students had an opportunity to store the contents of the texts in the form of both verbal information and visual images. This might be one of the reasons that led to the higher scores in the post-tests given after the students had been involved in graphic organizer activities. A study carried out by Suzuki, Sato and Awazu (2008) found that the spatial graphic display enhanced EFL readers' comprehension of sentences more than the sentential display did. The results of the current study appear to support their finding.

The present study confirms the findings of Grabe and Jiang (2010) study; they propose a set of guidelines that teachers should pay utmost attention to while developing graphic organizers. According to Grabe and Jiang (2010), well-developed graphic organizers should highlight the most salient information in the text. One of the aims should be to reflect the macro level structure of the text as well as the local structure. Moreover, the teacher should be sensitive about making the interrelationships and patterns of organization in the text clear to the students. Apart from these, it is a necessity to present the content of the text in a way that is closest to the original while developing discourse structure-based graphic organizers. If the graphic organizers in question are partially completed, the teacher should make sure that they have effective clues for the blanks. If the texts and the related graphic organizers used in this study are scrutinized, it could be observed that the graphic organizers meet the criteria proposed by Grabe and Jiang (2010). This might have been one of the reasons that caused the experimental group to perform significantly better than the control group.

CONCLUSION

The quantitative data gathered from the students' performance which were administered at the end of each procedure during the ten sessions of treatment shed some light on the use of the discourse structure-based graphic organizers in reading comprehension. The post-test scores of the two groups for both the graphic organizer and the conventional performances were calculated and compared with each other to see the effects of the graphic organizer treatment. This comparison indicated that the learners performed better on post-tests when they completed discourse structure-based graphic organizers as a post-reading activity in comparison to those that took part in a conventional method. The success of the graphic organizer treatment was consistent across the four texts used in the study. This finding supports what the literature indicates about the use of graphic organizers in reading comprehension.

The present study also confirms the findings of previous studies (Carrell, 1984, 1985; Martinez, 2002; Wang & Cao, 2009) that have highlighted the link between drawing students' attention to discourse structures in texts and facilitating improved reading comprehension. Thus the use of text structure, as a tool, can facilitate EFL students' reading comprehension of a text written in English. It is concluded that when EFL readers were made to consciously focus on the discourse structure of a text, their performance in reading comprehension was positively affected and they were able to reproduce more ideas from the text in question. Similarly, in the current study, the experimental students were able to reproduce more macro and micro level ideas from the texts in the summaries they wrote after completing the discourse structure-oriented graphic organizers.

There is a need to conduct a study that explores whether the inclusion of discourse-structure based graphic organizers has any effect on students' reading comprehension skills would be enlightening. Finally, it would be interesting and informative to learn the results of experimental studies that explore the effectiveness of the graphic organizer treatment in improving language skills other than reading.

REFERENCES

- Aebersold, J. A., & Field, M. L. (2003). *From reader to reading teacher: Issues and strategies for second language classrooms*. New York: Cambridge Language Education.
- Alvermann, D. E., & Boothby, P. R. (1986). Children's transfer of graphic organizer instruction. *Reading Psychology*, 7(2), 87-100.
- Barron, R. F. (1969). The use of vocabulary as an advance organizer. In H. L. Herber, & P. L. Sanders (Eds.), *Research in reading in the content areas: First year report*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, Reading and Language Arts Center.
- Brookbank, D., Grover, S., Kullberg, K., & Strawser, C. (1999). Improving student achievement through organization of student learning. *Chicago: Master's Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED435094).
- Boyle, J. R., & Weishaar, M. (1997). The effects of expert-generated versus student generated cognitive organizers on the reading comprehension of students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 12(4), 228-235.
- Carrell, P. L. (1984). The effects of rhetorical organization on ESL readers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 18(3), 441-469.
- Carrell, P. L. (1985). Facilitating EFL reading by teaching text structure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(4), 727-752.
- Carrell, P. L. (1996). Some causes of text-boundedness and schema interference in ESL reading. In P. L. Carrell, J. Devine & D. E. Eskey (Eds.), *Interactive approaches to second language reading* (pp. 101-113). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Olshtain, E. (2004). *Discourse and context in language teaching: A guide for language teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Doyle, C. S. (1999). *The use of graphic organizers to improve comprehension of learning disabled students in social studies*. Union, NJ: M. A. Research Project, Kean University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427313).
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Jiang, X. (2010). *Preparing teachers to teach discourse knowledge*. Paper presented at the AAAL Conference.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading*. London: Pearson Education.
- Hibbard, K. M., & Wagner, E. A. (2003). *Assessing and teaching reading comprehension comprehension and writing K-3 (Vol.2)*. New York: Eye on Education.
- Jiang, X. (2007). *The impact of graphic organizer instruction on college EFL students' reading comprehension*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ.
- Keene, E. O., & Zimmermann, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought: teaching comprehension in a Reader's workshop*. New York: Heinemann.
- Lee, J. W., & Schallert, D. L. (1997). The relative contribution of L2 language proficiency and L1 reading ability to L2 reading performance: A test of the threshold hypothesis in an EFL context. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31(4), 713-739.
- Lin, H., & Chen, T. (2006). Decreasing cognitive load for novice EFL learners: Effects of question and descriptive advance organizers in facilitating EFL learners' comprehension of an animation-based content lesson. *System*, 34(1), 416-431.
- Martinez, A. C. L. (2002). Empirical examination of EFL readers' use of rhetorical information. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(1), 81-98.
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching & learning*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Nuttall, C. (1996). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Jordan Hill: Heinemann.
- Paivio, A. (1991). Dual coding theory: Retrospect and current status. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 45(3), 255-287.
- Richards, J. C. (2009). *Connect (level 1 students' edition)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Slavin, R. E. (2011). *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*. NY: Pearson.
- Suzuki, A. (2006). Differences in reading strategies employed by students constructing graphic organizers and students producing summaries in EFL. *JALT Journal*, 34(1), 416-431.
- Suzuki, A., Sato, T., & Awazu, S. (2008). Graphic display of linguistic information in EFL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 42(4), 591-616.
- Wang, M., & Cao, Y. (2009). The effects of text structure, structure awareness and proficiency level on EFL learners' reading test performance. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 6(2), 14-18.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF TURN-TAKING AND WAIT TIME ON IRANIAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM INTERACTION ENHANCEMENT

Parviz Habibi

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan, Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This paper aimed to examine how signals of verbal turn-takings and wait-time strategies enhance the quality of speeches and conversations regarding the choice of various turn-takings. Movie clips from the New Interchange course book 1 (Richards, 2011) were chosen and considered as the materials of the study. Sixty participants were selected based on the homogeneity test at the pre-intermediate level and then they were non-randomly divided into two control and experimental groups. The participants took a conversation exam as a pre-test and talk in pairs on various subjects. The pre-test scores were recorded at the beginning of treatment. During the treatment period, the experimental group received treatment of turn-taking and wait-time strategies through explaining theses conversation strategies in the classrooms. The control group received traditional method of teaching conversations including role playing, class activities on different topics and the New Interchange Students' book 1. Both groups received the same time and materials. The treatment lasted 10 sessions each 60 minutes to observe and collect data through recording the participants' conversations in the classrooms considering their uses of turn-taking and wait-time strategies. Finally, they took a post-test on the same subjects they had in the pre-test. The scoring of participants' utterances in turn-taking and wait-time was rated by two raters to arrive at inter-rater reliability indexes. The reliability of scoring was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis. Independent and Paired Samples t-test were used to determine the differences between the two group oral performances in the pre and post-tests. Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in terms of using more turn-taking and wait-time strategies. Thus, this study suggests the explicit method of teaching turn-taking and wait-time strategies in teaching conversations and oral performances.

KEYWORDS: Turn-Taking, Wait time, English language classroom, Oral performances

INTRODUCTION

The concept of turn-taking covers a wide range of concern which it is not just a theoretical construction in the linguistic field of discourse analysis, but an important pattern in

communicative events, governing speech-acts and defining social roles as it establishes and maintains social relationships. One cue associated with turn-taking is that of wait time. Within turn-taking, wait time may cue the hearer to know that they have a turn to speak or make an utterance. Turn-taking is considered to play an essential role in structuring people's social interactions in terms of control and regulation of conversations. Therefore, the system of turn-taking has become object of analyses both for linguists and for sociologists. As a matter of fact, turn-taking refers to the process by which people in a conversation decide who is to speak next. It depends on both cultural factors and smart cues. Turn-taking is one of the basic mechanisms in conversation, and the convention of turn-taking varies between cultures and languages (Bakeman & Gnischi, 2005).

Rich turn-taking is an available feature of human- spoken dialogue. A *turn* is the essential factor within turn taking, which is attached to a speaker. Each speaker takes *turns* within conversation. A speaker is someone creating some sort of utterance or speech act directed towards an audience of one or more people. Very generally, turn-taking in linguistics can be defined as "the process through which the party doing the talk at the moment is changed, (Walsh, 2011). Thus, turn-taking has to do with the allocation and acquisition of turns i.e. how turns are exchanged in a talk or conversation (Brock & Hopson, 2008). Turn allocation is about giving turns to the next speaker(s), while turn acquisition describes how turns are received. In other words, turn acquisition determines the kind of action(s) the next speaker(s) can or should take when it is his/her turn.

Turn-taking is one of the basic mechanisms in conversation and the nature of turn taking is to promote and maintain talk. For smooth turn-taking, the knowledge of both the linguistic rules and the conversational rules of the target language is required. According to Bailey, Plunkett and Scarpa (1999), during a conversation, turn-taking may involve a cued gaze that prompts the listener that it is their turn or that the speaker is finished talking. There are two gazes that have been identified and associated with turn-taking. The two patterns associated with turn-taking are mutual-break and mutual-hold. Mutual-break is when there is a pause in the conversation and both participants use a momentary break with mutual gaze toward each other and then breaking the gaze, then continuing conversation again. This type is correlated with a perceived smoothness due to a decrease in the taking of turns. Mutual-hold is when the speaker also takes a pause in the conversation with mutual gaze, but then still holds the gaze as he/she starts to speak again (Brown, 1994).

Turn-taking as a pedagogical approach is at the core of teaching and learning in any subject. It comprises instructional and regulative components as it takes into account what kind of knowledge is to be exchanged and how it should be transmitted (Brockne, Desai & Oorro, 2001). Since common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way language is used Conversational rules vary in different cultures and different languages. One of the essential observations of conversational analysis is that, when conversing, participants obviously change their roles of speaker and hearer, i.e., they take turns (Walsh, 2011).

In the second language class, interactions between teachers and students serve as the main point for learning how to use the language. After the teacher asks a question, students mentally process their answers (Auer, 1996). They hear the question, determine the sounds and recognize its meaning and begin to form an answer. How long does it take to answer a question? How long should a teacher wait for an answer? Does it take longer to answer a question in the target language than in English? These are some of the questions that this study investigates.

Wait-time—the pause for thinking after questions and answers refers to the process by which people in a conversation decide who is going to speak next. It depends on both cultural factors and smart cues. In fact, the participant as Ellis (1997) states, look at language learning as an outcome of participating in discourse, particularly face-to-face interaction. This interpersonal interaction is thought of as a fundamental requirement of second language acquisition (SLA) (Bangerter, Clark & Katz, 2004).

A more important nonverbal behavior is *wait-time*, which is considered as the pause between conversational turns. In reality, wait time marks when a conversational turn begins or ends. If a teacher asks a question, the wait time both allows and prompts students to formulate an appropriate response. Studies (e.g. Good & Brophy, 2002), of on classroom interaction generally show that wait times in most classes are remarkably short-less than one second. Unfortunately, wait times this short can actually interfere with most students' thinking; in one second, most students either cannot decide what to say or can only recall a simple, automatic fact (Tobin, 1987). Increasing wait times to several seconds has several desirable effects: students give longer, more elaborate responses, they express more complex ideas, and a wider range of students participate in discussion (Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober & Brennan, 2001).

As with eye contact, preferred wait times vary both among individuals and among groups of students, and the differences in expected wait times can sometimes lead to ashamed and difficult conversations (Luu, 2010). Though there are many exceptions, girls tend to prefer longer wait times than boys-perhaps contributing to an opinion that girls are unnecessarily shy or that boys are self-centered or without thinking. Students from some ethnic and cultural groups tend to prefer a much longer wait time than is typically available in a classroom, especially when English is the student's second language (Toth, 2004). When a teacher converses with a member of such a groups therefore what feel to the student like a respectful pause may seem like hesitation or resistance to the teacher. Yet other cultural groups actually prefer overlapping comments-a sort of negative wait time.

In these situations, one conversational partner will begin at exactly the same example as the previous speaker, or even before the speaker has finished (Chami-Sather & Kretschmer, 2005). The negative wait time is meant to signal lively interest in the conversation. A teacher who is used to a one-second gap between comments, however, may regard overlapping comments as rude interruptions, and may also have trouble getting chances to speak. Even though longer wait times are often preferable, therefore, they do not always work well with certain individuals or groups (Donato, 2000).

For teachers, the most widely useful advice is to match wait time to the students' preferences as closely as possible, regardless of whether these are slower or faster than what the teacher normally prefers. To the extent that a teacher and students can match each other's pace, they will communicate more comfortably and fully, and a larger proportion of students will participate in discussions and activities. As with eye contact, observing students' preferred wait-time is easier in situations that give students some degree of freedom about when and how to participate, such as open-ended discussions or informal conversations throughout the day (Ansarey, 2012).

In order to begin a conversation, participants must form a relationship, and to do this they must in some sense be of the same order. Any relationship must necessarily be based on partial equivalence. There is a need to establish a temporarily-shared reality among participants. Participants, to some degree, must agree upon a world-view, a cosmology. Common ground-a set of propositions which make up the contextual background for the utterances to follow-must be established.

Conversation is a type of discourse: it is spoken dialogic discourse. Thus, conversation analysis may be seen as a subfield of discourse analysis. Conversation analysis involves close examination of internal evidence within the (spoken) text. One type of conversation analysis is conversational ethno-methodology: Ethno-methodologists are primarily concerned with the tacit rules which regulate the taking-up by speakers of the running topic, and hence the change-over from speaker to speaker (Walsh, 2011).

The importance of conversation to our normative life is increasingly evident. Everything you do, say and present is a conversation or the opportunity for a conversation: what you say at a networking event, your website, your business card, your use (or misuse of social media), what you say at a meeting or event. All of these things are an opportunity to engage. Conversation is a form of interactive, spontaneous communication between two or more people who are following rules of politeness and ceremonies. It is polite give and take of subjects thought of by people talking with each other for company. A conversation works unpredictably for particular purposes since it is of a spontaneous nature (Walsh, 2011).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Turn-taking skills and learning how to wait are critical skills needed to develop cooperative play skills. Waiting is a required in life including waiting in line, waiting to get someone's attention, waiting while someone else is talking, waiting for a turn during play (Goodwin, 1981). As boring as it is, taking turns and knowing how to wait goes a long way. Turn taking for language refers to the back and forth interaction whether it is with gestures, signs, sounds, or words. Because conversations need to be organized, there are rules or principles for establishing who talks and then who talks next. This process is called turn-taking. Turn taking skills and learning how to wait are critical skills needed to develop cooperative play skills.

Turn-taking is usually considered to follow a simple set of rules, enacted through a perhaps more complicated system of signals. The most significant aspect of the turn-taking process is that, in

most cases, it proceeds in a very smooth fashion (Auer, 1996). Speakers signal to each other that they wish to either yield or take the turn through syntactic, pragmatic, and prosodic means. The organization of turn-taking provides "an intrinsic motivation for listening." As any given listener might be selected to speak next, s/he must cope with responding to the previous utterances. Bickmore and Cassell (2005) observed a number of characteristics in conversation, among them: Variable turn order and size; variable distribution of turns; overlapping is common, but brief; and overlapping is promptly repaired (when two parties find themselves speaking at the same time, one of them will stop). Given these characteristics, it is obvious, according to Sacks et al., that turn-allocation techniques are being used. The current speaker may select a different next speaker, or either party may self-select (Luu, 2010).

This paper is concerned with those turn-allocation techniques that are "obviously" present. In summary, turn-taking consists of a set of rules, which are enacted through the use of signals (Duncan, 1972, 1973). Goffman (1981) refers to a turn at talk as an opportunity to hold the floor, not what is said while holding it. Though most researchers use the terms turn and floor interchangeably, Edelsky (1981) maintains that the concept of floor correlates with "the acknowledged what's-going-on within a psychological time/space" (p. 209). A floor may therefore consist of several turns, just as it is possible to take a turn without having the floor. A person may even continue to control the floor while s/he is not talking. Although turn-taking mechanisms seem to be universal, they are subject to cultural variation. Fox, Jean and Schrock(2002) also consider turn-taking as a complex process, possible through the interaction of both phonological and syntactic cues.

Turn-taking is usually considered to follow a simple set of rules, designed through a perhaps more complicated system of signals. The most significant aspect of the turn-taking process is that, in most cases, it proceeds in a very smooth fashion. Speakers signal to each other that they wish to either yield or take the turn through syntactic, pragmatic, and prosodic means. Goodwin (1981), reporting on a comparison by Good and Brophy (2002), proposes that everyday conversation is resembled to short-wave radio as to how the turn-taking is performed. The speaker provides an end-of-message signal, after which the hearer holds the channel, bringing about a change in the speaker/hearer roles.

The difference between the two types of interaction is that, in a normal conversation, speakers benefit themselves of other means or mechanisms to provide that end-of-message signal. BickmoreandCassell (2005) observed a number of characteristics in conversation, among them: Variable turn order and size; variable distribution of turns; overlapping is common, but brief; and overlapping is promptly repaired (i.e., when two parties find themselves speaking at the same time, one of them will stop). Given these characteristics, it is obvious, according to Sacks et al., that turn-allocation techniques are being used. The current speaker may select a different next speaker, or either party may self-select. .

Bikmore et al. (2005) propose a set of rules that apply at each transition-relevance place, that is, at the point where a next turn can be expected. In each transition relevance place, choices are presented to both speaker and hearer(s) as to who is to utter the next turn-

constructional unit. However, Sacks and his colleagues did not explain the signals employed in communicating such choices. Their rules only specify that, at any given transition-relevance place, the turn-so-far might be “so constructed” as to involve, or not to involve, the use of speaker self-selection. In summary, turn-taking consists of a set of rules, which are enacted through the use of signals.

What is a Turn?

A turn is different from the situation where a speaker produces backchannel signals (Walsh, 2011). Backchannel signals, such as uh-huh, right, yeah, etc., are signals that the channel is still open, and they indicate at the same time that the listener does not want to take the floor. Duncan (1972) also establishes a distinction between simultaneous turn and simultaneoustalking. Instances of the first involve true overlapping, whereas instances of simultaneous talking do not always imply that the current hearer intends to take the turn; they might just be the result of backchannel signals overlapping with the current speaker’s turn. According to Edelsky (1981), turn definitions can be grouped in two main camps: Mechanical and interactional (Fouche, 2005). Goffman (1981) says that a turn is the opportunity to hold the floor, not necessarily what is said while holding it. On the other hand, interactional definitions are concerned with what happens during the interaction, and take into consideration the intention of the turn taker. Edelsky (1981) points out that speakers are more concerned with completing topics than structural units. Therefore, she defines turn as instances of on-record speaking, with the intention of conveying a message.

Speaking Skill

"Speaking" is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal chords, tongue, teeth and lips Groepe (2009). When we learn our own (native) language, learning to speak comes before learning to write. In fact, we learn to speak almost automatically. It is natural. But somebody must teach us to write. It is not natural. In one sense, speaking is the "real" language and writing is only a representation of speaking. However, for centuries, people have regarded writing as superior to speaking. It has a higher "status". This is perhaps because in the past almost everybody could speak but only a few people could write.

Modern influences are changing the relative status of speaking and writing. Speaking is a communication skill that enables a person to verbalize thoughts and ideas (Donato, 2000). There are two instances when such a skill is required and these are: interactive and semi-interactive. In the first instance (interactive), this would involve conversations with another person or group of persons whether face-to-face or over the phone, wherein there is an exchange of communication between two or more people. In the second instance, semi-interactive happens when there is a speaker and an audience such as in the case of delivering a speech, wherein the speaker usually does all the talking, while the audience listens and analyzes the message, expressions, and body language of the speaker. Every single day, we are given opportunities to speak (Ansarey, 2012).

At home, the interaction with family members and neighbors and ask driving directions from passersby. We converse with the waitress at the local pub. At work, talk to colleagues and

superiors and in addition discuss business issues and concerns during business meetings (Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober&Brennan, 2001). People with less average communication skills, particularly speaking skills, may have difficulty in gatherings, including social, personal, or business-related. The speaker does not know how to put his thoughts and ideas into words or he simply does not have enough confidence to speak in the presence of other people. Regardless of what may be the reason for this, it leads to one thing: ineffective communication. And a person who cannot communicate effectively would find it difficult to strike a good impression on others, especially on their superiors (Ansarey, 2012).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With regard to the intended contents of the ongoing research the following research questions are raised:

RQ1. Can wait-time strategies improve Iranian pre-intermediate learners' speaking skills in conversations?

RQ2. Do turn-taking strategies affect Iranian pre-intermediate learners' speaking skills in conversations?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In the present study, the population was 90 male students who studied English as a foreign language in Danesh institution in Dezful, Iran. Non-random sampling method was used for the selection of these participants. They took part in a homogeneity test based on Oxford Placement test at the pre-intermediate level to homogenize the participants. Then sixty students whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were chosen as the participants of the present study. The level of the placement test was designed for pre-intermediate learners. They were non-randomly divided into two groups, one experimental and one control. Each group included thirty participants. Experimental group has benefited from turn-taking and wait- time in conversation while the control group used the traditional way of talking in the conversation sessions or role playing and they were exposed to turn-taking and wait-time strategies implicitly. The participants were within the age range of 15 to 17.

Instrumentation

In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study, the following instruments were employed:

The oxford placement test for the pre-intermediate learners was used to determine the homogeneity of the participants. This test featured 50 multiple choice-items covering vocabulary and grammar. The allocated time was sixty minutes to answer. Pre-test and post-test were designed by giving the learners the topics used in the course book and their conversation were recorded to test their wait-time and turn-taking strategies. Their presentations were rated by two raters to assess the inter-rater reliability index. The main sources of data collection for this

study were direct classroom observation and recording conversation between 2 or 3 minutes in each small group conversing related topics.

Materials

Interchange Book 1, fourth edition (Jack, C. Richards, 2011): It consists of ten units. The materials used in this study included reading and topics concerned with turn-taking and wait-time while students are interact together and proposed the topics and managed the conversations.

Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study, first 90 male were selected from Danesh institution in Dezful in district one, then a homogeneity test based on Oxford Placement Test: The pre-intermediate level was administered to the participants under study to determine their homogeneity and to divide the sample population into two groups. The two groups, 30 learners each, were selected non-randomly: one experimental and one control group. They met for one hour and a half, once a week.

In the first session of the course, a pre-test containing working on the given topics was administered to the participants before treatment in order to determine how well the participants know the wait-time and turn-taking strategies in performing oral performances before treatment. Then the conversations in pairs or peers were recorded and scored by two raters to estimate their inter-rater reliability of the scores. The Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to calculate the reliability index as ($r=.685$). The treatment was based on the actual lesson instructions and technical terms on the topics regarding turn-taking and wait-time in the sessions. In each session, the first hour was allotted to lesson instruction and the rest to explain and teaching the turn-taking and wait-time in the experimental group. The same procedure was used in the control group but the turn-taking and wait-time strategies were taught implicitly. The whole research took place in language institution classroom circumstance. To motivate and encourage the participants to pay enough attention and to play more active role in the research program, they were told that the purpose of the extra instruction was to improve their quality in conversation and how got the meaning of the partner intention through wait time while their conversation.

The entire research project took place in ten sessions. In the experimental group, 10 topics were chosen regarding to conversation with change of the roles between teacher and participants or between the participants. During four sessions of instruction, 90 minutes each, 60 minutes were allocated to main performances and the 30 minutes of the time dealt with discussion on the turn-taking and wait-time through showing some clips within the book. The experimental groups were considering turn-taking and wait time and while the other one were in a traditional way and ordinary conversation in which the above strategies were taught without awareness in an implicit method. In order to teach and investigate on the effect of the turn-taking and wait-time in the experimental classes, the following phases were carried out:

In the first session, first of all, it was supposed to teach main lesson and then describe and explain about turn-taking and wait-time as clarification the point and get the student familiar to turn-taking and wait time and how they should get turn to answer the questions and in their

conversations through showing some clips within the book and clarify some signals and cues which showed as turn-taking and wait-time signals.

In each session, after reading the passage, the teacher presented the students with the challenging turn-taking and wait time to ask questions and answers of the students and also in their conversation together. When the teacher is the current speaker, then firstly the teacher can nominate a student to be the next speaker. If the teacher does not nominate the next speaker, then the teacher must continue the turn. If a student is the current speaker then they select the next speaker and the teacher takes the turn. If the student does not select the next speaker then anyone can self-select as next speaker, with the teacher taking the turn if they self-select. If the teacher or another learner does not self-select then the student continues the turn.

The students were asked individually to come the board and interact with teacher based on considering the turn-taking and wait time and also in pairs between students as show the point and clarify the turn-taking and wait time by changing the role speaker and hearer directly and tangible as sample to other students until the time let us. After during forth session and continue that way, it was tried to record some conversation actually some clips with high quality by using camera and video-tape from forth session to last session and finally were tried to transcribe them on paper. After recording some clips as sources to assess the performances, the topics were discussed.

The control group receives the same strategies implicitly and was taught in traditional and ordinary conversation. The participants in the control group conversed with no turn taking or wait time strategy in the classroom interactions and conversation, whereas the experimental group got benefit of turn-taking and wait time while talking to each other in the form of conversation. In reality, the basic aim behind the study was exploring the impact of turn taking and wait time upon conversation enhancement and satisfaction from what has been spoken as a concluding remark.

These conversations on the post-test were recorded in each group and rated by two raters to estimate the inter-rater correlation (i.e. Pearson correlation analysis). The pre-test reliability index for the post-test was ($r=.808$) which showed appropriate scoring. Both the pre-test and the post-test were performed as part of the classroom evaluation activities under the supervision of the instructor. Having data collected, the researcher processed the data using the statistical package for social sciences (version 17). Independent Samples t-test was used to determine the differences between the two groups' pre and post-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Pre-test

At the beginning of the study, two groups were given a pre-test which their statistical data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test , Experimental vs. Control)

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test Experimental	30	51.266	24.586	4.488
Pre-test Control	30	48.900	13.717	2.504

As can be seen in Table 1, the number of the students in the two groups is 30. Initially, each student's pre-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each groups, were calculated. Results indicated that the average means for two groups was near to each other. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out that the SD of the experimental group was 24.586 to compare the SD of control group that was 13.717. In order to find out whether the difference among the performances of the two groups was statistically significant, Independent Sample t- test for the two groups was applied.

Table 2: Independent Samples Test (Pre-test, Experimental vs. Control)

t-test for Equality of Means							
Pre-test Experimental vs. Pre-test Control	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differen ce	Std. Error Differen ce	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.460	58	.647	2.366	5.140	-7.922	12.655
Equal variances not assumed	.460	45.45	.647	2.366	5.140	-7.983	12.716

Since the observed t (.460) is less than the critical t (2.000) with df=58 the difference between the Pre-test of the groups is not significant. Thus the groups are homogeneous at the beginning of the study.

Results of the Post-test

Descriptive statistics of the post-tests' oral performance in the pre-test was calculated in the Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test , Experimental vs. Control)

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test Experimental	30	70.000	13.838	2.526
Post-test Control	30	58.366	23.388	4.270

Table 3 shows the number of the students in two groups is 30. Initially, each student's post-test score on the proficiency test was obtained. Then descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation of each group were calculated. Regarding the standard deviation (SD), it was found out

that the SD of experimental group was 13.838, and SD of the control group was 23.38. To estimate the exact difference between the post-tests of the two groups, Independent Sample t-test was run in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Samples Test (Post-test, Experimental vs. Control)

t-test for Equality of Means							
Post-test Experimental vs. Post-test Control						95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Upper
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differe nce	Std. Error Differen ce	Lower	
Equal variances assumed	2.345	58	.022	11.63	4.961	1.701	21.565
Equal variances not assumed	2.345	47.09	.023	11.63	4.961	1.652	21.614

Table 4 shows that the average means for two groups was not near to each other and the difference among the two groups is significant. Since the observed t (2.345) is greater than the critical t (2.000) with df=58 the difference between the Pre-test of the groups is significant. Thus the groups are homogeneous at the beginning of the study.

Discussion

Results of the study showed that the control and experimental groups were almost homogeneous based on the pre-test scores. To answer the research question, an Independent Sample t-test was conducted to find if there were any meaningful differences between the results of the experimental and control groups in the post-test. The analysis of covariance rejected the null hypothesis revealing a significant difference between turn taking and wait time users and nonusers. The main aim of learning a language is to use it in communication in its spoken or written forms. Classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. It is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to a mutual effect on each other. Through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can use all they possess of the language-all they have learned or casually absorbed-in real life exchanges (Gass & Sellinker, 1994).

Therefore, in line with the above mentioned statements and the present study, it could be strongly argued that Turn taking and wait time activities strategy instruction can significantly influence EFL language learners' developing conversation. Simply, this study represents a preliminary effort to empirically examine the effect of Turn taking and wait time upon Iranian institution in Dezful city. Further researches are needed for a thorough understanding of this issue and for the confirmation of its findings. This is especially true when conducting research with more variables than those in the present study. It is also recommended that this study be replicated with a larger

number of participants and over the whole semester or the whole year. In addition, it would be interesting to compare results across levels of proficiency as well as gender.

The results of this study are matched with Brown (1994) who emphasize the importance of interaction among human beings and using language in various contexts to “negotiate” meaning, or simply stated, to get one idea out of your head and into the head of another person and vice versa.

The results showed that there was not a significance difference among students’ performance in pre-test, but in contrast there was a significant difference among the performances of the two groups in the post-test. Thus, it could be observed that students who received turn-taking and wait-time strategy instruction got better marks and their performance was better than another group. By looking at the groups’ means the results of post-test by Independent Sample t-test revealed that experimental group had the greatest improvement in their scores based on their conversations. The learners of experimental group after ten sessions outperformed the other groups. Therefore, the second research null hypothesis was rejected. The reasons behind this result could be discussed in terms of the effectiveness of turn-taking and wait-time on the quality of conversation in classroom interaction. Results showed a significant difference with between the experimental and control group. The above mentioned reasons might be the explanation of why the experimental group did better than the control group. The fact that experimental group outperformed the control group indicates that use of turn-taking and wait-time strategy in conversation let the students to think more and more about utterances and lead to mutual understanding and also give and ask opinion to be qualified the conversation.

The present study raised a number of questions requiring further research in the area of wait-time and turn-taking and its influence on conversation development. First of all, it is of importance to confirm more normative data with typically developing learners for wait time and turn taking. Similar research in respect of this trend might be valuable, especially with respect to interference programs in conversation classes. Turn-taking as pedagogical strategy which has shown turn-taking is a complex process which is influenced by various factors including classroom power relation and enhances the quality of conversation between students. The similar research which confirms this study is Turn-taking in the classroom which was conducted by Bakeman and Gnischi (2005) at University of Rome, Italy which has shown turn-taking could identify interactive patterns characterizing teachers’ strategies which could contribute to a mutual and better understanding of the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, it is important to determine whether similar results in terms of wait time and turn taking trends would be found when studying a larger plenty of participants. It would also be beneficial to study samples outside of Iran to determine if the same outcome applies not only for non native English speaking learners but also to children speaking British, Australian and American English or languages other than English. Moreover, wait time and turn taking trends regarding conversation require further investigations. Although a positive correlation with conversation was observed in the current study. Future findings might contribute to a better

understanding of the fact that some students benefit more from interference programs and, therefore, show better treatment outcomes than others.

CONCLUSION

The results showed that turn-taking and wait-time had a significant impact on experimental group performance in conversation aspect. In simple terms, conversation improvement of Iranian EFL learners could be attributed to turn taking and wait time instruction. The results of the study also indicated that the members of the experimental group achieved better results in the conversation than their counterparts in the control group did.

In the course of this study many questions have risen some of which are included here with the hope that they will be pursued and investigated. It is strongly suggested that a research with the same characteristics of this study including more participants to be conducted in an attempt to find the obtained results. Similar studies can be done on other proficiency levels, namely intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. Variables other than the ones used in this study can help the investigation of the same issue. For instance, the same experiment with male or female learners within the same age range is necessary to confirm the result of this study. This study lasted for ten sessions. Successful studies can allocate more time to the instruction of turn-taking and wait time to improve conversation and understanding better.

This study like any other research has its own limitations. The sample size was slightly limiting. Although it was moderate, more participants from different socioeconomic backgrounds may have reflected more natural results and a larger plenty of participants would have provided greater validity to the findings of the study and in addition to take part male and female. For finding out more investigation with considering both male and female, due to distribution of participants was not possible and lead to working on just one gender.

REFERENCES

- Ansarey, D. (2012). *Communicative language teaching in EFL contexts*. Teachers attitude and perception in Bangladesh.
- Auer, P. (1996). On the prosody and syntax of turn-continuations. In E. Couper-Kuhlen and M. Selting (eds.), *Prosody in conversation: Interactional studies* (pp. 57-100). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bailey, T. M. Plunkett, K., & Scarpa, E. (1999). A cross-linguistic study in learning prosodic rhythms: Rules, constraints, and similarity. *Language and Speech*, 42(1), 1-38.
- Bakeman, R., & Gnisci, A. (2005). Sequential observational methods. In M. Eid & E. Diener (Eds.), *Handbook of multi method measurement in psychology* (Chap. 6). Washington, DC: APA.
- Bangerter, A., Clark, H. H., & Katz, R. A. (2004). Navigating joint projects in telephone conversations. *Discourse Processes*, 37(1), 1-23. Symposium on Applying Machine Learning and Discourse Processing. Stanford, CA.

- Bickmore, T. W., & Cassell, J. (2005). Social dialogue with embodied conversational agents. In J. vanKuppevelt, L. Dybkjaer and N. Bernsen (eds.), *Advances in natural multimodal dialogue Systems*. Berlin: Springer.
- Bortfeld, H., Leon, S.D., Bloom, J.E., Schober, M.F., & Brennan, S.E. (2001). Disfluency rates in conversation: Effects of age, relationship, topic, role, and gender. *Language and Speech*, 44(2), 123-147.
- Brockne, B., Desai, Z., & Qorro, M. (2001). *Focus on fresh data on the language of instruction debate in Tanzania and South Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3rd Edition). New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Chami-Sather, G., & Kretschmer, R. (2005). Lebanese/Arabic and American children's discourse in group-solving situations. *Language and Education*, 19(1), 10-22.
- Donato, R. (2000). Socio cultural contributions to understanding the foreign and second language classroom. In J. P. Lantolf, (Ed), *Socio cultural theory and second language learning*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Duncan, S. (1972). Some signals and rules for taking speaking turns in conversations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 23, 283-292.
- Duncan, S. (1973). Some signals and rules for taking speaking turns in conversations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 23, 283-292.
- Edelsky, C. (1981). Who's got the floor? *Language in Society* 10, 383-421.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fouche, B. (2005). Qualitative research designs. In De Vos, AS, H. Strydom, C.B. Fouche & C.S.L. Delport (Eds), *Research at grass roots* (3rd edition). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Fox, T., Jean, E., & Schrock, J. C. (2002). Basic meanings of you know and I mean. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34, 727-747.
- Gass, S.M., & Sellinger, L. (1994). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Good, T., & Brophy, J. (2002). *Looking in classrooms* (9th edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Goodwin, C. (1981). *Conversational Organization: Interaction between Speakers and Hearers*. New York: Academic Press.
- Groepe, L. (2009). *English as a medium of instruction in Grade 11 Geography: A case of a secondary school in the Western Cape*. Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.
- Luu, T. T. (2010). Theoretical review on oral interaction in EFL class. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 1, 29-48.
- Richards, J. C. (2011). *New interchange I*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tobin, K. (1987). The role of wait time in higher cognitive functions. *Review of Educational Research*, 57(1), 69-95.
- Toth, P. (2004). When grammar instruction undermine cohesion in L2 Spanish classroom discourse. *The Modern Language Journal*, 88(1), 14-30.
- Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in Action*. London: Routledge.

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF TEACHING TEST-STRATEGIES ON READING COMPREHENSION TESTS

Farshid Sarmadi (Correspond Author)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Islamic Azad University, Ahar branch, Ahar, Iran
Sarmadi_farshid@yahoo.com*

Dr. Hanieh Davatgari Asl

*Department of English Language Teaching and Literature, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
Email: hdavatgar@ymail.com*

ABSTRACT

The current English language teaching (ELT) is based on the communicative principle whose aim is not only the acquisition of language knowledge but mainly the acquisition of the reading comprehending and answering the standard tests easily and correctly. However, the present method through the article should not be overestimated because there should be always a balance between the acquisition and learning of foreign language knowledge and skills so that pupils could achieve corresponding communicative competences. Of course, it is necessary to mention that the present study compared the use of distinct test taking strategies by Iranian Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In addition, the reading language skill should be integrated in ELT classes, so that pupils could focus more on functional use of language. Therefore, the purpose of this article is firstly to evaluate the role of using strategies through the standard tests; secondly, to explain the importance of strategies for learning the language very well through the test and exam; and finally, to propose methodological approaches to the successful development of the reading comprehension and taking test like MCRT test. Finally, the present research determined that all participants have a tendency towards the use of test-taking strategies and both male and female participants act similarly in terms of the use of test-taking strategies while performing MCRTs.

KEYWORDS: Language Learner, Testing, Test-Strategies, Reading

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of limitations and delimitations which are imposed on this study. This research requires the use of limited number of items in MCRTs. The reason for this limitation is to give enough opportunity for the test takers to take the test and think about the processes used by them while taking the test. Generalizability of the findings is limited to upper-intermediate level since such findings have been achieved on the basis of upper-intermediate male and female test takers' participation. This study is also limited to and mostly applicable with the adult test takers owing to the fact that test takers should have intellectual growth for thinking about the thinking process.

For the sake of manageability of research, the researcher used a single dependent variable, i.e. gender variation, to test the types of strategies used by test takers in performing MCRTs. As it is discussed in the introduction, MCRTs can be used to assess learners' reading comprehension, writing skill, knowledge of grammar and knowledge of vocabulary. However, the researcher delimited this research to the use of multiple choice test of reading comprehension. The reason for choosing only one type of MCRTs lies in the nature of manageability of research at this level.

One of the fruitful ways of measuring learners' reading comprehension is to ask them to carefully and deeply read the text and then answer a number of multiple choice questions. Weir (1990) defines a multiple choice test item as the selection of a correct answer from a number of options. This process requires the individual tests takers to opt for the best answer from among other options. However, it is not a direct and precise issue to talk about reading the text and selecting the best choice. In the process of test taking, the test takers are always fully involved to choose the best answer. This participation not only necessitates the use of specific language knowledge but also active and conscious operation on the process of answering the items. These processes are assumed as test-taking strategies which are closely related to language use strategies. According to Cohen (1998), language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. The prominent objective of the present study is to investigate the types of strategies used by the two different genders while taking MCRTs. In fact, this study seeks an opportunity to study the strategies and processes in Iranian EFL test-taking context. Taking language tests must not be viewed as a product; rather, it is a process in which test takers undertake a number of mental operations. Gaining an understanding of the underlying operations and strategies will help the teacher (in the classroom assessment) and the test administration experts (in large-scale testing) to design proper MCIs with reference to the various genders.

LITRATURE REVIEW

Accuracy

There are a number of researches carried out on accuracy. One important research which has an important effect on language teaching is EFL learners' oral accuracy which has been studied by Farrokhi and Cherazad (2012). According to Farrokhi and Cheahrazad (2012), historical background for focus on form is so important; that is, the researcher should have information about that to make a new and acceptable study. As explained above, Farrokhi and Chehrazad believed that the popular position in language teaching has been that the teachers or syllabus designers' first task is to analyze the target language. Eventually, it is the learner's job to synthesize the parts for use in communication, which is why Wilkins (1976) called this the synthetic approach to syllabus design. Depending on the analyst's linguistic preferences, the L2 is broken down into words and grammar rules, and etc. and presented to the learners in a linear and additive fashion according to such criteria as frequency, or difficulty. According to Long and Robinson (1998), synthetic syllabi, together with the corresponding materials, methodology, and classroom pedagogy, leads to lessons with a focus on forms. Moreover, as it is mentioned in Long and Robinson (1998), —synthetic syllabi, methods, and classroom practices either ignore language learning processes or tacitly assume a discredited behaviorist model in a way that the

learner's role is to synthesize the pieces for use in communication (p. 17). In addition to these problems, there is no needs analysis to identify a particular learner's or group of learners' communicative needs.

Recognition that the traditional synthetic syllabi and teaching procedures were not working as they were supposed to, led teachers, syllabus designers, and SLA theorists, to advocate the abandonment of a focus on forms in the classroom in favor of an equally single-minded focus on meaning. To this end, Communicative language teaching (CLT) was initiated in an effort to shift away from a sole focus on forms evident in the earlier structural approaches towards a focus on meaning and language use. Inspired by a theory of communicative competence (Hymes, 1971), its primary concern was to develop the ability of learners to use the second language meaningfully and appropriately in real life communication. CLT is not a uniform approach, however. One can distinguish between a strong and a weak form of CLT (Howatt, 1984). According to Wilkins (1976), therefore, a weak form of CLT is synthetic in its approach, as it advocates the teaching of linguistic units in isolation without allowing learners to infer rules during the holistic use of language. Conversely, a strong form of CLT argues that —language is acquired through communication (Howatt, 1984, p. 279). The strong version, thus, reflects what Wilkins refers to as an analytic approach to teaching, i.e. an approach in which it is the learner's task to analyze and discover the language. For language educators (Ellis, 2003), Task-based language teaching represents a strong form of CLT. It views —tasks as a means of enabling learners to learn a language by experiencing how it is used in communication (Ellis, 2003, p. 28)

Focus on Form

As mentioned above, different ideas and hypotheses have been described and explained about focus on form. Some researchers who have presented different ideas and explanations about focus of form are Hymes (1971), Wilkins (1976), Long and Robinson (1998), Ellis (2003) and so on.

Hymes' idea about focus on form

Understanding that the traditional synthetic syllabi and teaching methods were not working as they were supposed to, led teachers, syllabus designers, and SLA theorists, to advocate the abandonment of a focus on forms in the classroom in favor of an equally single-minded focus on meaning. To this end, CLT was initiated in an effort to change from a sole focus on forms evident in the earlier structural approaches towards a focus on meaning and language use.

Wilkins' idea about focus on form

One of the important and necessary duties of language teachers and syllabus designers is to analyze the goal, second or foreign language (Wilkins, 1976). As Wilkins explained the L2 or foreign language should be broken down into words, grammar rules and so on. Then the broken parts should be presented to the language learners in a liner additive fashion according to such criteria as frequency, or difficulty (1976). Of course it is important to know that according to Wilkins (1976), a weak form of CLT is synthetic in its approach, as it advocates the teaching of linguistic units in isolation without allowing learners to infer rules during the holistic use of language.

Long and Robinson's about focus on form

Although a purely analytic, a meaning-based form of task based teaching was an important step forward from synthetic approaches, SLA research believes that, if native-like proficiency is the goal of training, such an approach will not suffice either. There is an ever-growing consensus among L2 researchers, investigators and second language trainers that, in order to be effective, task based syllabuses, and analytical approaches in general, need to be augmented, at least at times by some type of grammar instruction (Long & Robinson, 1998). This study was based on researches that describing those learners are to get native-like grammatical competence, despite even extensive contact with the target language (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Ellis's idea about focus on form

But it is important to have some information about Ellis's idea about focus on form. According to Ellis (2003), the great version, therefore, describes what Wilkins refers to as an analytic approach to teaching, i.e. an approach in which it is the learner's task to analyze and discover the language. For language educators (Ellis, 2003 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrazad, 2012), task-based language teaching represents a strong form of CLT. It views tasks as a means of enabling learners to learn a language by experiencing how it is used in communication (Ellis, 2003, p. 28 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrazad, 2012).

Schmidt's idea about focus on form

As Long (2000) explains, focus on form is largely motivated by, albeit not exclusively, by Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990, 2001). This described hypothesis holds that noticing, a cognitive process that involves attending to the input learners receive, is inevitably a conscious process and is a necessary condition for second language learning. Schmidt (1990, 2001) has believed that attention and its subjective correlates noticing, i.e. registering formal features in the input, and noticing the gap, i.e. identifying how the input to which the learner is exposed differs from the output the learner is able to generate, are essential processes in L2 acquisition. Attention is generally considered a necessary condition for converting input into intake in the field of SLA (Schmidt, 1990, 2001 as cited in Farrokhi & Chehrazad, 2012; Smith, 1993). Gass (1990), for example, explains that nothing in the target language is available for intake into a learner's existing system unless it is consciously noticed (p.136).

According to Skehan and Foster (1999), these studies found no impact of task structure on the accuracy of performance. Although many researchers (Tavakoli and Skehan, 2005, Tavakoli, 2009) explained that task structure facilitates accuracy by devoting more important resources to it, Skehan and Foster (1999) found out that accuracy of the performance is affected by task structure when learners have the chance to engage in some kind of pre-task activity prior to task performance. So according to these studies, it can be concluded that task structure had no effect on the accuracy of the performance in the current study because the participants were not involved in any kind of pre-task activities before they performed the tasks. Accuracy was operationalized in terms of number of errors per a hundred words (Mehnert, 1998; Skehan, 1996; Sangarum 2005). It was gotten by dividing participants' total number of errors by the total number of words produced and multiplying the result by 100. All errors in syntax, morphology or

lexical choice were counted, including repetitions. Errors which were immediately self-corrected were not counted and errors in pronunciation were not included in the analysis.

Task-based language Teaching

As early as 1970s, (CLT) method became popular among second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and second language teachers (Skehan, 1996). According to Skehan (1996), Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is a realization of communicative language teaching. It is indeed the strong version of CLT, as tasks provide the foundation for an entire language program. Of course it is important to mention that Foster and Skehan (1999) found that there were some pre-mid- and post task activities that could be utilized to help language learners pay a balanced attention to both form and meaning simultaneously and improved the quality of learner language. As Ellis (2005) explained, planning is one of the task condition factors that affects second language production and has been of both theoretical importance to second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and of practical importance to language teachers. According to the importance of task planning factor in learners' task performance, there have been plenty of researches which have concentrated on the interaction of planning and task performance of language learners (Ellis, 1987; Foster & Skehan, 1996; Ortega, 1999; Robinson, 1995; Skehan & Foster, 1997, 1999; Yuan & Ellis, 2003; Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008).

Test Taking Strategies

In an informative article, titled *Strategies and Processes in Test Taking and SLA*, Cohen (1999) is concerned with how test-takers make use of strategies and processes while taking a test. In order to describe such processes, Cohen (1999) gives a definition of test-taking strategies and also introduces devices and methods of data collection. Finally, Cohen elaborates on the strategies for taking tests of reading and writing.

According to Cohen (1999), during the late 1970s, researchers felt a need to study the strategies students use in order to derive correct answer to class of items. This interest even increased in 1990s and language testing researchers related such studies to reliability and validity. It has been always assumed that a wrong answer to a question may not be traced to the participant's lack of proficiency, item inappropriateness but rather it may be the result of participant's inappropriate selection of test-taking strategies. Thus, strategy investigation attracted the attention of those working in the realm of SLA research tasks and instructional achievement testing approaches. Test-taking strategy is subservient to and an element of language use strategy. Thus, in order to explain test-taking strategies, one needs to have an understanding of language use strategies. Language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. This definition highlights some degree of consciousness and a matter of selection. Language use strategies constitute test-taking strategies when they are applied to tasks in language tests (Cohen, 1999). An important feature of test-taking strategies, as mentioned by Cohen (1999) is that strategies are context dependent; thus, different situations may require the use of various types of strategies. Besides, the frequency of strategy use varies from, context to context. Frequent use of test-taking strategies may be valued in some context. However, it may be inappropriate to use strategies in other contexts.

According to Cohen (1999), test-taking strategies can be identified and scrutinized using three different methods of data collection:

- Observation: observing what respondents do during the test.
- Designing items: designing specific items which elicit specific strategy use.
- Verbal reports: use of verbal reports while the items are being answered, immediately afterward, or sometime later.

The author of this article, Cohen (1999) provides detailed information on verbal reports. Cohen reports that verbal reports were used in first language research for the first time and were extended to SLA research afterwards. In fact, such reports help determine how respondents actually take tests of various kinds. Also, Cohen discussed two general testing formats, i.e. direct and indirect, in relation to strategy use. Indirect tests are tests that do not reflect real-world tasks. Such test types may encourage the use of strategies solely for the purpose of coping with the test format. Several researchers have studied the use of test-taking strategies while taking Multiple Choice Tests (MCT) as one type of indirect testing format (Mackay, 1974; Haney & Scott, 1987; Larson, 1981; Gordon, 1987 and Anderson et. al. 1991, all cited in Cohen, 1999). The general comment of the researchers working in this field was that participants may use different test taking strategies to arrive at answers; however, the efficiency is based on when the strategies are used and how effectively they are applied.

The aim of research in the case of Cloze Test is to see whether such a tests measure global reading skills as they are devised to do so. The research results suggest that Cloze Tests would suggest that such tests assess local-level reading more than they measure global reading ability. Furthermore, Cloze Tests are more likely to test for local-level reading when they are used in a foreign language test.

Direct tests resemble tasks of non-test condition or target language use. Three types of direct tests have been studied in relation to the test-taking strategies used. In the case of summarizing, respondents usually react to a set of perceived and real expectations on the part of the reader Cohen (1994), for example, claims that one strategy that test-takers use is to summarize by lifting material directly from the passage rather than restating it at higher level of abstraction. Like summarization, open-ended questions allow respondents to copy material directly from a text in their response. One strategy is to lift one material from immediate stimulus and use it as the answer. Another strategy is to introduce prepackaged, unanalyzed material and combine it with analyzed forms. Finally, Cohen (1999) studied composition as the third type of direct tests. The interpretation of essay topic is crucial and for this reason it is provided in a mini text. One strategy to succeed in writing compositions is to evaluate the nature of the task and its topic fully. Generally, an important consideration of the studies concerning test-taking strategies is to discuss the methods of elicitation. That is, tools which can be properly used to elicit the processes and operations selected by the test takers. Verbal report (Cohen, 1984, cited in Cohen 2006) is the primary research tool for this endeavor. He claims that verbal reports include data that reflect self-report, self-observation, and self-revelation. There are also two other ways of identifying test-taking strategies. The first one which is called observation is the process of observing what respondents do during the test. The second method is designing specific items which are

specialized in eliciting specific test-taking strategies. The researcher of the present study makes use of the test taking strategies to elicit proper answers from the Experimental group and Control group's test takers while taking MCRTs.

Multiple Choice Tests as a Kind of Test Method

"Test methods or test facets are aspects of the test method that may have an impact upon test scores (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007, p. 376)". As implemented in this definition, every test has specific aspects which can influence test score. What are those aspects which may change learners' performance? There have been distinct views on what constitutes a test. Researchers such as Carroll (1968), Clark (1972), Weir (1990) and Bachman (1990) have provided different frameworks of test method facets.

Carroll (1968) discussed test methods in terms of the stimulus and response characteristics. Later on, Clark (1972) added details to the stimulus and considered stimulus modalities as taking written, spoken, or pictorial form. Weir's (1990) framework is more informative while compared with the previous formworks proposed for test method facets. The framework given by this researcher included general descriptive parameters of communication, dynamic communicative characteristics, and task dimensions. During the history of development of test method facets, every researcher added more details to the previous framework. However, Bachman's (1990) framework seems to be more elaborated than the previous frameworks. Bachman (1990) classifies five major characteristics of test method facets including testing environment, test rubrics, input, response, and interaction between input and response.

What is of great concern is the fact that all these frameworks will lead to specific types of test based on the selection feature of underlying components. That is, distinct matching of elements will result in various kinds of tests which are used for measuring four major language skills. For testing reading comprehension, Weir (1990) introduced multiple-choice questions as a method of testing that requires the candidate to select the answer from a number of given options, only one of which is correct. According to Fulcher and Davidson (2007), multiple choice items contain two elements: stem and choices. In contrast to the stem which is a question or statement, the choices are correct and incorrect answers which the test taker needs to decide on as the response to the statement or question. The second method for testing reading comprehension, as stated by Weir (1990), is short answer questions. These are in fact questions that require the candidate to write down specific answers in spaces provided on the question paper. One more type of testing reading comprehension is the cloze test where words are deleted from a text after following a few sentences of introduction (Weir, 1990). Selective deletion gap filling and information transfer are the two other testing methods which were given by Weir (1990) for testing reading comprehension of learners.

There are a number of advantages for multiple choice tests. The widely known nature of multiple choice test exhibits its usefulness and acceptability in many context of language testing. The uses are not blind. Hence, they bear some advantages. Weir (1990) explains the following advantages:

- Multiple choice tests have marker reliability.

- It is possible to estimate in advance the difficulty level of each item and the test as a whole in the pre-test phase.
- The format of multiple choice tests makes it easy for the candidates to understand what they are required to do.
- The completion of other test types require the use some other skills which are not the subject for testing, but the completion of multiple choice tests do not.

The main objective of this study is to examine the types of strategies used by Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking MCRTs. In fact, the researcher seeks an opportunity to study the strategies and processes in Iranian EFL test-taking context.

Test taking Strategies and MCRT

Cohen (1998) studied the strategies for taking reading and writing. He distinguished between indirect and direct testing formats. By indirect testing formats, Cohen (1998) referred to MCRTs and cloze tests. He also described direct tests as summarization, open-ended questions, and composition. Regarding the relationship between test-taking strategies and MCRTs, Cohen (1998) introduced a series of strategies respondents may utilize in order to arrive at answers to multiple choice questions. Strategies for taking multiple choice reading comprehension test are present in Table 1.

Table 1: Strategies for taking a multiple choice reading comprehension test (Cohen, 1998)

Strategies for taking a multiple choice reading comprehension test
Read the text passage first and make a mental note of where different kinds of information are located.
Read the question for a second time for clarification.
Return to the text passage to look for the answer.
Find the portion of the text that the question refers to and look for clues to the answer.
Look for answers to questions in chronological order in the text.
Read the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.
Try to produce your own answer to the question before you look at the options that are provided in the test.
Use the process of elimination- i.e., select a choice not because you are sure that it is the correct answer, but because the other choices do not seem reasonable, because they seem similar or overlapping, or because their meaning is not clear to you.
Choose an option that seems to deviate from the others is special, is different, or conspicuous.
Select a choice that is longer/shorter than the others.
Take advantage of clues appearing in other items in order to answer the item under consideration.
Take into consideration the position of the option among the choices(first, second, etc)
Select the option because it appears to have a word or phrase from the passage in it- possibly a key word.
Select the option because it has a word or phrase that also appears in the question.
Postpone dealing with an item or selecting a given option until later.
Make an educated guess- e.g., use background knowledge or extra-textual knowledge in making the guess.
Budget your time wisely on this test.
Change your responses as appropriate-e.g., you may discover new clues in another item.

As it is assumed by Cohen (1998) the effectiveness and value of such strategies depend on two issues. The first issue relates to when such strategies are used. Secondly, the effectiveness of such strategies depends on how effectively test-taking strategies are used.

RESEARCH QUESTION

For the purpose of investigating and comparing the Experimental and Control group's test-takers' preferences in using different test-taking strategy-types in MCRTs, the following research questions are developed:

There is difference among Experimental group and Control group in performing MCRT test?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The general classification of this study included two subordinates; that is, the participants were divided into pilot group and project group. According to Dornyei (2007), a skilled researcher should always pilot his research instruments and procedures before launching his project. Also piloting is an important procedure in quantitative studies which possess psychometric properties. It is specially recommended in questionnaire surveys to achieve acceptable results (Dornyei, 2007). For this reason the researcher of this study explains the characteristics of each group separately under the following subheadings:

Participants through the present research

The main participants of this study were 40 EFL learners learning English at Alef Language Institute in Tabriz, Iran. As the purpose of this study was based on the comparison of Experimental and Control groups, two intact classes were chosen so that one class included 20 language learners and the other class had also 20 ones. The age range of participants in Experimental group was 20 to 38 (mean= 27 years old) and its counterpart in Control group was 18 to 26 (mean= 26 years old). The initial homogeneity of the two groups was examined through the use of the same standardized language proficiency test which was used by pilot group; that is the researcher used Preliminary English Test (2004) to estimate the homogeneity of the participants. In fact, the researcher used Reading section of PET which consisted of 35 questions to investigate the homogeneity of participants in terms of reading comprehension skill. The data from PET was analyzed using independent samples *t*-test (see Table 3.1). The results showed that there was not a significant difference between the groups, $t(38) = 0.33$, $p = 0.842$. The participants in both groups were mature enough to provide insightful information on what mental processes they would select while taking MCRTs. The Experimental group was given the strategies which were considered and the Control group was not given any quid.

Instruments

The researcher used three types of instruments in the present study. The instruments included a Preliminary English Test (PET), Multiple Choice Reading Comprehension Test (MCRT), verbal report, and finally list of strategies for taking a MCRT.

Procedure

The researcher of the present study compared the use of distinct test taking strategies by Iranian Experimental group and Control groups test takers while taking multiple choice reading comprehension tests. He also assumed and hypothesized that Iranian Experimental group and

Control group's EFL learners undertake various test taking processes and perform differently while trying to answer multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In this chapter, the researcher will give the details of the research design, participants, instrumentation, procedure, and data analysis. One of the fruitful ways of measuring learners' reading comprehension is to ask them to carefully and deeply read the text and then answer a number of multiple choice items. Weir (1990) defines a multiple choice item as the selection of a correct answer from a number of options. This process requires the individual tests takers to opt for the best answer from among other options. However, it is not a direct and precise issue to talk about reading the text and selecting the best choice. In the process of test taking, the test takers are always fully involved to choose the best answer. This participation not only necessitates the use of specific language knowledge but also active and conscious operation on the process of answering the items. These processes are assumed as test-taking strategies. Test-taking strategies are closely related to language use strategies. According to Cohen (1998) language use strategies are mental operations or processes that learners consciously select when accomplishing language tasks. It is assumed that Control group's test takers use more distinct mental operations than Experimental group's test takers while performing on a MCRT.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was an attempt to scrutinize the type of test-taking strategies used in MCRTs by Experimental EFL learners. It also investigated Iranian Control EFL learners' use of test-taking strategies while taking MCRTs. The three research questions of the present study all focused on the use of test-taking strategies by Iranian EFL learners. After collecting data from both groups of Iranian EFL learners through the use of standardized English proficiency test and Cohen's list of test-taking strategy use, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 11.5 to analyze the data. Furthermore, the same test, i.e. Independent-samples t-test was used for estimating the relationship between independent categorical variable, i.e. gender variation and the use of test taking strategies. The results of the data analyses are presented in the following sections.

The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

Data Analysis of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

One of the main issues concerned in this study was investigating the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental EFL learners who are taking part in multiple choice reading comprehension tests. In this part the researcher will present the type of strategies used by Experimental participants based on Cohen's (1998) list of test-taking strategies.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

	Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Q1	8	40%	6	30%	4	20%	2	10%	0	0%
Q2	9	45%	4	20%	5	25%	0	0%	2	10%
Q3	10	50%	9	45%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Q4	9	45%	8	40%	3	15%	0	0%	0	0%
Q5	0	0%	12	60%	5	25%	0	0%	3	15%
Q6	4	20%	7	35%	2	10%	5	25%	2	10%
Q7	1	5%	2	10%	2	10%	8	40%	7	35%
Q8	3	15%	5	25%	9	45%	1	5%	2	10%
Q9	0	0%	8	40%	4	20%	7	35%	1	5%
Q10	2	10%	3	15%	2	10%	5	25%	8	40%
Q11	1	5%	10	50%	4	20%	1	5%	4	20%
Q12	0	0%	6	30%	10	50%	0	0%	4	20%
Q13	6	30%	9	45%	3	15%	2	10%	0	0%
Q14	3	15%	9	45%	3	15%	2	10%	3	15%
Q15	1	5%	3	15%	9	45%	4	20%	3	15%
Q16	3	15%	4	20%	9	45%	4	20%	0	0%
Q17	5	25%	5	25%	4	20%	4	20%	2	10%
Q18	1	5%	9	45%	7	35%	1	5%	2	10%

Q = Question
F = Frequency
P = Percentage

Discussion of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Experimental Group

To test the Experimental group's use of test-taking strategies, the researcher estimated the frequency and percentage of participants' replies to the questions which were presented by Cohen (1998). The first question which presented the first reading strategy was learners' ability to read the text passage first and to make a mental note of where different kinds of information are located. The results of Table 1.1 indicates that 40% of the participants in the Experimental group always use this strategy. In the case of second strategy which was elicited using the second question, the researcher tested participants' willingness to read the question for a second time for clarification. It is evident that about 45% of the Experimental participants always make use of this strategy. Furthermore, the researcher tested a type of test-taking strategy which is concerned with learners' ability to return to the text passage to look for the answer. The results indicate that 50% of the participants always utilize the available strategy and around 45% of the participants in this group sometimes use this strategy.

Finding the portion of the text that the question refers to and looking for clues to the answer were the two elements in the next test taking strategy which were examined by the researcher. The results indicate that 45% of the participants always undertake this strategy. Also 40% of the Experimental group often finds the portion of the text that question refers to and look for clues to the answer. Moreover, the rest of the participants sometimes use this strategy. The fifth question of Cohen's (1998) list deals with looking for answers to questions in chronological order in the text. 60%, 25% and 15% of the participants in Experimental group often, sometimes and never

use the next strategy, respectively. This strategy, in fact, is concerned with reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.

Cohen (1998) presented another test-taking strategy which is reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions. Actually, the participants in this group were different in their use of this test-taking strategy. In fact, 20% of them always use this strategy while undertaking MCRTs. Besides, 35% of Experimental test-takers often use this strategy. It is important to note that 10% of participants sometimes utilize this strategy mentioned by Cohen (1998); the same percentage of participants never use this strategy. Moreover, the rest of the participants, i.e. 25%, seldom use this strategy. Trying to produce their answers to questions chronological before they look at the options that are provided in the test can be considered as the 7th type of strategy used for taking MCRTs. The results of Table 2 indicated that this strategy is a rather rare strategy among participants. In fact, except for 5 and 10 percent of the participants who always and often use this strategy other sometimes, seldom and never use it. The participants' reflection to the process of elimination, as another type of test-taking strategy, was mainly focused in center. That is, 455 of the participants sometimes use selected a choice not because they were sure that it was the correct answer but because the other choices did not seem reasonable.

“Choose an option that seems to deviate from the others is special, is different, or conspicuous”. This was the topic of 9th test-taking strategy which the participants thought about. Generally, most of the participants in this group often use this strategy. In other words, 40% of test-takers often use this strategy while taking reading comprehension tests. What is interesting in this study is the findings of the research to the next question, i.e. question No. 10 which deals with test-takers opt for choosing longer or shorter options. In fact, the results of the above mentioned table shows that 40% of the participants never use this strategy. Respectively, 25% of the participants seldom use this strategy and only 15% of them often use it.

Question No 11, which relates to taking advantage of clues appearing in other items in order to answer the item into consideration, presents some other information. 50% of the participants in this group often take advantage of clues in other items to find the correct answer. The next test taking strategy which is identified as question No.12 focuses on the central scale that is, often. Also 30% of test-takers in this group often take into consideration the position of the option among the choices. The next question which presented the 13th reading strategy was learners' ability to select the option just because it appears to have a word or phrase from the passage in it-possibly a key word. The results show that 45% of them often use this strategy. Besides, 30% of them always use it. 15% and 10% of the test-takers sometimes and seldom use this strategy. Selecting an option because it has a word or phrase that also appears in the question is the title of the next test-taking strategy which has been studied in this research. It is evident that 45% of the participants often use this strategy. In his list of test-taking strategies, Cohen (1998) discussed test-takers' preferences in postponing dealing with an item or selecting a give item until later. Test-takers' answers to this question has been also investigated and the results are presented in Table 4.3. As it is clear 45% of them sometimes postpone dealing with and answering item until later. Meanwhile, 20% of the test-takers in this group seldom postpone answering the item. This

table also shows that 15% of the participants often and never use this test-taking. Also, 5% of the participants always make use of this test-taking strategy.

The next three strategies reveal diverse results. In fact, question No. 16 which is concerned with making an educated guess has been investigated in this research. The results show that 15%, 20%, 45%, and 20% of the test-takers always, often, sometimes and seldom use this strategy, respectively. The results show that 25% of participants always and often budget their time. Also 20% of them sometimes and seldom manage their time. And only 10% of such participants never attend to budgeting their time. Finally, the last strategy which was related to changing test-takers' responses as appropriate has attracted the attention of the researcher. The results show that 45% of the participants often change their responses and only 35% of them sometimes do the same.

Studying test taking strategies have been a significant issue while test-takers' mental processes came to take a role. The major motive for this study was to complement the findings of previous researches. In a fruitful research, Powers (1995) studied the effect of gender variation on answering reading comprehension questions without the passage. The purpose of this study was on analyzing the gender differences in performance on a task requiring examinees to answer reading comprehension questions without reading the passages on which questions were based. In fact, the results obtained from his study indicated a very few and inconsistent differences between the two genders. Presumably, the present research was in line with the findings of Powers' (1995) paper. In a study which was related to test-takers' differences with regard to their cognitive style, Blanton (2004) focused on standardized reading test administered in three different formats. The prime goal of this paper was to investigate the means of scores on three forms of a standardized reading comprehension test taken by college students in developmental reading classes. The three forms of the test were administered in three different ways. The first way was a timed multiple-choice test; in contrast, the second format was a constructed response test. Finally, the last was an un-timed multiple-choice test. The results of this study showed that cognitive style had more impact on students' performance on a standardized test of reading comprehension than ethnicity or gender. Generally, learners' gender and ethnicity were critical factors considering this format. Thus, as opposed to style, strategies seem to have not a significant relationship with the test-takers' gender.

The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

Data Analysis of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

In the previous section, the researcher analyzed the data generated from the Experimental group. In this section, the researcher will examine the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Control group's EFL learners who are taking part in multiple choice reading comprehension tests. Table 3 shows frequency and percentage of scales which were accompanied by every test-taking strategy. In fact, using this table, the researcher presents the type of strategies used by Control group based on Cohen's (1998) list of test-taking strategies.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for The Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

	Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Q1	7	35%	5	25%	4	20%	2	10%	2	10%
Q2	9	45%	3	15%	5	25%	0	0%	3	15%
Q3	7	35%	9	45%	1	5%	0	0%	3	15%
Q4	1	5%	5	25%	3	15%	10	50%	1	5%
Q5	2	10%	10	50%	8	40%	0	0%	0	0%
Q6	6	30%	5	25%	2	10%	2	10%	5	25%
Q7	2	10%	8	40%	1	5%	8	40%	1	5%
Q8	6	30%	6	30%	7	35%	0	0%	1	5%
Q9	3	15%	4	20%	4	20%	7	35%	2	10%
Q10	3	15%	5	25%	6	30%	1	5%	5	25%
Q11	5	25%	8	40%	3	15%	4	20%	0	0%
Q12	2	10%	4	20%	7	35%	3	15%	4	20%
Q13	8	40%	2	10%	3	15%	6	30%	1	5%
Q14	2	10%	10	50%	2	10%	3	15%	3	15%
Q15	2	10%	3	15%	9	45%	5	25%	1	5%
Q16	6	30%	2	10%	10	50%	2	10%	0	0%
Q17	5	25%	6	30%	3	15%	5	25%	1	5%
Q18	7	35%	2	10%	5	25%	4	20%	2	10%

Q = Question
F = Frequency
P= Percentage

Discussion of the Use of Test-taking Strategies by the Control Group

To test the Experimental group's use of test-taking strategies, the researcher estimated the frequency and percentage of participants' replies to the questions which were presented by Cohen (1998). The first question which presented the first reading strategy was learners' ability to read the text first and make a mental note of where different kinds of information are located. The results of Table 3 indicates that 40% of the participants in Experimental group always use this strategy. In the case of second strategy which was elicited using the second question, the researcher tested participants' willingness to read the question for a second time for clarification. It is evident that about 45% of the Experimental participants always make use of this strategy. Furthermore, the researcher tested a type of test-taking strategy which is concerned with learners' ability to return to the text passage to look for the answer. The results indicate that 50% of the participants always utilize the available strategy and around 45% of the participants in this group sometimes use this strategy.

Finding the portion of the text that the question refers to and looking for clues to the answer were the two elements in the next test taking strategy which were examined by the researcher. The results indicate that 45% of the participants always undertake this strategy. Also 40% of the Experimental participants often find the portion of the text that question refers to and look for clues to the answer. Moreover, the rest of the participants sometimes use this strategy. The fifth question of Cohen's (1998) list deals with looking for answers to questions in chronological order in the text. 60%, 25% and 15% of the participants in Experimental group often, sometimes and

never use the next strategy, respectively. This strategy, in fact, is concerned with reading the questions first so that the reading of the text is directed at finding answers to those questions.

Teaching and testing have always been considered as two sides of the language learning coin. Recently, the appeal in the realm of language teaching was toward explorations in the underlying processes and strategies which are involved in language learning context; the same interest is inevitable in the testing context as well. This interest even becomes tangible when we are keen to increase our understanding of the use of test-taking strategies employed by distinct genders. Thus, a research which compares the use of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental and Control group's EFL test-takers was essential. The main concern of the present study was based on this issue. The first research question was concerned with the type of test-taking strategies used by Iranian Experimental EFL learners. This research question required the researcher to request the participants to complete a questionnaire prepared by Cohen (1998). For doing so, the participants had enough time to choose the best answer for every question in an 18-item questionnaire. Based on the available data, the researcher estimated the use and frequency of the test-taking strategies. The results showed that all types of test-taking strategies were used by Iranian Experimental EFL participants. What was significant was the difference in the frequency of the use of MCRT strategies which were undertaken by the participants while taking MCRTs.

CONCLUSION

The present research would achieve better results if he could apply these tests to a large number of test-takers. Moreover, if this study was conducted on learners at different proficiency levels, different results could be achieved. In conclusion, the results of this study show that all participants have a tendency towards the use of test-taking strategies and both male and female participants act similarly in terms of the use of test-taking strategies while performing MCRTs.

Implications for Language Instructors and Experts

Testing has changed concept over the last few couple of decades. Testing has become an integral part of the classroom context and all the participants involved in teaching will necessarily be affected by it. One such participant in the teaching system is the language instructor who is equipped with the knowledge of language and complementary knowledge base to scaffold the learners' progress and help them to increase their language proficiency. Testing which has been considered as an inseparable part of language teaching context will also be affected by the instructors' ideas. If the language instructor is aware of the mental processes which act as the learning strategies in the process of learning and also attends to them while being implemented to the testing context, he will motivate learners to consider such important factors. That is the instructor's awareness will bring along some relevant knowledge to the learners as well. Besides, the language instructor can match the learning strategies which are of great advantages to the learners to the testing context.

REFERENCES

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Carroll, J. (1986). The simultaneous manipulation of task complexity along planning time and [+/- Here-and-Now]: Effects on L2 oral production. In M. P. Garcia Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 44–68). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Clark, H. H. (1972). Diffusion of technology into the teaching process: strategies to encourage faculty members to embrace the laptop environment. *Journal of Education for Business*, 79, 301–307.
- Cohen A.D. (1998). Strategies and Processes in Test taking and SLA. . In L.F. Bachman and A.D. Cohen (Eds.). *Inferences between Second Language*.
- Cohen A.D. (2006). The coming of Age for Research on Test-Taking Strategies. In J. Fox, M. Wesche, D. Bayliss, L. Cheng, C.E. Turner, & C. Doe (Eds.) *Language Testing Reconsideration*. p 89- 111
- Cohen, A. D. (1994). *Assessing language ability in the classroom*. 2nd Edition. Boston: Newbury House/Heinle & Heinle.
- Cohen, A.D. (1998). *Language skills testing: From theory to practice*. Tehran, Iran: SAMT Publishers.
- Cohen, A.D. (1999). Student feedback in the college classroom: a technology solution. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 52, 171–181.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. London: Oxford University Press
- Farrokhi, F., & Chehrazad, M.H. (2012), *The Effects of Task Characteristics on L2 Learners' Production of Complex, Accurate, and Fluent Oral Language*. AllamehTabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.
- Fulcher, G., & Davidson, F. (2007). *Language Testing and Assessment: an Advanced Resource Book*. Routledge
- Gass, R. (1990). The simultaneous manipulation of task complexity along planning time and [+/- Here-and-Now]: Effects on L2 oral production. In M. P. Garcia Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 44–68). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Gordon, L. (1987). Using task repetition to direct learner attention and focus on form. *ELT Journal*.
- Haney, M., & Scott, S. (1987). *When and why talking can make writing harder*. In S. Ransdell & M. Barbier (Eds.), *New directions for research in L2 writing* (pp. 209–230). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.
- Howatt, B. (1984), *An Investigation into Differences between Women's and Men's Speech*. Module 5 Sociolinguistics. The University of Birmingham.
- Hymes, H. (1971). EFL teachers' attitudes towards Post-method pedagogy and their students' achievement. *Proceedings of the 10th METU ELT Convention*.
- Larson, R. (1981). *Composing in a second language*. In A. Matsuhashi (Ed.), *Writing in real time* (pp. 34–57). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Long, U. (2000). The effects of planning on fluency, complexity, and accuracy in second language narrative writing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 26, 59–84.

- Long, U., & Robinson, S. (1998). The differential effects of three types of task planning on the fluency, complexity, and accuracy in L2 oral production. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(4), 474-509. doi:10.1093/apply/amp042.
- Mehnert, K. (1998). Language learner strategy use and English proficiency on the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery. *Spain Fellow Working Papers in Second or Foreign Language Assessment*, 3, 1-26
- Mochizuki, N., & Ortega, L. (2008). Balancing communication and grammar in beginning-level foreign language classrooms: A study of guided planning and relativization. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 11-37.
- Sangarum, J. (2005). The effects of focusing on meaning and form in strategic planning. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Planning and task performance in a second language*, pp.111-141. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). *Performance by gender on an unconventional verbal reasoning task: answering reading comprehension questions without passages*. New York; collage entrance examination board.
- Schmidt, R. (1990). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. London: Longman
- Skehan P., & Foster, P. (1999). The influence of task structure and processing conditions on narrative retellings. *Language Learning*, 49(1), 93-120. doi:10.1111/1467-9922.00071, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/14679>.
- Skehan, P. (1996). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tavakoli, P. (2009). The post method condition: Emerging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly* (27), 134.
- Weir, C.J. (1990). *Communicative Language Testing*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Wilkins, J. (1976). *The effect of negotiation of meaning on the storytelling of adult students in ESL classrooms*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX.
- Wilkins, R. (1976). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp. 1-63). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Yuan, F., & Ellis, R. (2003). The effects of pre-task planning and on-line planning on fluency, accuracy, and complexity in L2 monologic oral production. *Applied Linguistics*, 24 (1), 1-27.

THE EFFECTS OF CONFORMITY AND TEACHER'S CONTROL ON PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' ORAL ACHIEVEMENT

Faezeh Rashedy

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This research investigated the effects of conformity and teacher's control on pre-intermediate EFL learners' oral achievement at Mehr English Institute in Mahshahr, Iran. The participants included 24 students who were selected out of 60 participants and divided into two experimental and control groups. The participants took the pre-test of speaking skill. During the treatment period, the control group received conventional activities in speaking skills such as class interaction and discussion. The experimental group received control, conformity and corrective feedback. Students' mistakes were corrected by the teacher immediately in the experimental group while these mistakes were corrected in the control group implicitly. After 16 sessions of treatment, a post-test of speaking skill was given to the participants of both groups to assess their oral achievement. Independent Samples t-test was used to analyze the data to compare the scores of both groups. The results showed that the experimental group had less progress compared to the participants in the control group in terms of conformity and teacher's control; however, they outperformed the control group in using structure and accent components. Moreover, the control group showed more progress in fluency, speaking confidence and communication components of speaking. The implications of this study may be useful for teaching speaking and pronunciation.

KEYWORDS: Conformity; Teacher's control; EFL learners; Oral achievement

INTRODUCTION

Many variables such as family life, community and school environment can affect students' achievement. These variables can be related to each other and to students' failures or successes in academic settings. It should be noted that we cannot ignore the effects of all these variables in education. Many researchers (e.g., Aarosan & Barrow, 2007) believe that, teachers are the most significant school-based factors in education and teachers' characteristics play major roles to shape students' achievement. Focusing on the effects of teachers' characteristics that can affect students' achievement is very helpful for administrators and teachers to increase students' achievement and involvement in the classroom activities. Regarding teachers' characteristics, two terms are very significant in this study: conformity and teachers' control.

The first term, conformity, refers to one's agreement to the majority position. There are many reasons that support the agreement to the majority position. People match their ideas and behaviors with the group members because of the desire to be fit, in order to be accepted or matched with the social rulers and norms. These three reasons are called normative, informational and identification conformity (Kelman, 1958).

Conformity is regarded as a powerful force that can have overt social pressure or subtler unconscious influence. It refers to the tendency of people to match and change their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors concerned with the people or group members in the classroom. Conformity shows its effects on peoples' ideas in the case of subtle unconscious influence, and behavior in the form of overt social effects (Arats & Dijksterhuis, 2003). Bond and Smith (1998) believe that conformity is directly related to the education and educational systems all over the world by considering the role of cultural values and it plays a major role in academic settings.

Educational systems all over the world can be classified into two main categories, the individualistic and the collectivistic systems. The individualistic system has been the educational ideal of many western countries. It helps to foster analytical skills and critical thinking in students and to liberate students in education. On the other hand, a collectivistic system believes that education needs to be fit into the needs of society as a whole. It more often emphasizes the obligations of the individuals for the benefit of the group in the focus. Skillman (2000) believes that cohesion, cooperation and conformity are very important in collectivistic societies. He maintains that people in these societies try to make more references to others and follow the norms, regulations and expectations of the groups and societies. Desai (2007) refers to individualistic societies and characteristics that involve diversity that distinguish one person from others. He believes that teachers will encourage creativity by showing more tolerance for the diverse ideas of their students and allowing them more freedom to follow up their ideas.

Different cultural values play major roles in individualistic-collectivistic distinction. Such cultural differences mean that people in different cultures have different ideas of the self and others. For collectivistic societies, interdependence is the accepted norm: the self and community are related to each other. Autonomy becomes secondary in this relationship (Mark & Kitayama, 1999). For more individualistic systems, autonomy, independence and uniqueness are important and they are the main characteristics of individualistic societies (Mark & Kitayama, 1999). Cross-cultural studies have shown that collectivistic societies are more concerned about conforming to social norms than individualistic ones (Bond & Smith, 1998). Conformity can be regarded as an informal means of control. There are some strategies in the classroom to control students in the classrooms. It is important to note that the demand for control is necessary in schools; because teachers cannot teach if the class is out of control. However, it is a problem if we define control as conformity and obedience.

One type of teacher control is corrective feedback that consists of several forms (Ellis, 2009). The main point is that we cannot ignore the advantages of corrective feedback in the teaching and learning process and it is essential especially when the errors cannot be self- corrected by students themselves (Chu, 2011). However, using a lot of corrective feedback in the process of

speaking may affect learner's motivation, and eagerness to take part in discussion or to take risk in the process of teaching and learning (Trusscot, 2007).

The present study intends to investigate the effects of conformity and teachers' control on pre-intermediate EFL learners' oral achievement. The focus of this study was the role of conformity and control in academic settings for speaking purposes.

Nowadays, speaking is the most demanding skill for learners to learn English for different purposes and speaking fluency is one of the main targets for both teachers and students (Gardner, 2009). Although many students spend a lot of time, energy and money in English institutes, schools and universities, some of them are not fluent in English and cannot communicate with others properly. Some of them may have a good command of English but have low confidence for speaking and taking part in the classroom oral activities and discussions (Ahangari & Amirzade, 2011).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Conformity

Conformity is the most general concept in the psychology science which refers to any changes in behavior caused by another person or group effects (Breckler, Olson & Wiggins, 2006). It refers to any social influence involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group. This change is in relation to real or unreal group pressure. Real group pressure refers to the real physical presence of people and the unreal group pressure refers to the rules, norms and expectations (Crutchfield, 1955). Conformity can be defined as yielding to group pressure that can take different forms, for example persuasion, teasing, criticism, etc. Conformity is also known as majority influence or group pressure. The term conformity is often used to indicate an agreement to the majority position, brought about either by a desire to fit in or be liked or because of a desire to be correct, or simply to conform to a social role (Arats & Dijksterhuis, 2003).

Turner (2005), states that conformity acts as a powerful force that can take the form of overt social pressure or subtler unconscious influence. It is the act of matching and changing ones' ideas and behaviors in response to others in the societies or classroom groups at schools. He states some reasons such as the desire to be liked. Reber and Allen (2004) state that we are experiencing conformity in every situation if we have to change our ideas or behaviors based on the accepted regulations and rules and follow the rules without considering our beliefs.

Classroom Management

Classroom management refers to the process of creating and maintaining the best opportunities for the students to learn (Mendler, 2001). Mendler believes that an effective classroom management should be the main responsibility of teachers. He maintains that classroom management does not mean providing set of rules and procedures for the students in the classroom, but it should refer to the sensitivity and caring of teachers to students.

Classroom management focuses on three major components: content management, conduct management and covenant management (Froyen & Iverson, 1999). Content management refers to the management of the materials, space, equipment and lessons. Conduct management deals with set of procedural skills that teachers employ in their attempt to address and resolve discipline problems in the classroom. It is important to note that the procedural skills that teachers use in conduct management, may vary from teacher to teacher. These different skills refer to teachers' knowledge and their personal experiences. Covenant management focuses on the classroom group as a social system that has its own features that teachers have to take into account when managing interpersonal relationship in the classroom. In this system, teachers and students' roles and expectations shape the classroom and their relationships are very essential to ensuring a positive school atmosphere. The last component has an important role in the classroom management because it takes the classroom interpersonal relationships into consideration (Froyen & Iverson, 1999).

Teachers' Control and Feedback

An important means of control in academic settings is providing feedback or corrective feedback by teachers, in this exchange, the teacher provides feedback on a students' utterance that contains an error (Flynn & Chatman, 2001). Corrective feedbacks can be defined as information provided by an agent, a teacher in the classroom. In this case, there is a chain of performance and feedback. Thus feedback can be defined as a response to a learner's erroneous utterance (Ellis, 2009). It has no effect in vacuum and it could be powerful in its effects, if there is a context to which the feedback is addressed (Timperley & Parr, 2005). It refers to any indication to the learners that their use of target language is incorrect (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Ellis (2009) states that the feedback can consist of several forms: (a) to indicate the errors, (b) to provide the correct forms of errors committed and (c) extended (meta-linguistic) information about the error. It is necessary to note that errors are natural and common characteristics of learning process. They show learners' development in the process of language acquisition and learning (Tornberg, 2005). When learning to speak a second or foreign language, any learner makes errors and they are natural part of mastering a new language. The errors can be of various kinds, for example, pronunciation, syntax and word choice errors. As errors cannot be self-corrected by learners, teachers' reaction toward errors in the form of corrective feedback is essential (Ahangari & Amirzadeh, 2011).

One of the major issues of language teaching is the effect of teachers' control on students' outcomes in different skills, especially speaking because it is one of the most important skills to be developed as a means of effective communication (Gardner, 2009).

Oral Proficiency

Richards and Renandya (2004) believe that most learners all over the world study English to develop proficiency in speaking. Many foreign language learners study a foreign language and try to learn English in order to become fluent and accurate to master the English sophisticated structures and vocabularies. However, second language acquisition (SLA) specialists are still unsure of what makes up the myriad factors that contribute to second language (L2) proficiency. To establish a baseline view of the complex interactions among traits, the researchers (Iwashita,

2008) focused on four key dimensions and components: fluency, lexical diversity, grammatical accuracy and complexity. These four components of oral proficiency may vary from study to study because of the use of diverse definitions of these components and dimensions of oral proficiency by many researchers in different studies. Dastjerdi (2012) focused on the effects of corrective feedback on students' speaking. 20 female intermediate EFL learners aged from 15 to 20 participated in his study. The participants were divided into 2 groups of 10. For one group, the errors were corrected immediately and for other group, the errors were corrected with some delay, i.e. after finishing speech. At the end of the term, each student was asked to discuss one of the topics that they had discussed during the term while their voices were recorded. Measures of accuracy, fluency and complexity were developed and the results showed that the delayed error correction had positive effect on fluency and accuracy but not on complexity. For the second aim, a Foreign Language Anxiety questionnaire was given to all the participants at the end of the term and the results indicated that the second group with delayed correction experienced less anxiety in class. This study focused on the effect of teacher control on students' anxiety.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis specifically attempted to reflect on the following research question:

Do conformity and teacher's control affect pre-intermediate EFL learners' oral achievement?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study conducted with the help of 24 students who were selected out of 60 EFL students from Mehr English institute in Mahshahr, Iran. They were all females and ranged in age from 16 to 20 years old. Standard Speaking Test (SST, 2006) was used to measure the oral proficiency of participants. Based on the students' scores, the students who achieved the levels 4, 5 and 6 were selected as the participants of this study since they achieve the average level of speaking proficiency. Then, they were randomly divided into two groups of 12: one experimental group and one control group.

Instrumentation

Four different testing instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially, a Standard Speaking Test (SST, 2006) developed by ALC Press was used to determine the students' proficiency level it consists of 5 stages. This test was used to determine the students' oral achievement in English at the pre-intermediate level. Accordingly, the scores 4, 5 and 6 were assumed as pre-intermediate level. SST contained five steps and each student was supposed to answer them in ten to fifteen minutes. The students' performances were scored by two raters at the same time. Before administration of homogeneity test, it was piloted by the researcher in the group of 20 of the same proficiency level in the same institute. The inter-rater reliability of this test was computed through *Pearson Correlation* analysis as ($r = 0.80$) to calculate the reliability of the test scores.

The second instrument of this study was a pre- test. It was based on the topics and activities of the Touch Stone Series Book 2 in both experimental and control groups to do the related activities to assess the participants' initial levels in speaking English before treatment. The inter-rater reliability of this test was computed through Pearson Correlation analysis as ($r=.83$) to calculate the reliability of the test scores. The third instrument of this study was a post-test. It was done to determine the effects of treatment: teacher's control and conformity on participants' oral achievement. Moreover, the post-test included the same topics and passages used in the pre-test. The inter-rater reliability values of the post-tests was calculated through Pearson Correlation analysis as ($r=.76$) to calculate the reliability of the test. Finally, a modified checklist of speaking (Hughes, 2003; Chalhoub-Devil, 1997) was used in both pre-test and post-test to measure oral abilities of participants. This checklist had 7 components. 6 components of the checklist were developed by Hughes (2003) and the last one was added based on the Chalhoub-Devil's (1997) speaking checklist.

Materials

Considering 16 sessions for both classes at the English institute, the researcher was able to select 4 lessons of Touch Stone, book two that were related to participants' proficiency level. Time of each class was 60 minutes. Students' speaking was checked based on Huthes (2003) and Chalhoub-Devil (1997) checklist of speaking for both pre-test and post- test. During 16 sessions of instruction, students were prepared for being successful for speaking purposes. Each student's oral production on the specific topics in both groups for both pre-test and post-test was recorded by an MP3 player to be analyzed and scored carefully by the researcher herself and another English teacher of the English institute based on the checklist of speaking.

Procedure

This study was conducted at Merhr English Institution in Mahshahr. The first step was to make sure of the students' homogeneity. Before administration of homogeneity test, the researcher piloted it in the group of 20 at the same proficiency level of both groups in the study. Then a week before the instruction, the researcher administered the SST homogeneity test (2006) to 60 participants in order to select 24 participants. Those participants who achieved the level of five and six were selected and divided into two groups randomly: one experimental group and one control. Both groups included 12 participants. Before starting instruction *pre-test* was administered to discover the students' levels of speaking at the beginning of research period. It was related to speaking purpose by focusing on teaching techniques such as question and answer, description, telling related memories and discussion and role play). Each production was recorded by an MP3 player and then scored according to the checklist developed by Hughes (2003) and Chalhoub-Devil (1997) by two raters. After selecting and dividing the participants on the bases of random judgment sampling, the instruction phase started. In the experimental group, the researcher focused on teacher's control, giving corrective feedback as a means of teacher's control and conformity. Each mistake was corrected by the teacher immediately while students were speaking. The participants had to follow the norms provided by the teacher during the instruction session; such as the kinds of activities, the topics discussed in the classroom and the correct answers. In this case, only the exact answers were rewarded and accepted. There was no chance for partial answers or incomplete answers of participants in the experimental group. The

same activities were conducted in control group which were done in experimental group. The only difference was related to the role of teacher's control, feedback and conformity. In the control group the incorrect forms were shown and practiced by teachers or in the group when the students finished their speech. The norms were not defined only by the teacher. The participants had active roles even in deciding on the activities and topics. They had a chance for partial knowledge, for expressing themselves even wrongly. The treatment lasted 16 sessions, 60 minutes a session, twice a week. During the treatment, in each session, the researcher devoted times to listening to the CD, practicing new words, and talking about related parts. As it was mentioned before, during each session, four types of techniques including suggesting new topic for each passage, question and answers, description and role play were used for speaking purpose. After listening to the CD some questions were asked to discover students' comprehension. In addition, the students discussed the passages and topics and gave their opinions about them. The same activities that were done in the experimental group were used in the control group. Finally, after the treatment period, a post-test of speaking achievement that covered all the materials, was administered to two groups. Finally, the results of the post-tests were compared to each other to know the importance of teacher's control and conformity in the speaking classes

Analysis

In order to determine the effects of teachers' control and conformity on pre-intermediate EFL learners oral achievement, once the scores of the pre-test and post-test are obtained, the mean and standard deviation of the scores were calculated. Then, analysis of Independent Samples t-test was run in order to find out whether the differences between the two groups were statistically significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the first research hypothesis, the researcher dealt with comparing the two groups based on the effects of conformity and teacher's control on participants' oral achievement. To do so, students' pre and post-tests were conducted at the beginning and the end of the term. The analysis went further to find out whether conformity and teacher's control in the classroom affects students' oral performance. Independent Sample t-test was applied to study the differences between the preand post-tests in the experimental and control groups. It is important to note that the researcher employed all the analysis at ($p < 0.05$). Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of students' speaking pre-tests in terms of the number of participants (N), mean(M), standard deviations (SD), and standard errors of mean (SE) for both groups.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics(pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	12	15.2500	1.76455	.50938
Control	12	15.5833	1.67649	.48396

According to the Table 1, the mean score of the participants in the pre-test in the experimental group (Mean=15.25, Standard Deviation=1.76) was less than the mean score of participants (Mean=15.58, Standard Deviation=1.67) in the control group. Table 2 shows the results of Independent Samples t-test of pre-test in both experimental and control groups.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-Test(pre-test)

Experimental Vs. Control	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differen ce	Std. Error Differen ce	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.037	.850	-.474	22	.640	-.33333	.70263	-	1.12383
Equal variances not assumed			-.474	21.9 4	.640	-.33333	.70263	1.79050 -	1.12405 1.79072

Table 2 shows that t-observed (0.474) was less than t-critical (2.066) with df of 22 in the experimental group. Furthermore, t-test analysis shows that the significance level as (0.640) which is greater than (0.05). This means that there was no statistically significant difference between mean performances of two mean scores in the experimental and control groups in the pre-test. More over, the above table shows that the amount of t-observed is not statistically significant; therefore, it can be claimed that the two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of experiment regarding their prior knowledge. Descriptive statistics of students' oral performance in the post-tests is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics(post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental	12	17.5800	2.10928	.609
Control	12	21.6767	2.27069	.655

Table 3, shows the mean score of the post-test in the experimental group as(17.58) and the mean score of post-test in the group was (21.67). It indicates that the mean scores of both groups in the post-tests improved but the participants in the control group outperformed the participants in the experimental group. Table 4 shows the results of the Independent Samples t-test of post-test of both groups.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test (post-test)

Experimental Vs. Control		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	variances	.037	.849	4.566	22	.000	-2.41667	.85686	-4.19370	-.63964
				-4.566	21.38	.000	-2.41667	.85686	-4.19666	-.63668

As presented in Table 4, the t-observed (4.566) of both groups is greater than t-critical (2.066). at the significance equals (0.00) which is smaller than the significance level (0.05). It shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. In other words, the control group outperformed the experimental group in the post-test and this means that the first null hypothesis of this study was accepted. In other words, teacher's control and conformity did not have any effect on the participants of the experimental group.

Discussion

Based on the results of the Independent Samples t-test of pre-test and post-test, the mean scores of both groups improved and the mean scores between experimental and control groups were significantly different. The mean score of the control group in the post- test was greater than the mean score of the experimental group. It supports the idea that conformity and teacher's control did not show a better effect on the participants' performance compared to the focusing on students' active roles and their creativity in the control group. As a whole, the study showed that the conformity and teacher's control had a less effective role in enhancing EFL learners' oral achievement in the experimental group at the pre-intermediate level of English compared to the control group.

The results can be more approved by this evidence that there were significance differences between the means of pre-tests and post-tests of both experimental and control groups. That is to say, the learners in the control group outperformed the learners in the experimental group with the focus on conformity in the classroom. This is very much compatible with the results of the research conducted by Milgram (2010). His experiment discovered that more than half of the participants in the study showed conformity. More ever, the results of this study are in line with the study conducted by Berns (2005) who noted that the participants of the study that experienced conformity did not want to stand against the majority position or to be rejected by group members. In his study, the participants showed levels of conformity similar to those in the Arats

and Dijksterhu's (2003) studies. It showed that participants in two different situations conformed to the defined norms. The results indicated that focusing on conformity in different situations such as schools leads to lack of creativity among the students, because following the norms is very important in these situations. One possible explanation of such results is that defining different norms by teachers in the classroom and making the students follow them will affect students' motivation and consequently students' behavior in oral achievement. This may decrease students' self-confidence and make them disappointed when they are regularly interrupted by the teacher.

One possible explanation on these findings is that providing a lot of corrective feedbacks in the process of teaching and learning by teachers in the classrooms especially while the students are participating in the activities and discussions may act as a negative factor on participants' self-confidence and finally on their participations in the classroom. When the students are afraid of speaking and taking part in the classroom activities, it will affect their communication strategies and fluency negatively. However, it may enhance their accuracy and accent. One of the main reasons may refer to the students' hesitations and pauses to monitor their performances. Thus they may show better progress in accuracy and accent rather than flow of speech, communication and speaking confidence.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate the differences between the two experimental and control groups with the focus of conformity and teacher's control in experimental group. The null hypotheses of the study were accepted since there were significant differences between both groups performance ($p < 0.05$) in the post-test; however, the control group out-perform the experimental group. Although the mean scores of the participants in the post-test increased compared to the mean scores of participants in the pre-test in experimental group, the mean score of participants in the control group was significantly greater than the experimental group. It showed the effects of teacher's characteristics such as conformity and control on students' motivations and consequently students' outcomes.

The participants of control group with the focus on the students' creativity and activity based on the main goals of the speaking classes such as creativity, students' active roles and the use of feedback in necessary cases, may benefit more than students in the experimental group that the researcher focused on conformity and control in all activities in the classroom during the instruction period. Some of administrators and teachers believe that highly controlling behaviors and defining a lot of norms and rules for students for taking part in the classroom activities and answering the questions play a major role in students' performance. Perhaps it is the main reason of some EFL students' reticence and lack of motivation to take part in the classroom activities and discussions inside or outside the classrooms. It should be noted that the main responsibility of teachers is enhancing the students' self-confidence to take part in the related activities and establishing rapport and less stressful atmosphere for the learners. This atmosphere is supposed to increase learning much more than where learners receive instruction based on conformity and control in the classroom.

To sum up, the findings of this study may be effective if the teachers try to focus on students' creativity, critical thinking and learners' involvement in the classrooms for teaching speaking skill. The teachers should be tolerant with the students' mistakes or unwillingness to take part in the classroom and try to build up their speaking confidence.

It is suggested to teachers to consider the effects of conformity and control in the learning and teaching processes in the academic settings and involvement in the classroom activities and try to provide enough opportunities for students in the classroom to enhance their level of motivation and effort to participate in the classroom discussions. The teachers should give the students time and opportunities to take the active roles, especially in a non-threatening environment. The teachers should incorporate the new findings of psychological and experimental studies related to teachers' characteristics and behaviors on students' motivation and achievements and try to enhance learners' motivational desire and speaking confidence especially in lower levels of teaching English in institutes and schools. If teachers focus only on teaching effectively by focusing on transferring the information to the students without providing a non-threatening teaching environment for learners to participate in the classroom activities and tasks, the teaching will be less effective for providing students to take part in classroom discussions, tasks and activities and to improve students' confidence for speaking and to enhance their fluency alongside their accuracy.

By taking insights from the present study and materials designers might include oral tasks that focused on fostering learners' creativity not conformity in the classrooms and help the learners to be creative in carrying up the activities in the text books. Moreover, they should add some open ended activities and provide some opportunities for the learners to support and enhance the learners' creativity in the classrooms. These materials encourage the students to take active roles in the classroom and fight the issue of students' reticence in the classroom and society. This study was conducted at Mehr institute in Mahshahr, Iran. Other contexts could be used to conduct a similar research to support the findings and to find more about the role of conformity and teacher's control on speaking skills. Also, only 16 sessions were run to see the effects of the treatment. Moreover, this study was fixed on females enrolled in the program and it should be investigated on male students. Females just took part in this study but the researcher can have both males and females in their future studies and compare them. Learners who studied English as a foreign language took part in this study. Moreover, the same study can be replicated in other situations such as ESL situations and even among native speakers' contexts. Furthermore, this research was conducted on the pre-intermediate EFL learners at Meher institute in Mahshahr. Other levels of language skills can also be studied if the researchers like to make generalizations about language learners at different proficiency levels. Eventually, this study lasted for two months. Succeeding studies can allocate more time to study the effects of teacher's control and conformity on EFL learners' speaking skill.

REFERENCES

- Aarosan, D., & Barrow, L. (2007). Teachers and students achievement in Chicago high schools. *Journal of Labour Economics*, 25, 95-135.

- Ahangari, S., & Amirzadeh, S. (2011). Exploring the effects of teachers' use of spoken corrective feedback in teaching Iranian EFL learners at different levels of proficiency. *Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 29(1), 59-68.
- Arats, H., & Dijksterhuis, A. (2003). The silence of the library: Environment, situational norm and social behaviour. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84 (1), 18-28.
- Berns, G.S. (2005). Neurobiological correlates of social conformity and independence during mental rotation. *Bio Psychiatry*, 158(3), 245-253.
- Breckler, S. Olson, J., & Wiggins, E. (2006). *Social psychology alive*. Toronto: Nelson Education.
- Chalhoub-Devil, M. (1997). Theoretical models, assessment frameworks and test construction. *Language Testing*, 14 (1), 3-22.
- Chu, R. (2011). The effects of teacher's corrective feedback on accuracy in the oral English of Englishmajors college students. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1 (5), 454-459.
- Crutchfield, R. (1955). Conformity and character. *American Psychologist*, 10, 191-198.
- Dastjerdi, H. (2012). Impact of immediate and delayed error correction on EFL learners' oral production: CAF. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 3 (1), 45-54.
- Desai, J. (2007). Intergenerational conflict within Asian American families: The role of acculturation, ethnic, identity, individualism and collectivism. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 67, 69-73.
- Ellis, R. (2009). Corrective feedback and teacher development. *L2 Journal*, 1, 3-18.
- Froyen, L.A., & Iverson, A. M. (1999). *The school wide and classroom management*. Upper Saddle River, N. J: Prentice Hall.
- Gardner, R.C. (2009). Integrative motivation, included anxiety and language learning in a controlled environment. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14 (3), 197-214.
- Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press
- Kelman, H. C. (1958). Compliance, identification and internalization. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2, 51-60.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mark, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1999). Deviance or uniqueness, harmony or conformity? A cultural analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology*, 77 (4), 785-800.
- Mendler, A. M. (2001). *Connecting with students*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Milgram, S. (2010). Obedience and authority: An experimental view. *Personality and Social Psychology*, 36 (2), 126-146.
- Reber, A. S., & Allen, R. (2004). *Implicit and explicit learning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Skillman, G. (2000). The effects of collectivistic and individualistic cultures on imagination in English and Western Students. *Plus Academic Journal*, 3(2), 10-33.
- Timperely, H., & Parr, J. M. (2005). Theory competition and the process of change. *Journal of Educational Change*, 6 (3), 227-252.
- Tornberg, U. (2005). Motivation in English classroom: A study of how teachers work with motivating their students working papers. *Applied Linguistics*, 4, 43-69.

MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES OF EFL STUDENTS OF TABRIZ TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH

Morteza Elyasi Lankaran (Corresponding Author)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Ahar branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
Email: mlankaran@yahoo.com*

Dr. Hanieh Davatgari Asl

Email: hdavatgar@gmail.com

*Department of English Language Teaching and Literature, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Ahar, Iran*

ABSTRACT

The role of motivation in language learning, especially in research articles, is so important that language teachers can transfer their ideas and views through emotional perspectives. Large number of different factors affects the success of students in learning foreign languages. Two of these factors can be motivation and attitudes of students toward learning a target language. Positive attitudes of students and different kinds of motivation can have a great influence on the success or failure of students in learning languages. Researchers also can get more information from articles through evaluating these issues and can specify their views about the articles. The function of emotional perspectives in interpersonal relationship, texts and articles is as a vital role that helps both readers and writers. The present paper investigates the kind of motivation and the attitudes of the students in the province of Tabriz in Iran towards learning English. 100 students from three well-known language learning centers of this city by the names of Chitsazan, Farhang and Albourz were surveyed using the AMTB (Attitude, Motivation Test Battery) questionnaire. Different domains were surveyed to get the goal of this paper such as interest in English, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, desire to learn English, parental encouragement and attitudes towards learning English. The result of this survey shows that University of Tabriz have both integrative and instrumental motivation but their attitudes towards English are not strongly positive. Of course, it is important to state that the findings of the present study revealed that motivation and attitude were similar considered among the students.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Extrinsic, Intrinsic, Attitudes, Instrumental, Integrative.

INTRODUCTION

According to different investigations and researches motivation is one of the most important factors that cause success or failure in learning a foreign language. The kind of motivation and the amount of it in students are very important too. Winne and Perry (1962) define motivation as: “an internal state that arouses directs and maintains behavior” (p.354). By his definition motivation is an internal factor of learning and if one person has this inner desire, learning can be important for him. And by knowing the importance of learning he tries to allot more time and

energy to learn it. Therefore he learns better and speeds up learning. Motivation is a very strong desire that by the help of it one person doesn't give up trying to achieve his goal.

Brown (2007) gives different definitions according to different schools of thought.

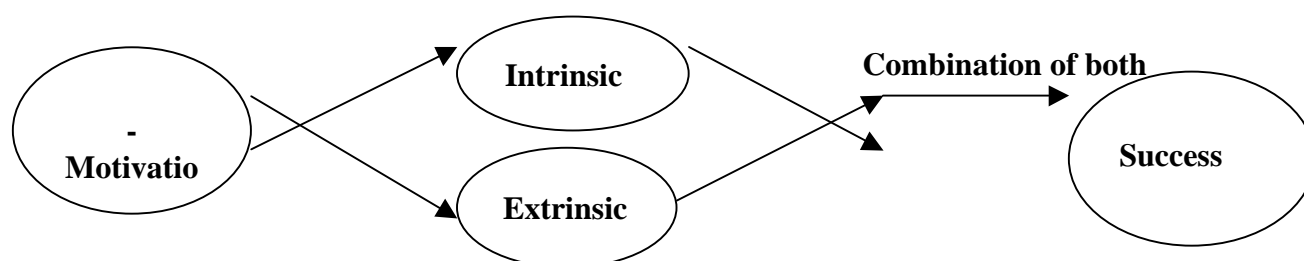
- a) From a *behaviorist* perspective: motivation is seen in very matter of fact terms. He believes that they base their idea on external factors. Giving rewards and having positive reinforcement are the key points in this school of thought.
- b) From *cognitive* perspective: motivation places much more emphasis on individual's decisions. People have choices to what they should experience as their goals and what they should avoid.
- c) From *constructivist* perspective: motivation places even more emphasis on social context as well as individual personal choices. Each person is unique and can be motivated differently.

Motivation cannot be seen but we can understand it from the behavior of the learners such as their participation in the class, being active in answering to the questions and etc. On the other hand the amount of the motivation in the class among the students of the same class can be completely different. For example some people go to different language centers by their own interests and they are very eager to learn one new language but in contrast some people go to different language centers because of their parents' force or maybe because of their parents' satisfaction or because of large number of different reasons. These people have different motivations towards learning a foreign language.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation means that internal or external factors affect learning. Some motivations are based on the internal factors such as needs, interests and enjoiments. On the other hand some motivations are based on external factors such as rewarding and punishing and etc. Motivation that refers to intrinsic factors is called intrinsic motivation and the motivation that refers to external factors is called external factors.

Some researchers such as Maslow (1970) believe that intrinsic motivation is much more important than extrinsic motivation because we are motivated to get "self-actualization". But on the other hand Winne and Perry (1962) believe that both of these two motivations are necessary in EFL classes. Some activities in the classes are interesting and attract the interests of students and these activities create intrinsic motivation. But sometimes external factors such as taking exam can be very helpful because it gives students enough motivation to study.



Instrumental and Integrative Motivation

When a person learns a language in order to be a member of one community, he has an integrative motivation. The people who want to migrate from one country to the other one have this motivation. One of the most important aspects of this kind of learning is using language for social interactions. It seems this kind of motivation leads to much more success than the instrumental one.

Instrumental motivation refers to using language to get instrumental goals such as getting a job, reading technical texts, translation and etc. the people that have this motivation don't have any desire to be the member of the target society. They are just studying language to meet their needs.

Some linguists believe that mixture of these two motivations can lead to success. But on the other hand we know that every person is unique and has different characteristics and we cannot say that which way is the best way. Everybody has different ways of learning.

Sometimes some situations are inevitable. That means one person gets use these two features unconsciously. For example one person studies academic texts in target language setting. This person benefits from both instrumental use of language in one hand and on the other hand lives and becomes the member of that country(integrative motivation).

Attitude

Oxford Advance Dictionary (2010) defines attitude as: "the way that you think and feel about somebody or something. And, the way that you behave toward somebody or something shows how you think and feel". As we see from this definition attitude is a collection of beliefs towards language, people or things that have been formed gradually in passing of time. Ellis (2000) says that having positive motivation enhances learning a foreign language while negative attitude stops learning or makes it difficult. But on the other hand the teacher himself should have positive attitude towards a foreign language too. In new approaches of teaching the mistakes of students are tolerated and they are asked to use language in their everyday lives and they have a close relation with their teachers, so if teachers don't have positive attitudes they can transfer these attitudes to the students too.

Most of our attitudes towards the target language and its users are from unreliable sources. Mostly we get negative attitude just by watching movies or reading the stories or other resources that are not reliable. It is the duty of the teachers to explain, clarify and bring concrete examples to change this negative view of students and enhance learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Different researches and explorations have been conducted on the importance of motivation and attitudes in second language learning; that is, Chalak (2010) investigated motivation and attitudes of Iranian undergraduate EFL students towards learning English. The result of the study showed that the students of English translation were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Moreover, the answers revealed that the students did not always try very much; they reproved

themselves for their failure in learning English. Therefore, as another motivating factor, more efforts by students could guarantee their success in learning English. Another factor is the attitude that they have toward English. Their responses in the questionnaire items reported that they believed that English was very important and they needed to learn it for both instrumental and integrative reasons (Chalak, 2010).

Al-Haj (2011) concluded that enhancing motivation in the EFL classrooms is the solution. The finding of the study showed that: First, teachers in secondary schools of the Gezira State do not give motivation to their students in EFL classes; second, these teachers are not professional enough to use motivation while teaching, this claim combines with the fact that these teachers do not use learning activities-like games, debates, etc.-which motivate the students while they are learning English as a foreign language. The role of using modals in writing, especially in research articles is so important that by them writers can convey their ideas and views in their writings, thesis or articles. Researchers also can get more information from articles through evaluating these markers and can specify their views about the articles. The function of meta-discourse in interpersonal relationship, texts and articles is as an appointment role that helps both readers and writers (Aboulalaei, 2013).

Fernandez (2001) investigated exploring the student's motivation in the EFLclass. The finding of the study revealed that the female students exhibit a higher degree of motivation than their male ones. Furthermore, the scores assigned by the girls to all the items in the battery of questionnaires were somewhat more and, in some cases, much more than those assigned by the boys. The greater motivational level of female students in comparison with that of the male ones in the L2 classroom has been evinced by previous studies.

According to Poursalehi et al., (2014), "investigations done by some researchers conclude that language learners who study L2/FL for educational benefit or personal profit accrue no advantage outside of the classroom. Undoubtedly, the chances and opportunities to utilize the L2/FL in the classrooms are always limited since language is taught as a subject only, and is not commonly used as communication outside the language classrooms. As Ellis (1994, p. 214) states, "formal learning takes place through conscious attention to rules and principles and greater emphasis is placed on mastery of the subject matter that was treated as a de-contextualized body of knowledge" (Ppoursalehi et al., 2014).

Lightbown and Spada (2002, p. 92) found that the "teacher's goal is to see to it that students learn the vocabulary and grammatical rules of the target language" and "the goal of learners in such courses is often to pass an examination rather than to use the language for daily communicative interaction." Against the above-mentioned statements, Lightbown and Spada (2002, p. 91) believe that through natural context "the language learner is mentioned to the language at work" or "in social interaction or where the instruction is directed toward native speakers rather than toward learners of the language." Therefore, the social significance is emphasized more than mastery of the subject matter (Lightbown & Spada, 2002, p. 92).

However, the important issue which determines and specifies the good language learners is their ability to utilize their class learning to raise their speaking skills. Macaro (2001, p. 38) studied the characteristic of effective speakers and mentions that these learners do not quit or hesitate for too long when they cannot consider how to say something. Often they find solution to solve the problem or ask the person they are speaking with to help them. In this way, they are involved in much more exposure and interaction with the L2. When they are not directly involved in the interaction, successful learners seem to use strategies to help them stay focused in the classroom."

According to Macro (2001), the more active ones will use strategies to attract the teacher's attention to them. It is believed that being aware of certain strategies in enhancing L2/FL speaking skills would help learners to acquire good speaking skills." This assumption is based on several theories in language learning strategies which postulate that learners' success in language learning or lack of it is attributable to the various strategies which different learners bring to tasks and not solely relying on environment per se. Therefore the role of classroom learning should not be underestimated (Macaro, 2001).

According to Lewis (1999, as cited in Poursalehi et al., 2014) language learners could take part in language classes through some questions. That is, they were asked by the teacher's explanation on how to translate a passage, sharing their ideas with their classmates and teachers, for example, by commenting briefly on the topic of discussion, making a connection between the current lesson and the previous ones, reporting the reading predictions, making inferences, making generalizations and determining their perspectives. According to Lewis (1999, p. 159), "learners took part in the language classes by adding data and information to someone else's perspective, agreeing or disagreeing, asking for clarification, giving examples from other readings, own experience or of other people's, presenting both sides of an argument and suggesting an untested hypothesis." According to Essberger (2000) and Rubin and Thompson (1982), the language learners take the opportunity to answer the questions asked by the teacher and do all classroom activities. Besides paired or group activities, communicative participation could also be accomplished by means of presentations which were presented by Essberger (1998).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aims of this study will be investigated through the following research questions:

- 1- Are the students of Tabriz highly motivated towards learning English?
- 2- How does attitude of students of Tabriz increase towards learning English?

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this study was to explore and describe the motivation and attitudes of EFL students of Tabriz toward learning English. To achieve this purpose, a mixed method research with greater emphasis on qualitative approach was employed. This section is divided into different sections. The first section discusses the research question. The students' data were also gathered and described in the chapter. In order to address the questions about the various uses relevant to L1 and TL use in the classroom, the second section of the chapter defines the different

instruments that were employed. The data used for the transcriptions and subsequent data analysis were gathered using a teaching in order to capture the details involved in student interactions over a visit to the mentioned class. Then, the design of the study, materials along with procedures, and testing procedures was demonstrated. Also, the participants and the context of the study was introduced; that is, the present research explored and investigated the language attitudes and motivation of the students of the Tabriz in Iran where they are studying English as a foreign language in different institutes of this city. The study tried to find motivation orientations of the students of Tabriz towards English language and their attitudes towards learning English, and their cultures. Of course, the researcher checked the students' averages in last semester and according to them found the students' proficiency and level of studying.

Participants

The subject were 100 students who are from intermediate to advanced English speakers. 70 of them were female and 30 of them were male. They were from 15 to 35 years old. All of them had different course of study at school and university but since they had been studying there at least three years, they could use and understand English acceptably.

Context of the study

The sites for carrying out the field work for this observation was three private English language centers in Tabriz by the name of Farhang ,Albourz and Chitsazan. English is taught in different levels in these institutes from elementary to IELTS and TOEFL levels. Classes are three sessions a week and each session is 90 minutes. The main instruction materials which are used in these institutions are the series of Interchange books.

Instrument

Questionnaire which was adopted from Gardner's AMTB (1985) was used in this research. He classified the answers into 6 parts which include: strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree. This questionnaire has 104 items. Since all of the students know English, the questions were in English without their translations to their native language. Students answered the questions in the class in a whole session and didn't take them home. They were asked to read carefully and understand the questions and answer them precisely. They were told that if they had any problem in understanding the text they could ask them in their own language or in English. Students didn't have any stress to finish them on time because they were given enough time to answer to all of the questions.

Procedure

It was explained and clarified to the students that these questions were just used in the research and they are not used for identifying any specific students. The sample of these questions was given in the appendix. Different data were extracted from the questionnaire such as: interest in English, integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, desire to learn English, parental encouragement and attitudes towards learning English. Different number of other data could be extracted from this questionnaire but because it is unrelated to the research question we ignore it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students' responses to the questionnaire were analyzed in descriptive form. The range of questions are: 1) Strongly disagree, 2) Moderately disagree, 3) Slightly disagree, 4) Slightly agree, 5) Moderately agree, 6) Strongly agree. Raw data was given to Microsoft Excel program and its mean (average) was calculated according to each of the research question. Seven factors were analyzed as follows.

Different questions in the questionnaire are about the interest of students in learning a foreign language.

Table 1: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question 1	5.28
Question 12	1.98
Question 21	5.32
Question 32	1.71
Question 42	5.42
Question 55	1.94
Question 65	4.9
Question 76	2.74
Question 85	5.08
Question 95	3.44

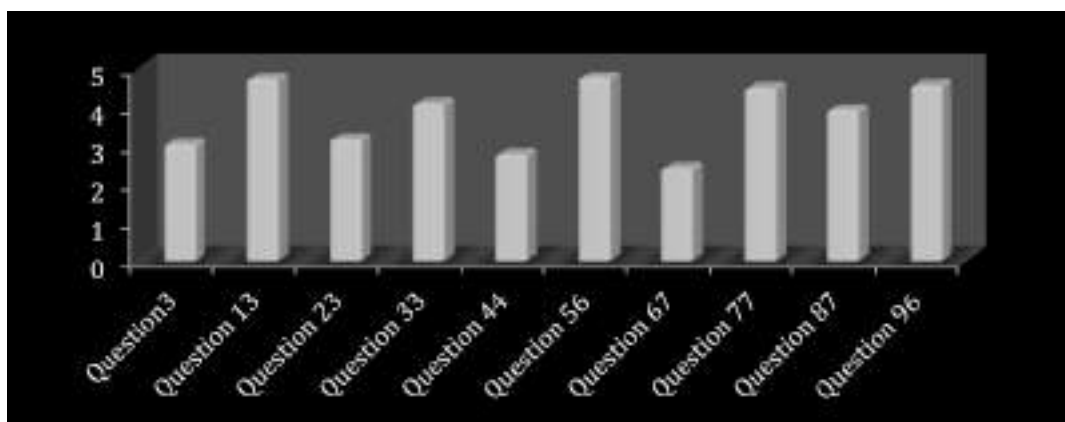


Figure 1: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,763. That means students answered to the questions of interest in learning a foreign language, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz are not strongly interested in learning a foreign language. Some other questions (items) in this questionnaire reveal the motivation intensity of the students of Tabriz. These questions are as follows:

Table 2: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question3	3.03
Question 13	4.73
Question 23	3.16
Question 33	4.1
Question 44	2.76
Question 56	4.76
Question 67	2.42
Question 77	4.49
Question 87	3.92
Question 96	4.56

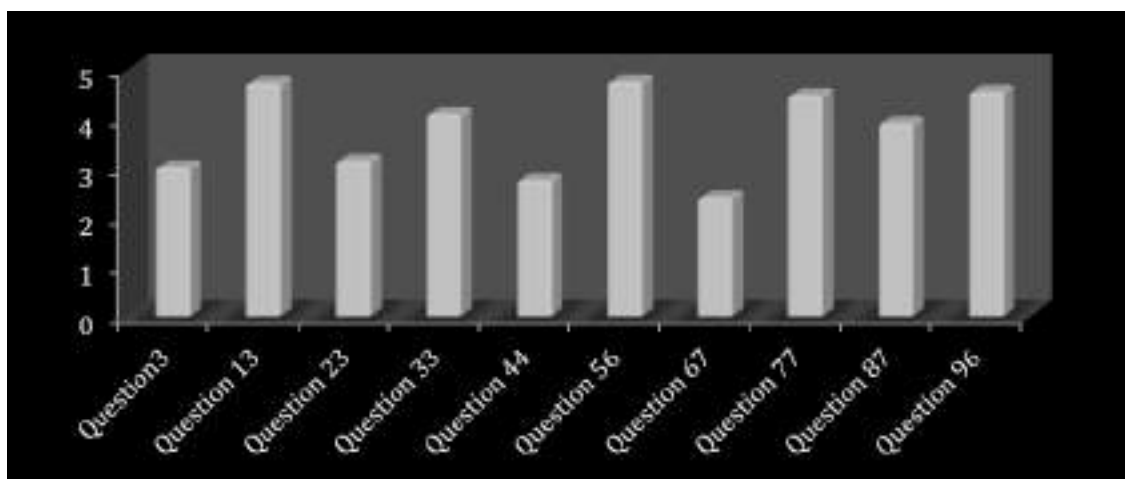


Figure 2: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,804. That means students answered to the questions of motivation intensity, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz are not strongly motivated in learning a foreign language. The following set of questions is about the attitudes of students towards learning English language. Students of Tabriz answered these questions to show that they have positive or negative attitude towards learning English.

Table 3: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question6	5.39
Question 18	1.4
Question 26	5.47
Question 38	2.86
Question 47	4.28
Question 62	1.38
Question 70	5.47
Question 82	1.63
Question 90	5.46
Question 100	1.92

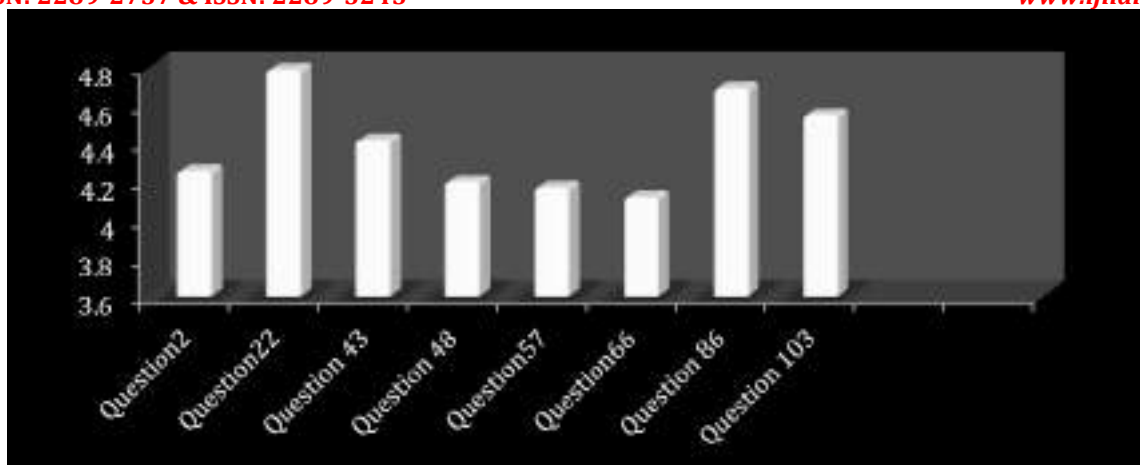


Figure 3: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,526. That means students answered to the questions of attitudes towards learning English, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz don't have strong attitudes that means positive attitude towards learning English.

The other domain for investigating is integrative motivation. The items that we consider to get the answer are:

Table 4: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question8	5.63
Question 28	5.33
Question 50	5.02
Question 72	5.53

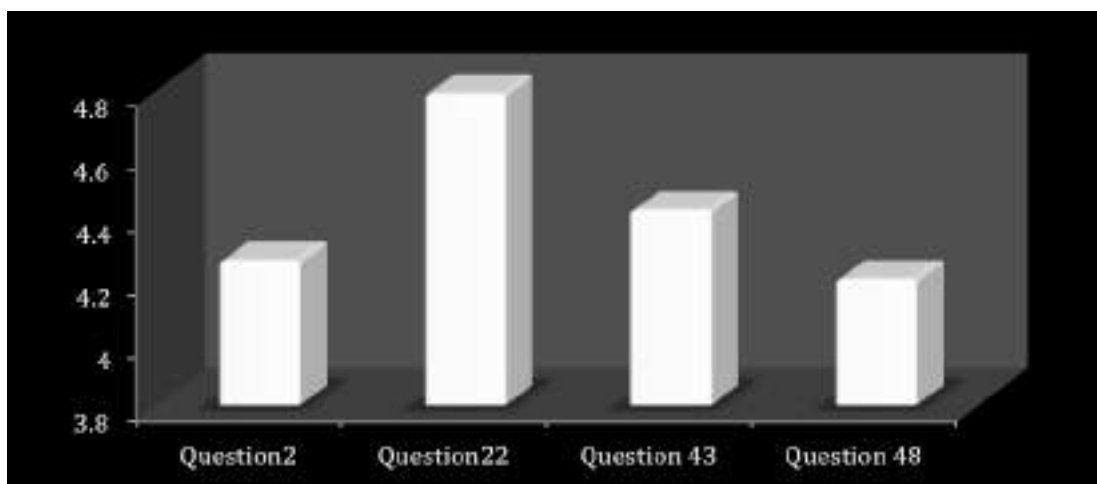


Figure 4: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 5,377. That means students answered to the questions of integrative orientation, between moderately agree and strongly agree. That means the people of Tabriz have strong desire towards integrative orientation. This data shows that for the people of Tabriz integrative motivation that means having interaction and communication with native people are very important and they appreciate the way of living and the culture of native speakers.

The other feature that this paper investigated is the feature of instrumental motivation. As it was mentioned before this motivation deals with using language instrumentally in the situations such as getting a job, having exam and so on. The following items deal with this motivation.

Table 5: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question15	5.01
Question 35	5.49
Question 59	5.35
Question 79	4.27

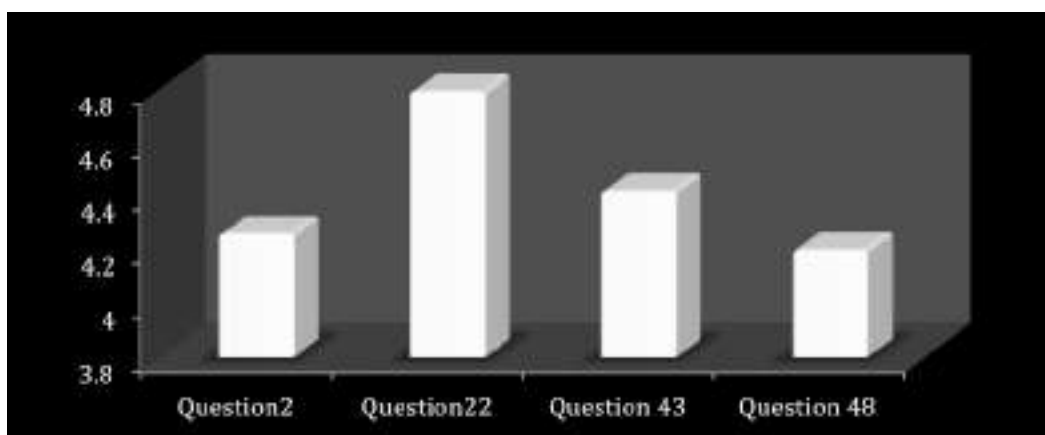


Figure 5: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 5, 03. That means students answered to the questions of instrumental motivation, between moderately agree and strongly agree. That means the people of Tabriz have strong desire and motivation towards learning English instrumentally.

The following set of questions is about attitudes of the students of Tabriz towards learning English. It shows that they want to learn English as a foreign language or not. The questions are:

Table 6: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question9	4.99
Question17	1.89
Question 29	4.61
Question 37	2.23
Question51	5.52
Question61	2.35
Question 73	5.53
Question 81	2.38
Question92	5.51
Question99	2.73

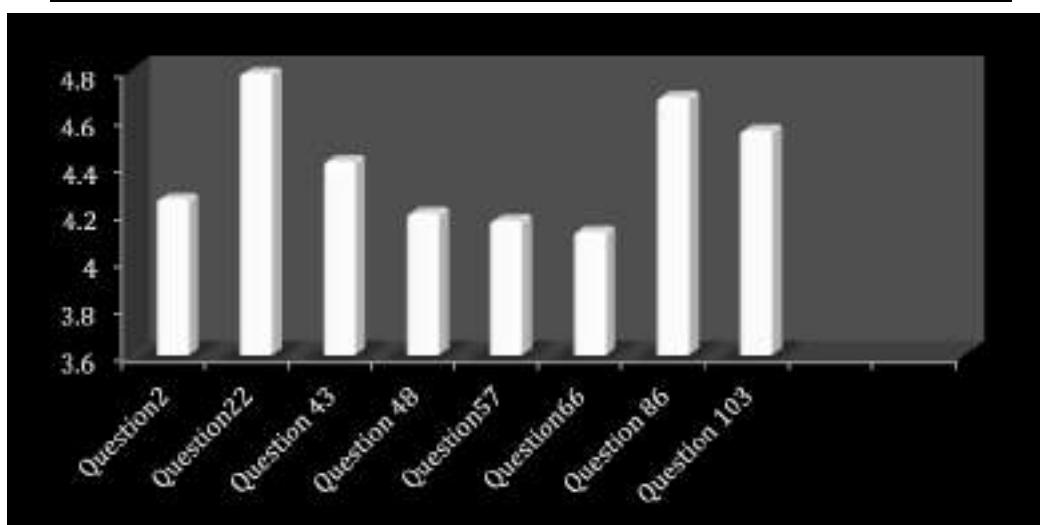


Figure 6: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 3,743. That means, students answered to the questions of desire to learn English, between slightly disagree and slightly agree. That means the people of Tabriz don't have strong desire to learn English as a foreign language. The last domain of investigation is about parental encouragement. These items helped us to know how much parents are interested in English and encourage their children to learn it as a foreign language. The questions are as follows:

Table 7: The average of the questions one by one

The number of questions	Average
Question2	4.26
Question22	4.79
Question 43	4.42
Question 48	4.2
Question57	4.17
Question66	4.12
Question 86	4.69
Question 103	4.55
Question2	4.26
Question22	4.79

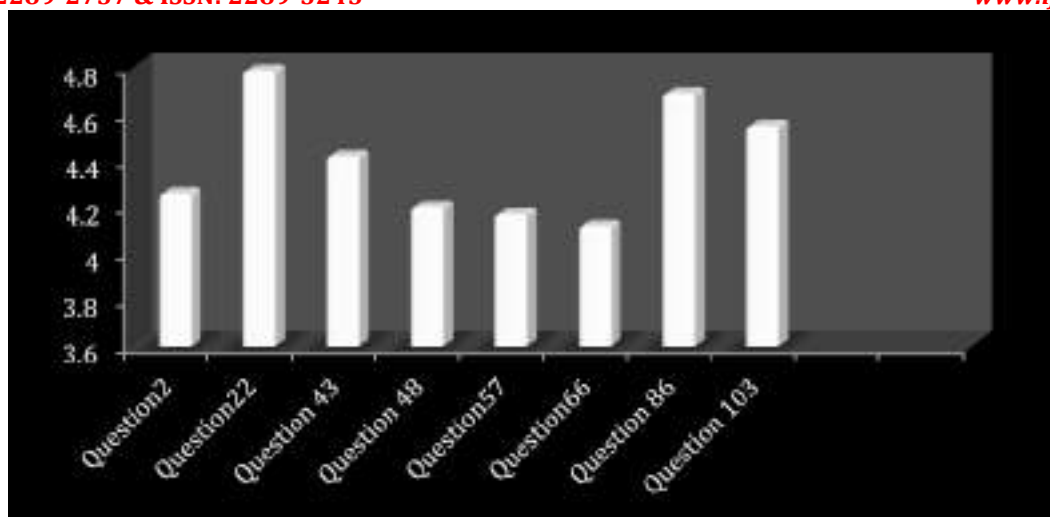


Figure 7: The average of the questions one by one

The mean or average of scales used for this domain is 4, 4. That means, students answered to the questions of parental encouragement, between slightly agree and moderately agree. It means that the parents of students in Tabriz encourage a lot their children to learn English as a foreign language. The general table for above mentioned domains is as follows. Number one to seven is different domains and 0 to 6 are mean or average of agreement.

According to above mentioned table and figures and numbers which were accessed by the researcher 7 items were analyzed and the accessed figure was demonstrated as below:

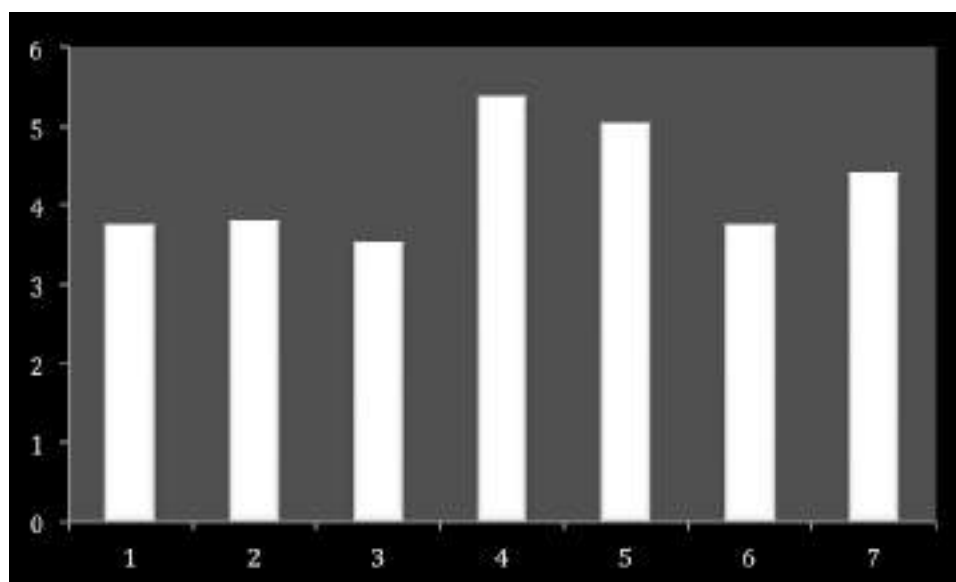


Figure 8: 7 items were analyzed and the accessed

In this table:

- 1: Interest in learning a foreign language
- 2: Motivation intensity

- 3: Attitudes towards learning English
- 4: Integrative orientation
- 5: Instrumental motivation
- 6: Desire to learn English
- 7: Parental encouragement

CONCLUSION

At the end, it is essential to point out that research is typically conducted with some limitations. Among the limitations of this study, we can refer to the reluctance or unwillingness or perhaps fear that most English as a Foreign Language EFL learners had before volunteering to participate in the study. Therefore, it is suggested to interpret results with some caution. The findings of the present investigation revealed that most EFL learners participating in this study held similar ideas toward the motivation and attitude. While the present investigation focused on English learners in Iran, the same issue can also be taken up in many other parts of the world. If the language researchers and teachers have information about students' attitude and motivation, they will be able to teach them in correct way and time.

REFERENCES

- Abd ul-Gayoum. (2011). Enhancing motivation in the EFL classrooms is the solution. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2 (3), 524-529
- Aboulalaei, M.H. (2013). Exploring the differences Between Iranian Women and Men Academic Article Writing According to Mood and Modality. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 18(5), 668-674.
- Al-Haj, H.(2011).Web 2.0, synthetic immersive environments, and mobile resources for language education. *CALICO Journal*, 25(3), 528-546. Retrieved from https://calico.org/html/article_715.pdf.
- Chalak, A., & Kassaian,Z.(2010). Motivation and attitudes of Iranian undergraduate EFL students towards learning English. *GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies: Volume 10(2)*. Essberger, J. (2000). Speaking to yourself can be dangerous. <http://www.englishclub.com/eslarticles/200002.htm/>.
- Fernández,D.(2011).Exploring the students' motivation in the EFLclass. *Present and Future Trends in TEFL*, 321-364.
- Fernández, D. (2001). *Linguistics Theories and TheirApplication*. Council for CulturalCooperation of the Council of Europe: London.
- Fernández,D.(1993).Sources of motivation in the EFL classroom. *VIII Jornadas Pedagógicas para la Enseñanza Del Inglés*, 18-36.
- Kimura,Y., Nakata,Y., & Okumura.T. (2006). Language learning motivation of EFL learners in Japan *JALT JOURNAL*.
- Lewis, M. (1999). *How to study foreign languages*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Lightbown, P.M., & Spada, N. (2002). *How language are learned (2nd edn.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Macaro, E. (2001). *Learning strategies in foreign and second language classroom*. London: Continuum.
- Poursalehi, J., Aboulalaei, M.H., & Zohrabi, M. (2014). The Impact of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) on Iranian Learners' Speaking Skill, 7 (3), November 2014; 494-503.
- Rubin, J., & Thompson, I. (1982). *How to be a more successful language learner*. Boston, Mass: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Vaezi, z. (2008). Language learning motivation among Iranian undergraduate students. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 5 (1), 54-61.

Appendix A

Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)

Student's level: -----

The following questions ask about your motivation in and attitude toward learning the English language. Remember there is no right or wrong answers; just answer as accurately as possible. Use the scale below to answer the questions.

1= Strongly disagree
2= Moderately disagree
3= Slightly disagree
4 = Slightly agree
5= Moderately agree
6= Strongly agree

1. I wish I could speak many foreign languages perfectly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My parents try to help me to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I don't pay much attention to the feedback I receive in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I don't get anxious when I have to answer a question in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I look forward to going to class because my English teacher is so good.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Learning English is really great.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. If Iran had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Studying English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. My English class is really a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I would get nervous if I had to speak English to a tourist.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Studying foreign languages is not enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I don't think my English teacher is very good.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Studying English is important because I will need it for my career.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in our English classes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Knowing English isn't really an important goal in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I hate English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. I feel very much at ease when I have to speak English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I would rather spend more time in my English class and less in other classes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I wish I could read newspapers and magazines in many foreign languages.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. My parents feel that it is very important for me to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I don't bother checking my assignments when I get them back from my English teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I feel confident when asked to speak in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. My English teacher is better than any of my other teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. I really enjoy learning English.	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Studying English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. If it were up to me, I would spend all of my time learning English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I think my English class is boring.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Speaking English anywhere makes me feel worried.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I really have no interest in foreign languages.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I keep up to date with English by working on it almost every day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. The less I see of my English teacher, the better.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. Studying English is important because it will make me more educated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in our English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I sometimes daydream about dropping English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. I'd rather spend my time on subjects other than English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. It doesn't bother me at all to speak English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. I wish I could have many native English speaking friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. I enjoy the activities of our English class much more than those of my other classes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. I would really like to learn many foreign languages.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. My parents feel that I should continue studying English all through my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. I put off my English homework as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. I am calm whenever I have to speak in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. My English teacher has a dynamic and interesting teaching style.	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. English is a very important part of the school program.	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. My parents have stressed the importance English will have for me when I leave university.	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. Studying English is important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the English way of life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
51. I want to learn English so well that it will become natural to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
52. To be honest, I really have little interest in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
53. Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.	1	2	3	4	5	6
54. It would bother me if I had to speak English on the telephone.	1	2	3	4	5	6
55. It is not important for us to learn foreign languages.	1	2	3	4	5	6
56. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always have my teacher for help.	1	2	3	4	5	6
57. My parents urge me to seek help from my teacher if I am having problems with my English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
58. My English teacher is one of the least pleasant people I know.	1	2	3	4	5	6
59. Studying English is important because it will be useful in getting a good job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
60. It worries me that other students in my class seem to speak English better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
61. I'm losing any desire I ever had to know English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
62. Learning English is a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
63. I would feel quite relaxed if I had to give street directions in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
64. I like my English class so much; I look forward to studying more English in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
65. If I planned to stay in another country, I would try to learn their language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
66. My parents are very interested in everything I do in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
67. I tend to give up and not pay attention when I don't understand my English teacher's explanation of something.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68. I don't understand why other students feel nervous about speaking English in class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69. My English teacher is a great source of inspiration to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

70. I plan to learn as much English as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71. I would like to know more native English speakers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
72. Studying English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73. I would like to learn as much English as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
74. To be honest, I don't like my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
75. I would feel uncomfortable speaking English anywhere outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6
76. Most foreign languages sound crude and harsh	1	2	3	4	5	6
77. I really work hard to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
78. I would prefer to have a different English teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
79. Studying English is important because other people will respect me more if I know English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
80. I get nervous when I am speaking in my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
81. To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
82. I think that learning English is dull.	1	2	3	4	5	6
83. I would feel comfortable speaking English where both Iranian and English speakers were present.	1	2	3	4	5	6
84. I look forward to the time I spend in English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
85. I enjoy meeting people who speak foreign languages.	1	2	3	4	5	6
86. My parents encourage me to practice my English as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
87. I can't be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
88. Students who claim they get nervous in English classes are just making excuses.	1	2	3	4	5	6
89. I really like my English teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
90. I love learning English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
91. The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
92. I wish I were fluent in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
93. I have a hard time thinking of anything positive about my English class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
94. I feel anxious if someone asks me something in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
95. I would rather see a TV program dubbed into our language than in its own language with subtitles.	1	2	3	4	5	6
96. When I am studying English, I ignore distractions and pay attention to my task.	1	2	3	4	5	6
97. My English teacher doesn't present materials in an interesting way.	1	2	3	4	5	6
98. I am sometimes anxious that the other students in class will laugh at me when I speak English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
99. I haven't any great wish to learn more than the basics of English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
100. When I leave university, I will give up the study of English because I am not interested in it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
101. I would feel calm and sure of myself if I had to order a meal in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
102. English is one of my favorite courses.	1	2	3	4	5	6
103. My parents think I should devote more time to studying English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
104. You can always trust native English speakers.	1	2	3	4	5	6

THE EFFECT OF CONTEXTUALIZED SPELLING ACTIVITIES ON IMPROVING HIGH SCHOOL EFL LEARNERS' SOUND- SYMBOL INTERACTIVE WRITING ERRORS

Mitra Mohammadi

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the effect of contextualized spelling activities on improving learners' sound/symbol interactive writing errors among high school students. To achieve this purpose, a dictation test was administered to seventy-five female language learners of Alzahra third grade high school in Ahvaz, Iran. Forty-five third grade learners were selected and non-randomly assigned to three experimental groups of contextualized, decontextualized and sentence level, each with fifteen participants. The participants in the decontextualized group received direct instruction in spelling rules at a time. The participants in the contextualized group learned spelling through reading passages. The participants in the sentence group produced spelling through writing sentences. In each group, every session was allocated to dictation and allowed students to correct their own misspelling words. Three groups used self-correcting technique, explicit spelling instruction, and multiple intelligence techniques for improving spelling through two months in the Fall semester, 2014. Statistical analyses were conducted through One-way ANOVA and Post-hoc Scheffe tests. Descriptive analyses of the post-tests showed that contextualized group improved effectively compared to the decontextualized and the sentence level groups. The study suggests that contextualized spelling rules may enhance learners' sound/symbol interactive writing and help them to develop their spelling in English language.

KEYWORDS: Contextualized spelling activities, Spelling, Writing errors

INTRODUCTION

Writing is the process of conveying thoughts and ideas into written messages. Writing is a contemplated and cognitive process which requires sustained intellectual effort over a considerable period of time. Good writing requires the writer to state himself/herself in a more effective way to concern spelling and dictation. Many writing components are including in writing thus, to accomplish a composition task, writers go through different stages of writing. Jenks (2003) stated that "the writing process is categorized in a five stages sequential pattern (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing)" (p. 1). In second language (L2) instruction, writing ability is also a difficult skill and basic learning element for English as

foreign language learners. Unfortunately, writing is a difficult skill to be improved in a short period of time. The gravity of writing skill and its outstanding role in demonstrating students learning extent is obvious in the first or the second language.

Academics (e. g., teachers and professors) most favorably evaluate students through their writings. Thus, poor writing ability of students may endanger their academic success to a deliberate ability (Tan, 2011). Poor spelling also confines the writer's choice of words, which negatively affects creativity and guides to short and sometimes incoherent pieces of writing. However, it is more important for non-natives especially EFL learners in Iran provided with only restricted exposure to write in English. In order to transfer messages effectively, accurate spelling is strongly required. Spelling includes the connection of several skills, involving semantic and grammatical knowledge, knowledge of phonological representations, formulation of analogies with words in visual memory, knowledge of orthographic rule and conventions (Bradley & Bryant, 1985). Fagerberg (2006) suggested that, spelling is essential since one misspelling may change the meaning which the writer wanted to convey in the text. Teaching sound/letter corresponding to Iranian learners could be very complicated and that makes dictation as a time consuming task.

Spelling errors can be classified into phonological and orthographic errors. Al-Jarf (2009) indicated that phonological problems refer to errors in which the misspelled word does not sound like the target word because the whole word, a consonant, a vowel, a syllable, a prefix, a suffix, a grapheme or grapheme cluster is misheard. On the other hand, "orthographic problems refer to errors in which the misspelled word sounds like the written target word, but grapheme used for the misspelled part does not correspond with the target grapheme "(p. 9). Accordingly, there is no one-to-one match between letters of spelling and the sounds they present. Thus the mismatch between sound and spelling makes the problem of realizing the appropriate spelling for the sound which is heard by the learners.

Treiman and Bourassa (2000) indicated that although the English sound/spelling correspondence is inconsistent or not completely regular, knowledge of these with visual memorization can help spelling development. There are two different mechanism by which spelling of a word can be produced that affirm by dual-route model of spelling. First is a lexical route that words are processed orthographically through visual whole word recognition using the top-down approach. Second is a non-lexical route where by words are processed phonologically that is the transfer of letter-sound associations using the bottom-up approach (Brown & Ellis, 1991). It is commonly accepted that the connection of orthographical and phonological is essential for good spelling.

Kamhi and Hinton (2000) indicated that all assumption of spelling are involved a dominant role for phonological knowledge. Phonological knowledge is very important in the development of spelling and from the beginning stage of learning to spell. Learners without sound realization and phonological knowledge face problems in acquiring orthographic knowledge and will be embarrassed. Phonological knowledge is the most important in the development of spelling, reading and writing. However, language development has been closely related to the concept of phonological knowledge.

Multiple-intelligence is a technique that improves transfer of correct spelling into written. The International Dyslexia Association (2000) indicated that multiple-intelligence technique connects listening, saying, looking and writing in different associations. Thus, this technique helps visual and auditory of the learners to be successful in spelling. All learning intelligences and style could be involved in spelling instruction. The multiple intelligence technique can be connected to many different learning areas. It includes several subcategories including visual intelligence which commits to the ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind. Interpersonal intelligence which is an understanding of other people which is a technique that asks of the learners work with a partner to spell words. Naturalist intelligence discriminates the human ability to distinguish among living things (animal, plants) and the researcher emphasizes the development of the verbal and writing. Self-correcting is a technique that students reread their own writing and make corrections.

Rana and Perveen (2013) indicated that utilize of self-correction increase the learners linguistic competence. In addition, learners would be able to define specific difficulties with their written work and this motivated those to review their work until they would be capable generate better quality work. This indicates that it is suitable and valuable for learners to correct their own work frequently. Hall (2014) argued that because spelling learning is so significant to young learners reading and writing development, it is important that explicit instruction and differentiated strategies be utilized to expand the favors of spelling teaching since the beginning years. She added that instructors can utilize formal and informal strategies along with data about their students in order to continually develop their instruction and improve students' outcome.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Spelling has always been of paramount important in Iranian educational system, and writing of both general and academic text has been the aim of many educational enters for years (Cook, 1999). This precisely can be due to the fact that there have been many people wishing to write the text of both academic and non-academics want to say in the target language, so that they can follow their aims regarding their profession and/or any other motivation they have. There for, in many language centers and institutions much attempt has to make by teachers to teach students the appropriate technique for writing accurate texts of target language they learn.

Kenuing and Verhoeven (2007) indicated that student's ability to spell is affected by diversity of skills, such as orthographic knowledge, phonological knowledge, knowledge of spelling rules and morphological awareness. Spelling instruction has been in the English curriculum since 1783, when Noad Webser prefaced the first Blue-Baced speller (Bloodgood, 1991, p. 11). Schlagal (2003) suggested that this book through teachers can teach grammar, spelling and pronunciation. Includes "series of words for all of students, and they are to be read as a rote memorization task" (p. 23). Rote memorization was utilized as the study technique. Templeton and Morris (2001) indicated that this technique conducted to the attention of instruct pupils to expand spellings of words (p. 18). In the beginning of the 20th century, a question was heightened by Schlagal (2003) whether "spelling must be taught in the context or to go on utilizing a series of words" (p. 27).

They admitted that words in series were persisted over teaching words in context, Thus for teaching spelling memorization persisted to be a way.

There were two basic system for teaching spelling in the 1930s, test-study-test system (i.e. take a pre-test at the center of the week, read misspelled words during the week, and take a re-test of all the words at the end of the week), and study-test system (i.e. read words during the week and take the test at the end of the week). Templeton and Morris (2001) equaled the two systems and indicated that test-study-test system was over the study-test system. Teachers indicated this approach frequently utilized in the students' daily writing that as way of read series of words.

Teachers carried much criticism about the words utilized in spelling guide books *Basal spellers* in the 1950s. They indicated that the words may have been considered for difficulty, but were not developing orthographic knowledge. Because of research results in this field and this criticism, Schlagal (2003) indicated that "authors began to plan a more functioning spelling system that included popular in the series words for instance common letter-sound patterns" (p. 43). The utilizing of series words in spelling texts was still persisted more the utilizing of spelling in context, during that period of time.

Spelling Instruction in the Classroom

Across the past thirty years, there has been deliberately argument between researchers and teachers relating suitable spelling instruction (Schlagal, 2003). The debate of spelling instruction has been existed among researchers and teachers with a reformist view and those with traditional view. Marten and Graves (2003) indicated that "Traditional spelling is more a rote routine and an engaging craft; the focus is on memorization, the lessons, the word series, and the spelling tests"(p, 22). Schlagal (2003) added that "the words themselves should be memorized as separated items but the words that are given to students may have an overall common character (i.e. homophones). By memorizing those words, many learners will have lost the spelling of the words by next day but may aid some learners proposed on the spelling test" (p. 35). Scott (2000) suggested that a teacher with traditional view delivers her/his learners a series of words at the starting of the week, accomplish drill during the week, and gives a test at the end of the week. Learners will not be able to spell or utilize the words correctly when putting the words to actual utilize or when writing, if they cannot remember spelling of some words by next day of the test.

In accession, as well instructors with traditional view depend weightily on the utilizing of a spelling textbook. Scott (2000) indicated that the "activities or methods in a workbook or text book furnish little or no instructions for students to usage what they learned in tangible writing tasks"(p. 18). Schlagal (2003) indicated that these spelling books are utilized regardless of the different needs of the learners in the class and invented for a specific grade of instruction. Larson, Hammill and Moats (1999) added that "it can make obscure for some learners to accomplish the activities from a workbook or textbook because all learners are not at the same level developmentally" (p. 37).

Spelling and Writing

Moats (2006) stated that, there is a strong connection between spelling and writing. She added that, writing is a mental manipulating task that depends on automatic utilization of fundamental skills, such as grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling, so that the writer can hold follow of such matters like word choice, authentic needs, topic and organization. Writers who should think too hard about how to spell utilize expensive able cognitive resources required for higher level of composition (Singer & Bashir, 2004).

Moat (2006) added that, poor spellers may limit what they write to words that they can spell, with unavoidable loss of verbal power, or they may lose follow of their thinks when they spell a word. It is required for learners to have endured with verbal and written language, containing phonemic knowledge, to certain that learners are victorious in their own written work.

Baiely, Borczak, and Stankiewicz (2002) concluded that, "the first factor affecting the success of writers was a lack of experience with language". They added that, "in order for children to be successful in written language, they must have a strong verbal language developed, which is often based in phonemic awareness" (p. 22). The basic problem among most learners is to spell words accurately and this shows the limit of useful spelling knowledge and these learners can inhibit their ability to write (Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2011).

On the basis of the argument of the El Koumy (2002) argued that there were two chief approaches for pretend the teaching learning process and foreign language instruction and learning area for over the last two decades: (1) "the skill-based approach, sometimes appeared as the "formal" or "intentional", "direct" instructional approach and (2) the whole-language approach, sometimes appeared as the "informal", or "indirect", "incidental" learning approach" (p. 11). Each approach will be described in the following section.

The Skill-Based Approach

The skill-based approach takes its theoretical feathers from structural linguistics and behavioral psychology. Supporters of the skill-based approach believed language as a set of disunited skills. Each skill is distributed into pieces and bits of sub skills. These sub-skills are progressively trained in a predetermined following through modeling, exception and direct explanation. El Koumy (2002) indicated that the skill-building instructor permanently utilize discrete point test (e.g. true or false, fill in the blanked, and multiple-choice) to evaluate the principle of each sub-skill before go to the next. The skill-based approach believes in spelling as one of the sub skills included in reading and writing. It also considers that spelling includes many micro-skills like as word structure, phonetic, and letter-naming. Spelling rules may be learned through mechanical drills (Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2011).

Studies Related to Developing Spelling

In order to see the effect of self-correction and strategy-instruction, or no-correction technique in improving spelling performance and spelling consciousness program, a research was designed by Cordewener, Bosman, and Verhoeven (2014). In this study, the population of the research included 73 third grade students between 7 and 9 years old. Students were divided based

on a median split, into low-skilled and high-skilled spellers. Assignment to the three conditions was based on the scores on the standardized spelling pre-test, consciousness score on the pre-test, their age and their sex. Instruments of the study were pre-post test and, retention test. The matching procedure resulted in a distribution of the students in the three conditions did not differ on standardized word spelling. After gathering of the data, the results showed that students in all three conditions made develop between pre-test and post-test. This study explained how spelling performance and spelling consciousness can be improved by a spelling training. This study also indicated that instruct students as a structured way to spell words lead to positive outcome for their spelling performance. It study indicated that strategy instruction was effective for low-and high-skilled spellers. Self-correction may lead to self-confidence. Self-confidence may have had an influence on the development on spelling consciousness. Direct self-correction appeared to be more effective to improve spelling consciousness, self-correction directly after dictation to stimulate their thinking about spelling and, self-correcting directly after dictation is also effective to improve both spelling performance and spelling consciousness.

In a program of explicit and implicit instruction, Cordewener, Bosman and Verhoeven (2014) aimed to help good and poor spellers for the acquisition of morphological and phonological of spelling rule. In this program 193 students (94 girls, 99 boys) between the age of 5 and 9 years old take part. The learners were assigned into low-and high skilled speller based on their scores on word-spelling test. The learners were specified to the implicit, explicit, and control conditions were matched based on their scores on reading and spelling test. Prior to the training, the pre-test was performed, two week after the pre-test, the morphological spelling training started. The training involved of six sessions, the week after the training, the post-test was administered. In implicit training sessions, visual dictation was utilized and for explicit training the morphological rule for words was taught. And explicit training started with an explanation of the purpose of training to explain the differences in development between pre-test and post-test for learners in the explicit instruction, implicit, and control condition and for control condition there was no training. Subsequent post-hoc tests cleared that learners in explicit condition made more progress than learners in control condition, the learners in explicit instruction made progress between pre-test and post-test consciousness. Explicit- rule instruction and explicit spelling instruction of a structured approach to spell words are effective ways to teach learners how to spell. Moreover, applying a metacognitive aspect to explicitly stimulate learners to think about their spelling was also effective. Explicit instruction of spelling rules or a structured approach to spell words appeared to be effective for both poor and good spellers. However, in their studies explicit instruction approach to most effective for both high- and- low skilled spellers and explicit instruction most likely lead to explicit learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research questions of the study are as follows:

RQ1: Is there any difference between the learners who learn contextualized, de contextualized, and sentence level spelling rules?

RQ2: Do contextualized spelling rules develop learners' sound/symbol writing?

RQ3: Do de contextualized spelling rules develop learners' sound/symbol writing?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To select the homogeneous participants, a dictation test was administered following Kibble and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) to ten students to pilot the reliability of the pre-test in Alzahra high school, Ahvaz, Iran. Meeting the reliability, forty-five students out of 75 students were selected based on their performance on the pre-test. The selected participants were female and they were non-randomly divided into three experimental groups, fifteen participants each. They were decontextualized, contextualized, and sentence level groups. The research took two months in Fall semester, 2014.

Instrumentations

Three instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present research. Initially, the pilot test was made to make the pre-test reliable and practical based on the Kibble and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) dictation test, who suggested the use of already familiar words in the dictation tests. The test consisted of words which will be chosen from the passages of their course book. The reliability of the test was ($r=.691$) based on KR-21 formula. The second instrument was a pre-test that functioned as a homogeneity which test included 80 words. The third instrument was a post-test (i.e., a modified pre-test) which was administered to determine the effectiveness of experimental groups spelling techniques. At the end of the treatment 80 words were used in the post-test of the experimental groups. Regarding the treatment, word and sentences as well as the passages were prepared and taught in the three experimental groups. The reliability of the piloted post-test was calculated through KR-21 formula as ($r=.736$).

Materials

The third grade English text book which was used as the materials. The book contain six lessons, each lesson contains a list of vocabulary, reading comprehension, speaking, listening, writing and grammar with exercises such as complete the sentences, and answer the questions. The learners were encouraged to study target words of each lesson. In each session, words from the list were chosen and used in the dictation tasks.

Procedure

This study was conducted at Alzahra high school of Ahvaz, Iran. The first step was to accomplish this study, to do so, a week before the instruction the researcher administered a pilot test as a dictation test (Kibble & Milles, 1994; Feez, 2001) to 10 learners in order to make pre-test practicality and reliability that contained 80 words. In the next step, the researcher administered pre-test of spelling developed based on Kibble and Milles (1994) and Feez (2001) to 75 learners that function as homogeneous test 45 female EFL learners out of 75 third grade high school will be chosen through a pre-test which is used in order to determine how well the subjects know the content and to compare the results of test to see the effect of treatment. Based on the results of this test, 45 EFL learners non-randomly divided into three experimental groups, decontextualized group, contextualized group and sentence level group. The participants in the decontextualized group received direct and explicit instruction in spelling rules at a time. Example, add (s, es, ies) to form plural from singular nouns. In this group, the researcher takes a board dictation circle the misspelled words, spell it and write the correct form in every session. The participants in the

contextualized group learned spelling through reading. In this group, students observed how the spelling rules were applied in reading passages. They also developed visual image of the words in this passage. Also, teacher give papers to students that they should underline the misspelled words and teacher said them look the correct form of the word-say-write-check it again.

The participants in sentence group produced spelling through writing. In this group, the students applied the spelling rule explained to actual writing task such as short sentences, answers for written question. Additionally, the teacher gave papers to students to select the misspelled words underline and work with a friend to say/spell words. In each group, the emphasis in the classroom was on the development of verbal ability of the learners. Practices like, add-ending-prefix-suffixes, draw the words- illustrate the meaning, draw the words as they sound-arrange your words into-chains-letters, and form peer-coaching teams to help learn words were performed in the three groups. Generally, the spelling techniques such as self-correcting, explicit instruction, and multiple intelligence techniques were selected on the basis of exercises which were mainly used in English books for general purposes and for improving spelling and writing achievement for third grade high school students. The treatments introduced to the learners for six weeks including one session each week with each session in each session one lesson will be taught lasting 45 minutes, having provided the three groups with different type of treatment. Throughout the 2 months of the Fall semester, the participants in the experimental groups made their endeavor to practice and apply the spelling techniques of the explicit instruction, self-correcting and multiple-intelligence to promote their spelling skill. The participants in the experimental groups were constantly reminded to use comprehensive spelling techniques during the whole treatment course when they were engaged in spelling tasks. Finally, two weeks after the end of the treatment period, the post-test of dictation given to the participants to test improving spelling proficiency and to see the real effect of the treatment. Some items were modified or changed to remove the learners reminding of the pre-test. The present study consists of the two variables, the dependent variable is considered to be the performance of students on spelling and the independent variables are the comprehensive techniques of explicit instruction technique, self-correcting technique, and multiple-intelligence technique.

Data Analysis

In order to determine the effect of using spelling techniques on Iranian high school EFL learners, the data were collected through spelling the pre-test and post-test. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations and variances of the scores were calculated. Data were analyzed by One-way ANOVA to find out whether the differences between the three groups' pre and post-tests were statistically significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the results obtained throughout the research and analytically scrutinizes the groups' performance in the study in the three experimental groups. Descriptive statistics of the pre-test in the three groups is presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics(pre-test)

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Devia tion	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Contextualized	15	14.33	1.92	.49	13.26	15.40	12.25	18.75
Decontextualized	15	15.30	1.46	.37	14.48	16.11	13.00	18.50
Sentence level	15	15.28	2.98	.76	13.63	16.93	12.00	19.50
Total	45	14.97	2.21	.33	14.30	15.63	12.00	19.50

Table 1 shows that in the present study, there were 15 students in each of the three groups were females. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed that mean of score in contextualized group was 14.33. The mean of score in decontextualized group was 15.30. The mean of score in sentence level was 16.2. The total mean of three groups was 15.28. In order to understand the degree of proximity among the pre-tests, One-way ANOVA was administered and after the statistical analysis.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA (pre-test)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.186	2	4.593	.934	.401
Within Groups	206.592	42	4.919		
Total	215.778	44			

Table 2 shows that that since the observed F (1.775) is less than the critical F (3.22) with $df=42/2$, the difference between the pre-test in the three groups is not significant ($p<.05$). Descriptive statistics on the post-test is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics(post-test)

	N	Mean	Std. Devia tion	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Contextualized	15	17.78	2.17	.56	16.57	18.98	11.50	19.75
Decontextualized	15	15.78	2.73	.70	14.27	17.29	12.00	19.75
Sentence level	15	16.80	2.09	.54	16.64	18.95	14.00	20.00
Total	45	17.12	2.48	.37	16.37	17.86	11.50	20.00

Table 3 shows that the mean of the score in the contextualized group was 17.78. The mean of score in the sentence level group was 17.80 and the mean in the decontextualized group was 15. of mean of the scores among three groups' significance differences was observed.

Thus there was a significant difference between the experimental groups. Since the present study investigate the effect of decontextualized, contextualized, and sentence level rules on the EFL spelling learner's proficiency, the performance of the participants of each group was taken into consideration. Therefore, One-way ANOVA was used to determine whether the observed F was significant at .05 level. The results of the One-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA (post-test)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	40.33	2	20.168	3.651	.035
Within Groups	231.99	42	5.524		
Total	272.32	44			

Comparing the observed F (4.678) with the critical F (3.22) with df=42/2, the difference between the post-tests in the three groups is significant ($p < 0.035$). It means that the three groups are different due to the treatment of the present research. Results of the post-hoc Scheffe test which determine the exact difference between the groups.

Table 5: Post-hoc Scheffe test, Multiple Comparisons

(I) Tests	(J) Tests	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Interval Lower Bound	Confidence Interval Upper Bound
Contextualized	Decontextualized	2.000*	.858	.078	-.17	4.17
Decontextualized	Sentence level	-.016	.858	1.000	-2.19	2.16
	Contextualized	-2.000*	.858	.078	-4.17	.17
Sentence level	Sentence level	-2.016*	.858	.075	-4.19	.16
	Contextualized	.016	.858	1.000	-2.16	2.19
	Decontextualized	2.016*	.858	.075	-.16	4.19

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 shows that the Post-hoc Scheffe test which analysis, it made clear that there is a significant difference among the three groups in the post-test. Post-hoc Scheffe test was performed to show the multiple-comparison of the three groups. It shows that, difference between contextualized and decontextualized was significant. Consequently, the result showed that participants who worked in sentence level group outperformed the participants who worked in decontextualized. It was concluded that the participants who worked in the sentence level group did better than the participants who worked in the decontextualized group. Difference between sentence level and contextualized was also significant. In short, the participants in the contextualized group had better performance than the participants of sentence level group.

Discussion

The results showed that, the spelling of three groups improved and there was a significant difference between the contextualized group and the other groups. As a whole, the study showed that the spelling techniques were effective in improving EFL learners' development of the spelling proficiency at the third grade high school level of English. This result can approve that, the learners who learned spelling rules in the contextualized group outperform the learners who learned spelling the rules in the sentence level and the decontextualized groups. According to the results of this study, the most effective group among the three groups was contextualized group who were outperformed the other groups in achieving the higher mean in spelling proficiency post-test since they have been more successful in using the spelling rules. Results revealed better results among contextualized than decontextualized and sentence level group in sound/symbol interactive writing development. The reason might be due to the fact that the contextualized group pays more attention to this rule and those three techniques while writing in the context which support the meaning of the word and its spelling /sound relation to other words in association.

Generally, contextualized group used the self-correcting, explicit instruction, and multiple intelligence technique and this might be due to their potential attention of those factors in the text. However, this does not mean that the decontextualized and the sentence level group have ignored the role of those three techniques in developing sound/symbol interactive writing. In other words, the decontextualized and the sentence level group used those three techniques but they had the spelling/sound relations out of the context and this made them confused due to the lack of contextualized support. The context may help them the contextualized groups monitor their own writing based on their phonological knowledge, develop their fluency, made meaningful context, and develop their visual image of the word in the text. This lacked among the decontextualized and the sentence level groups. Thus using context or sentence structures for teaching spelling may promote sound/symbol interactive writing of female learners. One possible explanation on these findings is that providing a lot of corrective writing and spelling activities and techniques in the process of teaching and learning by teachers in the classrooms especially while the students are participating in the writing activities may act as an affective role on participants' writing and on their participations in the classroom. When the students do not have motivation for writing and taking part in the classroom activities, it will affect on their accuracy negatively. Thus they may show better progress in accuracy and spelling proficiency by

providing appropriate spelling techniques such as, explicit instruction, self-correcting, and multiple intelligence technique.

The results showed a significant improvement in the participants' sound/symbol interactive writing. Compared to the result of their performance in pre-test, the mean score of their pre-test was less than the mean score of their post-test. It was observed that the difference between the post-test was significant ($p < .05$). However, it was less than the contextualized group. Sentence level group turned out to have improved better than the decontextualized group sound/symbol interactive writing. Based on these findings, The reason for the develop performance of students in sentence level group might be due to the fact that utilizes of writing activities and writing exercise of their course book may help learners to develop spelling at the sentence level. The findings of this study are against Scott (2000) who suggested that, activities in a text book divided little or no management for learners to exercise what they learned in actual writing task. Moreover, the results of this study are opposite with the study that Johnstone (2001) did. Book exercises and sentence activities are not satisfactory to develop spelling proficiency. In the present study context was reduced to sentence level to evaluate the effect of sentence as a mini text on learners spelling proficiency.

The results also showed that its effect was less than the effect of contextualizes level. The development of learners in spelling proficiency might be due to the fact that, learner's motivation in learning and spelling target word increase through sentence practice. It showed that pedagogical activities might provide strong motivation for students to learn English and to practice language and writing activities might stimulate thinking. Most importantly by using self-correcting technique in sentence level group as a means of correcting misspelling word learners might encourage and this help them to monitoring their writing at the sentence level develop their accuracy. One possible explanation of these finding is that providing writing exercises in the process of teaching and learning by teacher in the class especially while students have purpose may be very interesting for them because these drills help them to be reflective and responsible and give them a chance to produce something.

CONCLUSION

This study began with the assumption that contextualized, decontextualized, and sentence level spelling rules could enhance the third grade high school language learners' spelling proficiency. The instruction lasted for the two-month semester. During this time, the teacher (researcher) employed the spelling rules and self-correcting techniques, explicit instruction techniques, and multiple intelligence techniques to teach spelling. The null hypothesis of the study in the contextualized group was rejected since there was a significant difference between the pre-and the post-tests. The null hypothesis in the sentence level group was rejected since there was a significant difference between the pre-and post-tests. The null hypothesis of the study in decontextualised group was accepted since there was not a significant difference between the pre-and post-test. The results of the post-test indicated that the instruction of spelling rules of the contextualized group did affect the third grade high school female language learners spelling proficiency. That is, the spelling proficiency of the contextualized group who had made the use

of contextualized spelling rules and activities such as self-correcting, explicit instruction, multiple intelligence techniques to outperform the decontextualized and the sentence level groups.

The application of contextualized spelling rules for writing and spelling proficiency resulted in successful learning among females. Language learners who are successful in their writing and spelling proficiency might draw on this strategy more frequently than do those who are poor in their writing and spelling proficiency. Of course, poor spellers may utilize other contextualized spelling activity but they are less frequent users of this activity. The value of contextualized spelling activities use of contextualized spelling rules should be discussed by teachers who teach at the high school level. Therefore, the use contextualized spelling activities use of contextualized spelling rules of should be more brought to notice among students of writing classes in particular based on what results of the study suggested.

The results of this research can lead the future researchers to investigate other language skills. Other skills such as listening comprehension or reading skills are recommended to be investigated in future. Females just took part in this study but both males and females may participate in future studies as well. Learners who studied English as a foreign language took part in this study. Moreover, the same study can be replicated in other situations such as ESL situations and even among native speakers' contexts. Furthermore, this research was conducted on the high school EFL learners at Alzahra high school in Ahvaz. Other levels of language skills can also be studied if the researchers like to make generalizations about language learners at different proficiency levels. Eventually, this study lasted for two months. Succeeding studies can allocate more time to study the effects contextualized spelling activities on EFL learners' writing and spelling proficiency.

REFERENCES

- Al-Jarf, R. (2009). *Phonological and orthographic problems in EFL college spelling*. Retrieved July 15, 2014 from <https://www.teachingEnglish.org.uk/BBCteachingEnglish/blogs/reemasado/>.
- Bailey, S., Borczak, C., & Stankiewicz, A. (2003). *Improving students writing skills through the use of phonics*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Saint Xavier University. Document Reproduction No. ED 468241. Retrieved September 15, 2014 from www.eric.ed.gov/.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Dargahi, Z. (2011). *The use of different spelling strategies among EFL Young learners*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Retrieved July 15, 2014 from www.readingteachersnetwork.org.
- Bloodgood, J. W. (1991). A new approach to spelling instruction in language arts programs. *The Elementary School Journal*, 93, 203-211. Retrieved January 22, 2014 from http://www.journals.uchicago.edu.
- Bradley, L.L., & Bryant, P.E. (1985). *Rhyme and reason in reading and spelling*. University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbor.

- Brown, D., & Ellis, N. C. (1991). *Handbook of spelling: theory, process and intervention*. John Wiley and sons, LTD. Chichester, England.
- Cook, V. J. (1999). *Teaching spelling*. Retrieved May 17, 2014 from [http:// private www.assex.ac.uk/~ vcook /OBS20. Htm](http://private.www.assex.ac.uk/~vcook/OBS20.Htm).
- Cordewener, K. A. H., Bosman, A. M.T.M., & Verhoevenel, L. (2014). *Implicit and explicit instruction: The case of spelling instruction*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Pittsburg University.
- El Koumy, A. S. (2002). *Teaching and learning English as a foreign language: A comprehensive approach* (1 ed). Dar An-Nashr for Universities, Cairo, Egypt. Document Reproduction No. ED 490784. Retrieved March 21, 2014 from www.eric.ed.gov.
- Fagerberg, I., (2006). *English spelling in Swedish secondary school: students' attitudes and performance*. Karlstds University Press. Retrieved March 18, 2014 from: [http:// kau.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2.../FULLTEXT01](http://kau.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2.../FULLTEXT01).
- Feez, S. (2001). *The role of dictation in teaching and learning English*. Retrieved April 10, 2011 from [http://www. Telenex.hku.hk/](http://www.Telenex.hku.hk/).
- Hall, A. (2014). *Making spelling meaningful: using explicit instruction and individual conferencing*, 14, 34-37.
- International Dyslexia Association. (2000). *Spelling*. Retrieved March 5. 2014 from [htt: // www.interclays. org/ servlet/ compose? Section](http://www.interclays.org/servlet/compose?Section).
- Jenks, C. J. (2003). *Process writing checklist*. Document Reproduction Service No. ED 479389, 1-9.
- Johnstone,. R. (2001). Exploring classroom teachers spelling practices and beliefs. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 40, 143-156. Retrieved April 12, 2014 on [www. reading teachers network. Org/Publications](http://www.readingteachersnetwork.org/Publications).
- Kamhi, A. G., & Hintone, L. N. (2000). *Explaining individual differences in spelling ability. Topics in Language Disorders*, 20(3), 37-49.
- Kenuing, J., & Verhoeven, L. (2007). *Spelling development throughout the elementary grades: he Dutch case. Learning and Individual Differences*, 18, 459-470.
- Kibble, M., & Miles, T. R. (1994). *Phonological error in the spelling of taught dyslexic children*. In C. Hulme, & M. Snoling (Eds), *Reading development and dyslexia* (pp. 105-127). London: Whurr publications.
- Moats, L. C. (2006). How spelling supports reading: And why it is more regular and predictable than you may think. *American Educator*, 29(4), 12-43.
- Rana, A. M. K., & Perveen, U. (2013). *Motivating students through self-correction. Educational Research International*, 2(2), 192-196.
- Schlagal, B. (2003). Classroom spelling instruction: History, research, and practice. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 42(1) 44-57. Retrieved June 15, 2014 from [http:// Faculty. Rcoe. Appstate .edul koppen haverd](http://Faculty.Rcoe.Appstate.edu/koppenhaverd).
- Scott, C. M. (2000). Principles and methods of spelling instruction: Applications for poor spellers. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 20(3), 66-82.
- Singer, B., & Bashir, A. (2004). Developmental variations in writing in stone, C. A., Sillimon, E. R., Ehren, B. J., & Apel, K. (Eds.), *Hand-book of language and literacy: development and disorders*, (pp. 559-582). Newyourk: Guilford.

- Tan, B. H. (2011). Innovative writing centers and online writing labs outside North America. *Asian EFL Journal*, 13(2), 391-418. Retrieved September 2, 2014 from <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com>.
- Templeton, S., & Morris, D. (2001). Reconceptualizing spelling development and instruction. *Reading online*, 5(3), 20-35. Retrieved from <http://www.uic.edu/index.html/>.
- Treiman, R., & Bourssa, D. (2000). The development of spelling skill. *Topics in Language Discourse*, 20, 1-18.

DEVELOPING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING: BRAINSTORMING VS. ROLE-PLAY

Farid Ghaemi

Assistant Professor, Karaj Branch Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran
Email: ghaemi@kiaui.ac.ir

Esmail Hassannejad

Department of English Language, Dezful Branch Islamic Azad University, Dezful, Iran
Email: myhonor504@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Due to the lack of preparation for the speaking activities, some of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students face serious problems in speaking skill. The present study aims at investigating the relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two widespread pre-speaking activities which was carried out between the two class groups –students undertaking a full-course of study in Lang. Lab. 2 in Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch, Iran and through a standard proficiency test derived from NTC's TOEFL Test, it was observed that the students were homogeneous. Each class group was given necessary treatment separately to implement each of the mentioned pre-speaking activities as a warm up before the speaking phase in five sessions. Then, based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview ranging from 1 to 6, where 1 means memorized proficiency and 6 stands for native proficiency, was utilized for each class group to assess EFL students' speaking proficiency, and the obtained scores were applied in one independent sample t-test. Since the t-observed was more than the t-critical, the first hypothesis was verified. That is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity. The pedagogical implications of the present study are 1) recognizing the EFL students' tendency to brainstorming as the most provoking pre-speaking activity 2) providing the students with an atmosphere wherein brainstorming can be implemented before the speaking phase.

KEYWORDS: Brainstorming, Role-play, Pre-speaking, speaking phase

INTRODUCTION

Most of the EFL students face serious problems in speaking skill because of inadequate preparation for the speaking activities. They should be taught how to prepare for the speaking phase when they arrive in language classes. The purpose of pre-speaking is to activate language, motivate speakers, prepare ideas, and help students bring their background knowledge (schemata) to the specific context of the lesson. As stated by Rezaei (2013), in pre-speaking activities, four features need to be determined, i.e., the topic of speaking lesson, the purpose of speaking lesson, the audience to which speakers speak, and the format of speaking, or whether it is a conversation, discussion, monologue, presentation, formal speech and so forth. Likewise, based on Vilimec

(2006), this stage includes two focus areas: engage-instruct-initiate sequence, and grouping students. The first area concerns engagement of students, techniques for drawing attention or involving students, providing students with instructions and initiating students to start the activity. The second area deals with setting students into groups, providing this is required by the nature of the activity. Kayi (2006) introduced some of these activities including discussion, simulation, role-play, simulation, story -telling, information gap, brainstorming, story completion, reporting and so on among which brainstorming and role-play seem more influential than others. Brainstorming as a pre-speaking activity motivates students to produce ideas in a limited time. Depending on the context, either individual or group brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely. The good characteristic of brainstorming is that the students are not criticized for their ideas so students will be open to sharing new ideas. Another pre-speaking activity is role-play in which students pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles, and the teacher gives information to the learners such as who they are and what they think or feel (Harmer, 1984).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Speaking Theories

According to Gower et al. (1995), speaking as a productive skill has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practiced through controlled and guided activities and, fluency, considered to be ‘the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously’. Bygate (1987) states that in order to achieve a communicative goal through speaking , there are two aspects to be considered – knowledge of the language, and skill in using this knowledge. It is not enough to possess a certain amount of knowledge, but a speaker of the language should be able to use this knowledge in different situations. Based on Bygate (1987) , speaking skill is viewed as comprising two components: production skills and interaction skills, both of which can be affected by two conditions: firstly, processing conditions, taking into consideration the fact that ‘a speech takes place under the pressure of time’; secondly, reciprocity conditions connected with a mutual relationship between the interlocutors. Production skills involve two aspects – facilitation and compensation, brought about by processing conditions. Both devices help students, besides making the oral production easier or possible, sound more naturally. Interaction skills, on the other hand, involve routines and negotiation skills. Routines present the typical patterns of conversation including interaction and information routines. Negotiation skills serve as a means for enabling the speaker and listener to make themselves clearly understood. This is achieved by two aspects: management of interaction and turn-taking. With regard to the elements of speaking that are crucial for fluent oral production, Harmer (2001) distinguishes between two aspects – knowledge of ‘language features’, and the ability to process information on the spot or mental/social processing. According to Harmer (2001), to wage oral communication, participant should possess knowledge of language features, and the ability to process information and language on the spot. Language features involve four areas – connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. If the speaker possesses these language features, processing skills, ‘mental/social processing’, will help him or her to achieve successful

communication goal. Processing skills include language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing.

Speaking with Regard to Communicative Competence

As Revell (1991) stipulates, beginning with Noam Chomsky (1965) and his distinction between competence as the speaker's intuitive knowledge of the rules of his native language', and performance as 'what he actually produces by applying these rules', the theory of communicative competence has gone through a serious development so far. Brown (1994) discusses several theories of communicative competence as they developed through periods of time, of which the most notable ones include the studies by Hymes (1967), Savignon (1983), Cummins (1979) or Canale and Swain (1980). In accordance with Brown (1994), the newest views are probably best captured by Lyle F. Bachman (1990) in his schematization of what Bachman calls 'Communicative Language Ability' (CLA) which comprises two basic features – firstly, knowledge, competence in the language, and, secondly, the capacity for implementing or using the competence. Bachman proposes three components that in his view 'communicative language ability' framework includes language competence, strategic competence, and psychological mechanisms. While language competence is a set of specific knowledge components that are utilized in communication via language, strategic competence is the term that Bachman uses to characterize the mental capacity for implementing the components of language competence in contextualized communicative language use; the third component, psychophysiological mechanisms present the neurological and psychological processes involved in the actual execution of language as a physical phenomenon.

Speaking Activities in Relation to Communicative Language Teaching

As Brown (1994) describes, it has been the philosophy of communicative language teaching (CLT) for many years to teach foreign languages through communicative approach which focuses 'on speaking and listening skills, on writing for specific communicative purposes, and on authentic reading texts'. Brown (1994) defines the most important features of CLT:

- 1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
- 2) Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learners to accomplish those purposes.
- 3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- 4) In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed context.

Harmer (2001) when suggesting features of CLT implies that 'the language learning will take care of itself' and agrees with Brown that the accuracy of the language is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task. In relation to communicative language teaching, Revell (1991) reminds that 'theories of communicative competence imply that teachers

must do more than just supply learners with a number of language structures to manipulate' and suggests that it is necessary to make a link between 'linguistic competence' and 'communicative competence'. Accordingly, Littlewood (1991) raised a solution for bridging the gap by categorizing activities into two groups: pre-communicative activities, and Communicative activities. The aim of the pre-communicative activities is to 'help the learners develop links with meanings that will later enable them to use this language for communicative purposes'. Pre-communicative activities are therefore divided into two subcategories: 'structural activities', such as mechanical drills or verb paradigms, for producing accurate and appropriate language forms; and, 'quasi-communicative activities', such as question-and-answer activities, giving directions to a stranger basing learner's replies on, for example, a town plan, or questionnaires, which bear a potential functional meanings of the language (Littlewood 1991). Correspondingly, Millrood (2001) believes that Speaking lessons are normally offered in three main phases, namely pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking phases and classroom activities are accordingly divided into three main categories, i.e., pre-speaking, while/during-speaking, and post-speaking activities. Pre-speaking activities are considered as a warm-up and prepare the learners for the main speaking activity. In order to activate language, motivate speakers, prepare ideas, and helps students bring their background knowledge (schemata) to the specific context of the lesson. Students are asked to encourage ideas about the topic by means of fruitful pre-speaking activities such as brainstorming. In pre-speaking activities, four features need to be determined, i.e., the topic of speaking lesson, the purpose of speaking lesson, the audience to which speakers speak, and the format of speaking, or whether it is a conversation, discussion, monologue, presentation, formal speech and so forth. While-speaking activities compose the body of speaking lessons. Students are encouraged to engage in some sort of interactive exchange of information or communication. They may be asked to play a role given to them in as in role-playing activities, to find a solution to a problem posed for them as in problem-solving activities, or to play in an interesting game that teacher introduces, and all these activities aim to provide them with suitable opportunities to express their feelings, describe things, explain them clearly, ask questions and ask for what they need, discuss things in small or larger groups, and so on. And in post-speaking activities a rethinking process is at work. The learners are encouraged to reflect on the activities which were just done and on their own performance, bring language they have acquired into more focus, further focus on the ideas they have just come up with, and produce spoken language integrated with the other skills, that is not merely oral production, but a combination of two or more skills simultaneously. They aim to promote critical thinking in learners which paves the more language development.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a significant relationship between brainstorming and role-play in pre-speaking phase?
2. Is brainstorming more effective than role-play in pre-speaking phase?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: It is believed that those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between brainstorming and role-play.

METHODOLOGY

The study aims at investigating the relationship between brainstorming as one of the most applicable pre-speaking activities through which students can produce ideas freely in a limited time and role-play as another widespread pre-speaking activity in which students are assigned different roles which they may have outside the classroom environment, in real life . It is to be noted that the students in both two classes were involved in a context in which they were incapable of speaking fluently due to the lack of any preparatory steps which could help foster their speaking ability.

Setting

The setting for this study included the language laboratory in the Humanities faculty of Islamic Azad university, Dezful branch, Dezful, Iran.

Participants

The investigation of pre-speaking activities was intended for 60 typical second – semester college students of Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch, Dezful, Iran who were studying "Lang Lab 2" as their main course in two homogeneous classes. The criterion for focusing on this selected population was a proficiency test in grammar, reading comprehension and vocabulary in English. There were 30 students in each class. Each class group whose teacher was the same was taught separately to speak based on one specific pre-speaking activity, in one class Brainstorming and in another one Role-play.

Instrumentation

To use necessary items for proficiency test, 20 vocabulary questions 20 grammatical items and regarding reading comprehension, 10 questions were raised from NTC'S TOEFL test. All together, the proficiency test included 50 questions and each question had a two- point mark with the total of 100 points. Based on the statistical description of the proficiency test, it was observed that the Mean of the first group was equal to 84.59, the Minimum score was 68 and the Maximum score was 98. The Mean of the second group was equal to 84.00. The minimum score was 70 and the Maximum score was 96. Regarding the results of the proficiency test, the mean difference of the proficiency tests was equal to 0.59 that showed a reasonable difference level to compare the two classes for this research. Having taught each class group how to initiate their speaking activities via one of the two pre-speaking activities, brainstorming and role-play, and having extended the same trend within five sessions, the researcher who was also the instructor of the two "Lang Lab 2" classes utilized an interview based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview was utilized for each class group to assess the EFL students' speaking ability in terms of the following components:

1. Accent
2. Structure
3. Vocabulary
4. Fluency
5. Comprehension

The scale used by the teacher and the researcher both as the raters of the students spoken performance made it essential to give careful attention to the following points suggested by Farhady et.al. (1994) in order to make the scoring as reliable as possible .

1. Each interview must be carefully structured.
2. The number of raters will not be less than 20 for each case.
3. The candidates should be put at ease in order to make the results both more valid and reliable .
4. Each interview will be recorded for scoring and future reference.
5. Scoring will be discrete rather than holistic .

Procedure

Scores were given on a 6 point scale ranging from the least appropriate (1) to the most (6). However, since native and native-like proficiency do not usually occur, levels (5) and (6) were ignored. Then, each student's voice was recorded so that their speaking ability could be rated deliberately based on the above discrete factors.

The interview session was held separately for each class group and each student was given a specific score on the basis of the mentioned speaking components. In order to see which one of the two pre-speaking activities was more effective on the EFL learners' speaking, the researcher applied an independent sample t – test based on the scores obtained from the students' interview results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Having collected the data based on the above mentioned data collection instruments and procedures, the researcher conducted the analysis of data and tested the hypothesis formulated for the present study. Accordingly, an independent sample t-test was utilized so that it could be shown which one of the two pre-speaking activities, brainstorming and role-play was more effective on the EFL learners' speaking.

Table1: Group Statistics

Prespeaking		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Brainstorming	30	15.67	1.807	.330
	Roleplay	30	10.10	1.583	.289

Table2: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
Scores	Equal variances assumed	.925	.340
	Equal variances not assumed		

Tables 3&4: Independent Sample T-test

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Scores	Equal variances assumed	12.692	58	.000	5.567
	Equal variances not assumed	12.692	57.018	.000	5.567

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	.439	4.689	6.445
	Equal variances not assumed	.439	4.688	6.445

Based on the results given in table one, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores obtained from the students implementing brainstorming were 15.67 and 1.80. The mean and the standard deviation for the second group of students who utilized role-play group were 10.10 and 1.58 respectively. At the 95% confidence interval of difference one can conclude that as P is less than 5% ($P < 0.05$) $p = 0$, the difference between the means obtained from the t – test is statically different. That is to say, the means of the first and second group were 15.67 and 10.10 respectively. There is a difference value of 5.57 of the mean of the two groups on the same test. According to Levene's test for equality of variances, since $F = 0.925$, $p > 0.05$, the equal variances assumption is accepted. Likewise, $t(58) = 12.69$; $p < 0.05$ and as the first hypothesis is one-tailed, P value, which is obtained by dividing Sig.(2-tailed) by two, equals 0.000, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is verified; that is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

In order to assure whether the result was acceptable, the researcher got another teacher who taught the same course to interview the same groups separately based on the same scale. Then, on the basis of the obtained score, an independent sample t-test was applied. The following tables provide the results obtained from the independent sample t-test conducted by the second rater.

Table 5: Group Statistics

Prespeaking		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Brainstorming	30	16.60	1.354	.247
	Roleplay	30	10.43	1.813	.331

Table 6: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
Scores	Equal variances assumed	.729	.397
	Equal variances not assumed		

Tables 7&8: Independent Sample T-test

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Scores	Equal variances assumed	14.923	58	.000	6.167
	Equal variances not assumed	14.923	53.676	.000	6.167

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			Lower	Upper
Scores	Equal variances assumed	.413	5.339	6.994
	Equal variances not assumed	.413	5.338	6.995

Regarding the results given in table one, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores obtained from the students implementing brainstorming were 16.60 and 1.354. The mean and the standard deviation for the second group of students who utilized role-play group were 10.43 and 1.813 respectively. At the 95% confidence interval of difference one can conclude that as P is less than 5% ($P < 0.05$) $p = 0$, the difference between the means obtained from the t – test is statically different. That is to say, the means of the first and second group were 16.60 and 10.43 respectively. There is a difference value of 6.17 of the mean of the two groups on the same test. According to Levene's test for equality of variances, since $F = 0.729$, $p > 0.05$, the equal variances assumption is accepted. Likewise, $t(58) = 14.92$; $p < 0.05$. In addition, because the first hypothesis is one-tailed, P value, which is obtained by dividing Sig.(2-tailed) by two, equals 0.000, so it can be realized that the first hypothesis is verified; that is, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

To sum up concerning the main question raised in this study, one can be safe to conclude that there is a significant relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two most applicable pre-speaking activities. According to the second question, as the first hypothesis was verified, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

Discussion

It goes without saying that this study profited by a mixed method design which included qualitative and quantitative aspects of research; that is, interviewing the students and utilizing a

range from 1 to 6 based on the Likert test which is considered as a non-parametric and ordinal test has to do with the qualitative aspect of the research and applying an independent sample t-test which is interval and parametric refers to the quantitative or experimental aspect of research. Similarly, as the use of qualitative and quantitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the research process, it is regarded as a fixed mixed method on one hand, and since the use of such a mix method arises due to issues that develop during the process of conducting the research, it is referred to as an emergent mixed method on the other hand. Hence, this type of mixed method design falls somewhere in the middle of the continuum with both fixed and emergent aspects of the design. Likewise, this research benefits from a true experimental design since each group was given the necessary treatment and afterward they were evaluated with regard to the mentioned treatment.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating the relationship between brainstorming and role-play as the two most applicable pre-speaking activities and realizing which one of these two can affect students' speaking more than the other one. For these purposes, two groups of second – semester college students of Islamic Azad University, Dezful branch who were studying "Lang Lab 2" as their main course in two homogeneous classes were selected. The criterion for focusing on this selected population was a proficiency test in grammar, reading comprehension and vocabulary in English. There were 30 students in each class. Each class group whose teacher was the same was given necessary treatment separately to implement each of the mentioned pre-speaking activities as a warm up before the speaking phase in five sessions. Then, based on the speaking scale developed by Farhadi et al (1994) an interview ranging from 1 to 6, where 1 means memorized proficiency and 6 stands for native proficiency, was utilized for each class group to assess the EFL students' speaking proficiency, and the obtained scores were applied in one independent sample t-test. Since the t-observed was more than the t-critical, the null hypothesis which stated "there is no relationship between brainstorming and role-play was rejected and the first hypothesis was verified. In other words, those who implement brainstorming as their pre-speaking activity have a stronger performance in their speaking phase than those who utilize role-play as their pre-speaking activity.

Needless to say that the students' interest to brainstorming or role-play will be determined by providing each class students with a specific treatment on either of the two activities. In accordance with brainstorming, it should be considered as the most widespread pre-speaking technique through which EFL students share their ideas freely without hesitation. In fact, it will help them boost their fluency and since there is no limitation to seize them, they try to talk automatically and nonstop. Furthermore, as they are taught how to brainstorm during five consecutive sessions, they will adapt to implementing such an intensive process before speaking. Conversely, role-play as another pre-speaking activity seems quite useful for native or native-like speakers due to the fact that it is based on the sociocultural factors which exist in authentic native or native-like contexts. So EFL students refrain from going through role-plays thanks to the lack of the necessary sociocultural aspects background knowledge which have to be utilized in their conversations. According to brainstorming as the most adequate activity for EFL students before

speaking, Lang Lab teachers are recommended to prepare a situation in which students feel free in order to participate in class discussions and answer the teacher's questions enthusiastically away from affective filters. Similarly, the topics are suggested to be selected based on the students' interest, and teachers should provide the students with general background knowledge. Likewise, speaking activities are expected to be selected in such a way that they fit the previous brainstorming activity. It is to be noted that since there is no chance for EFL students to extend their English-speaking situations outside the classrooms, teachers are recommended to make fruitful, nonthreatening and provoking situations inside the classrooms and assign some tasks for the students to do it outside the classroom.

Limitations of the Study

Although the above objectives were met and the priority of brainstorming to role-play in EFL classrooms were illustrated, the researcher faced some limitations while getting along with the current study. First, based on Farhadi et. al. (1994), in an interview, the number of raters are not expected to be less than 20 for each case, while it will be so time-consuming for the researcher to employ the mentioned number of raters for each case. Furthermore, the way the interviewers recorded the participants' voices was based on the existing facilities in the laboratory, whereas interviewers need to get their recordings via the most modern instruments so that they can have a more exact judgment on the students' performance.

REFERENCES

- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Broukal, M., & Nolan-Woods, E. (1997) . NTC's Practice Tests for the TOEFL , Test of English as a Foreign Language: University of Michigan.
- Brown, D. H. (1994). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Bygate, M.(1987).Speaking .The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages . Cambridge University Press.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M., (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, (1), 1–47.
- Chomsky, N., (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of Educational Research*, 49, 222-251.
- Farhadi, H., Jafarpour, A., & Birjandi, P. (1994). *Language skills testing:From theory to practice*. Tehran, Iran: SAMT Publishers.
- Gower, R., Phillips, D., & Walters, S. (1995). *Teaching practice Handbook* . Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- Harmer, J. (1984). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London; New York: Longman.
- Harmer, J. (2001). The Practice of English Language Teaching (3rd edition). *TESOL Quarterly*, 37 (1), Spring 2003.
- Hymes, D.H., (1966). Two types of linguistic relativity. In Bright, W. *Sociolinguistics*. The Hague: Mouton. pp. 114-158.

- Kayi, H. (2006). *Teaching Speaking: Activities to Promote Speaking in a Second Language*. University of Nevada. The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. XII, No. 11, November 2006.
- Littlewood, William. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press .
- Millrood, R., (2001). *Modular course in ELT methodology* . Moscow: Drofa.
- Savignon , Sandra J. (1983). *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice, Texts and Contexts in Second Language Learning*. Urbana. Addison Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- Vilimec, E. (2006). *Developing Speaking Skills*. Thesis. University of Pardubice. Faculty of Arts And Philosophy. Department of English And American Studies.

ON THE EFFECT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH TENSES

Akbar Abbasi (Corresponding Author)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Torbat-e-Heydarieh branch, Islamic Azad
University, Torbat-e-Heydarieh, Iran
Email: akbar.abbasi77@yahoo.com*

Mohammad Ali Fatemi (PhD)

*Department of English Language Teaching, Torbat-e-Heydarieh branch, Islamic Azad
University, Torbat-e-Heydarieh, Iran
Email: Fatemi35@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of dynamic assessment on Iranian pre-intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' acquisition of English tenses. To fulfill the purpose of the study, the placement test was administered to 120 pre-intermediate EFL learners. Those learners with scores of one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected for the purpose of the study. There were 58 students who were then divided randomly into experimental and control groups. Next, the pre-test was administered to the subjects of each group. The participants in the experimental group received mediation in dynamic assessment model. The control group received deductive grammatical rules during twelve sessions. Moreover, to observe any development in the learners' attitude towards dynamic assessment a researcher-made questionnaire was filled out by the learners in the experimental group both before and after the treatment. The results indicated that the learners in the dynamic group not only could outperform the other group in terms of learning English tenses but also they had positive attitudes toward learning through dynamic assessment. The results obtained from this study can definitely be valuable for the EFL learners to improve their learning. They need to be informed that instruction through assessing helps them to become aware of their weaknesses and strengths; therefore they have opportunities to decrease their deficiencies in their subsequent assessments.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic Assessment, Deductive grammar teaching, EFL, English tenses.

INTRODUCTION

During the first decade of the twenty first century many L2 researchers have tried to envisage a monistic view of language instruction and assessment which is termed as Dynamic Assessment (DA) (Ableeva, 2008; Anton, 2009; Birjandi & Ebadi, 2010, 2009; Jacobs, 2001; Kozulin & Garb, 2002; Lantolf, 2009; Poehner, 2008, 2007; Summers, 2008). As Pishghadam, Barabadi & Mehri Kamrood, (2011) state this post-psychometric view of assessment is a direct attack on the traditional psychometric views that support a dualistic view of instruction and assessment. They

add that based on the Socio-Cultural Theory of mind (SCT) originated from the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky's ideas, DA researchers claim that dialectical integration of instruction and assessment into a dynamic activity will bring about successful education. This requires sensitivity to the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) during the assessment procedures which is achieved through the mediators' intervention in terms of providing hints, prompts, and feedbacks.

DA, as a new approach to assessment is mostly grounded in both Vygotsky's SCT, on the one hand, and in his concept of ZPD on the other hand. Saeidi and Hosseinpour (2013) add that based on SCT, process of learners' development is a key to analyze their cognitive abilities. DA intervention refers to mediation, which helps students develop their abilities to apply appropriate L2 knowledge in an EFL setting. Assessment and instruction through DA are inseparable (Saeidi and Hosseinpour, 2013). Accordingly, this study aims at seeking the effect of presenting five English tenses including simple present, present continuous, simple past, past continuous and future through dynamic assessment, which is considered an instructional tool.

For decades, teaching English in Iran has been dominated by a teacher-centered, examination-oriented, grammar-based method (claimed by Zohrabi, Torabi and Baybourdiani, 2012; Molavi Vardanjani, 2013). Teachers explain grammar rules in detail, and students are busy taking notes and have few opportunities for meaningful practice. Memorization and rote learning are used as basic acquisition techniques. This method is greatly influenced by the Grammar-Translation Method, which emphasizes the teaching of the second language grammar; its principle "practice" technique is translation from and into the target language. As a result, though most students in Iran learn English for at least three years in junior high schools and four years in senior high schools, the outcome is not satisfying. Another problem is that a plenty of teachers feel that teaching through a test is an inappropriate and useless job while some teachers believe that teaching through testing can be completely communicative and enjoyable for learners even if achieving this can sometimes be quite demanding of our creativity as teachers.

Bachman (1990) has defined the effect of testing on teaching and learning as backwash, and believes that it can be harmful or beneficial. If the content of the test and testing techniques are inconsistent with the objectives of the course, the test may cause harmful backwash. The basis of traditional testing methods such as the translation method was considered subjective and the accuracy and fairness of such evaluations were considered at best questionable. On the other hand, in traditional assessment methods the relationship between examiner and the examinee is neutral and disinterested while in dynamic assessment the examiner is interested in the examinees' development and assessment is performed in a very helpful atmosphere. The most distinguishing feature which differentiates the traditional assessment methods and dynamic assessment is the process of providing feedback. In the traditional methods there was usually no specific plan for giving feedback during the process of assessment meanwhile in dynamic assessment the process of assessment is mediated. Limited number of studies that will be mentioned in the review of related literature part implies that more studies are needed in the field of language learning in order to better understand the effects of dynamic assessment on language learning, and in order to provide more guidance to language teachers who wish to use dynamic

assessment in their language classrooms. The present study tries to develop a dynamic test of English tenses learning and provide answers for the research questions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Poehner and Lantolf (2005) define DA as the interaction between assessor as intervener and learner as active participant with the aim of making cognitive changes in the learner during the process of learning and assessing. Unlike other sub-skills, grammatical knowledge has not received much attention as far as DA is concerned. They add that various studies have been conducted on reading and writing the results of which show the effectiveness of DA in comparison to the conventional forms of assessment.

Dynamic Assessment and Non-dynamic Assessment Comparison

Current and traditional approaches to curricula and assessment of learners' abilities have been the subject of strong criticism, criticisms that draw on the nature of the relationship between instruction and assessment. DA grounded in Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD, focuses on what a learner is able to do with the assistance of a more knowledgeable another and the type and amount of mediation needed for a learner to be able to do a task. DA indicates the learner's learning potential. That is, the learner is able to overcome performance problems by working through his or her independent limitations as they engage and collaborate with the teacher who offers just the mediation(s) needed to assist the learner in moving themselves forward in the given activity. Thus, assessment and instructional activities are brought together in DA so that learner development is fostered. According to Caffrey, Fuchs, and Fuchs (2008), DA differs from NDA, i.e. non-dynamic, traditional, static assessment, in many respects such as relationships between an examiner and learners, nature of the feedback provided, and nature of learning. As for the relationships, they point out that while in NDA the atmosphere between an examiner and the examinees has been a threatening one, in DA it is a supportive one that focuses on a joint activity towards learners' learning. With regard to feedback, whereas in NDA no or very little learning-friendly feedback may be provided, in DA feedback has to be fine-tuned to match person(s)-specific ZPDs. While in NDA the emphasis has been exclusively on the product of learning, in DA it is, over and above the product, on the process(s) of learning.

Models of dynamic assessment

There are different approaches and models to DA. Poehner, (2008) and Thouësny (2010) state that models generally differ in how they approach mediation. In Feuerstein's interactionist model, assistance emerges from the interaction between the examiner and the learner, and is therefore highly sensitive to the learner's ZPD. Interactionist DA focuses on the development of an individual learner or even a group of learners, regardless of the effort required and without concern for a predetermined endpoint. In Brown's interventionist model, forms of assistance are standardized, therefore emphasizing the psychometric properties of the assessment procedure. Interventionist DA is concerned with quantifying, as an 'index of speed of learning' (Brown & Ferrara, 1985: 300), the amount of help required for a learner to quickly and efficiently reach a pre-specified end point. Brown's Graduated Prompt (GP) model is grounded on the number of prompts needed to elicit a desired response. The learner's learning potential which is defined as a

gain score (from the pretest to the posttest) is estimated by the number of prompts needed to get the goal and the level of transfer of learning to other tasks (Gutierrez, 2000). This model of DA is different from Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) in that the mediation in Brown's GP model of DA is arranged from most implicit to most explicit and culminates with a correct answer (Poehner, 2008). The tests are also administered in an almost standardized manner and the examiner gradually provides the child with prompts if the child is not able to complete the task.

Grigorenko and Sternberg, (2002) claim that there are two formats within interventionist DA models. The cake format is more integrated, offering mediation throughout the administration of the assessment. In the cake format, the examinee is provided with mediation drawn from a standardized menu of hints, ranging from implicit to explicit, during the administration of the assessment itself. Thus, the 'cake' metaphor alludes to the layering of test items and hints in such a way that a menu of hints can be accessed, as required, for each question or problem before moving on to the next item on the test. The sandwich format primarily relies on a pretest-intervention/training-posttest format administered in either an individual or group setting, and reminiscent of traditional experimental research designs. This is also the more widespread dynamic assessment format (Cited in Duvall and Naeini, 2012).

Approaches to teaching English tenses

Teaching English Tenses can be done through deductive and inductive approach. Both of the approaches have their own strengths and weaknesses. Chalipa, (2013) states that deductive approach starts with the presentation and explanation of the rules, and then it is followed by the examples of the sentences using the rules. She adds that in deductive approach the teachers directly explain the rules of the English tense. The explanation is completed with discrete sentences, and it is followed with samples of sentences by the learners to confirm their understanding. An inductive approach starts with examples from which a rule is inferred (Chalipa, 2013). If the teachers apply inductive approach, they do not give the rule directly to the learners, they just give list of sentences and from the sentences they ask the learners to discover the rule by analyzing the provided sentences in a discourse level. It is just like acquiring the first language, in which parents do not introduce the rules of the first language but because it is practiced everyday and continuously with many exposure then the grammatical rules of the first language are acquired naturally and effortlessly. In regard to the strengths and weaknesses of both deductive and inductive approaches to teaching grammar, the researcher tried to apply deductive approach for teaching English tenses to the participants in control group.

Previous researches on DA in language education

Although DA is a newcomer in second language acquisition (SLA), it is by no means the case in other disciplines. As Haywood and Lidz (2007) contend, DA is no longer a new approach to psychological and educational assessment as some of its current applications have been around for more than a half century.

Tajeddin and Tayebipour (2012), pointed that the following studies fall within L2 DA studies: Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), Nassaji and Swain (2000), Kozulin and Garb (2001), Poehner (2005), and Ableeva (2010).

In Iranian context the following researchers have conducted their studies to investigate the effect of DA on Iranian EFL learners' abilities. Pishghadam, Barabadi and MehriKamrood (2011), investigated the effectiveness of using a computerized dynamic reading comprehension test (CDRT) on Iranian EFL students. The results revealed that providing mediation in the form of hints contributed significantly to the increase of students' scores, and consequently to the improvement of their text comprehension. Jafary, Nordin and Mohajeri (2012) investigated the effect of dynamic assessment on learners' syntactic knowledge. The results showed that at a 0.05 level of significance the mean of experimental group was more than the mean of control group for different scores. The findings of a study by Tajeddin and Tayebipour (2012) in order to investigate the effect of DA on inter-language pragmatics (ILP) revealed that DA groups outperformed NDA groups and that DA groups of both high and low proficiency levels differed significantly from pretest to posttest to delayed posttest. Naeini, and Duvall (2012), reported the results of a research project aimed at studying improvements in English Language Training (ELT) university students' reading comprehension performance by applying the mediations of a dynamic assessment approach to instruction and assessment. In their study, DA procedures were conducted with 10 ELT university students. The descriptive and analytic analyses of the results revealed dramatic, measurable progress in participants' reading comprehension performance. In another study by Ghahremani (2013), the researcher investigated the effects of implementing three forms of assessment namely, summative, formative and dynamic assessment on Iranian freshmen's listening ability and listening strategy use. The results indicated that the learners in dynamic group not only could outperform the other groups in terms of listening ability, but they also used more listening strategies. Khodamoradi, Iravani and Jafarigohar, (2013) in their study investigated the extent to which teacher's scaffolding and peers' collaborative dialogue could contribute to the acquisition of English tenses in Iranian EFL learners with different levels of grammatical knowledge. It was found that those low achievers who received assistance from the teacher and those who collaborated with high achievers had significantly better performances than those low achievers who collaborated with low achievers. In another study by Zoghi and Malmeer (2013), the researchers tried to explore the effect of an interactionist model of DA on Iranian EFL adult learners' intrinsic motivation. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their amount of intrinsic motivation. At last the findings of a study by Saeidi and Hosseinpour (2013) aiming at investigating the effect of DA as an instructional tool on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning indicated that vocabulary learning rate of learners can be enhanced using DA.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To achieve the study goals, the researcher sets the following main research questions as a guide throughout this study:

Q1. Does dynamic assessment have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' acquisition of English tenses?

Q2. Does dynamic assessment have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' attitude?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To accomplish the task, fifty-eight male students participated in this study. The subjects who contributed in this research were selected out of 120 Iranian EFL learners studying in grade three at junior high schools in Mashhad, Iran. After administering the placement test, in order to homogenize the participants and make sure about their general proficiency level, the researcher chose the subjects who scored one standard deviation below and above the mean (34 to 45) and then he randomly divided them to control and experimental group with 29 students in each one. The learners in the third grade of junior high school were chosen by the researcher, because upper levels were not accessible for the researcher. All the subjects were between the ages of 12 to 15 years old and their first language was Farsi.

Instrumentation

For achieving the required data the following instruments were employed in this study:

First, the participants' general proficiency was assessed using a pre-intermediate English placement test to ensure the homogeneity of the groups at the very beginning of the course. This test is available at: <http://www.macmillanstraightforward.com/resources/tests> and accessed on 6 February 2014. Since the reliability of this test was unknown to the researcher and in order to make sure about the appropriateness of the test for the subjects under investigation, the test was piloted with parallel group (pre-intermediate EFL learners). The reliability of pre-intermediate placement test was estimated through KR-21 formula which is 0.76. This test consisted of two sections: grammar and vocabulary. It consisted of 50 items in the form of multiple choice questions, the 40 first items of which were grammar and the last 10 items were vocabulary items and the time allotted was 50 minutes.

Second, a researcher-made diagnostic test which aimed at evaluating the participants' entry behavior in the domain of English tenses including was administered as pretest. The purpose of the pre-test was that the result of the pre-test was an indicator of the participants' level of grammatical knowledge before the treatment. To make sure about the appropriateness of the pre-test (a teacher-made test) for the subjects under investigation, the test was piloted with parallel group (pre-intermediate EFL learners). The reliability of pre-test (or post-test) was estimated through KR-21 formula as 0.61.

Third, two quizzes in the form of multiple-choice and completion items were administered to the participants in both control and experimental groups on the sixth and tenth sessions of the treatment. Each test consisted of eight multiple choice and four completion items and the time allotted for each test was twelve minutes. These two tests were piloted by the researcher on the parallel group of the learners. The reliability of both quizzes was estimated through KR-21 formula which was 0.56 and 0.58 respectively.

Fourth, the final post-test which was the pre-test, was administered to the participants in both control and experimental groups. In terms of the test layout, the pre-test/post-test included two sections of multiple choice items and completion items. In the first section, the participants were required to answer 25 multiple choice items while in the second section they were provided with 15 test items to fill in the blanks with appropriate forms of the given verbs in parentheses.

Finally, an attitude questionnaire was designed by the researcher and used in this study. Since the participants were pre-intermediate, the items were written in Farsi so that the students were able to answer the questions. This questionnaire consisted of twelve items in the form of 5-point Likert scale. Each question was used to represent whether or not there is a positive response to the use of dynamic assessment as an instructional tools in learning English tenses. It should be mentioned that items 11 and 12 were prepared to find out the participants knowledge of dynamic and static assessment. The reliability of this questionnaire was estimated through Cronbachs' Alpha as 0.90.

Procedures

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following procedures were applied:

At first the placement test was administered to 120 lower intermediate learners who were studying in grade three at a junior high school in Mashhad, Iran. After analyzing the data, fifty eight students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean (the learners who scored 34 to 45 from their test) were chosen for this study. They were numbered from one to fifty eight. Then, they were randomly assigned into experimental and control group with 29 students in each group.

Participants in both groups took pretest. In order to make sure that all the test items were new and unfamiliar to both groups; the researcher analyzed the students' responses on the pretest. As mentioned in Motallebzadeh, BehAfarin and Daliry Rad, (2011) when 80 percentages of students (23 students in each group) answered one question correctly, we should omit that question because almost all the students could recognize the grammatical structure. As a result in this test, there were no items that twenty three students or more in each group could response correctly. After estimating reliability of the pretest, 40 acceptable items of this test were given to the subjects under the investigation, both subjects of the control and experimental groups.

After that, participants in experimental group were asked to fill out the attitude questionnaire to collect their attitudes towards dynamic assessment before participating in the treatment. It should be mentioned that since the participants in the experimental group were not familiar with dynamic assessment treatment at first the instructor explained about the dynamic assessment treatment and after that they took part in a sample of dynamic assessment session. When the instructor was sure that the participants in experimental group knew what dynamic assessment is he emphasized to avoid writing their names at top of the page, and coded the attitude questionnaire by numbers so that the students could honestly respond the questions with no limitation.

At the heart of the process, during 12 sessions of treatment, five weekly post tests were administered to students. The participants in the experimental group received mediation in dynamic assessment model which involved some strategies like looking for clues, eliminating the

answers that do not fit and comparison strategies. In the experimental group five English tenses were taught to the participants through dynamic assessment in the following method: Five English tenses including simple present, present continuous, simple past, past continuous and simple future were put in five short tests. The tests were distributed among the participants. After allocating one minute for the participants to be prepared for the treatment, dynamic assessment was applied by the instructor in the following way to help the participants learn and get the right answer through these stages: A) Asking the participants to read the question silently; B) Asking the participants to look for clues in the stem of the question; C) Asking the participants to eliminate the answers that do not fit; D) Providing the participants with more examples and asking them to compare the question with these examples; E) Providing the correct response if the previous stages could not lead the participants to the correct response.

In view of the fact that dynamic assessment has been shaped based on "step by step" learning and "ZPD", the course had been devised in a way that it could fulfill this purpose. The instructor first started with the first step and moved thoroughly to the other stages by the time the participants had been able to get the correct answer. The mediation processes were designed to enable the instructor to mediate each of the items in an interactive way. In the experimental group, dynamic assessment was conducted in a scheduled pattern, two times a week on Saturdays and Tuesdays. These five weekly post-tests were delivered to the participants in control group, too. In control group, the participants received deductive grammatical rules during twelve sessions. A sample of deductive grammar teaching session will be appeared in appendices, too.

Moreover, participants in both groups took two quizzes without knowing the date of administration. On the sixth session when the participants in experimental group had taken part in five dynamic assessment sessions, the first quiz was administered. After that, the participants took the second quiz on the tenth session when they had taken part in ten dynamic assessment sessions. These two tests were administered to the participants in control group on the sixth and tenth sessions, too. Both groups were assessed statically and had only twelve minutes to answer the questions.

Having finished the treatment (6 weeks, 12 sessions), students in both groups participated in the post-test. The researcher administered the pretest as posttest to see the effects of the treatment during the study. At the end, the participants in experimental group were asked to fill out the attitude questionnaire once more in order to find out whether their attitudes for the applying dynamic assessment to learn English tenses have changed or not. After that the data analysis stage was carried out. Next, through the application of the t-test, the mean scores of the subjects in the experimental group were compared with the mean scores of the subjects in the control group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions regarding the difference between the two different instruction methods i.e., dynamic assessment and deductive grammar teaching, this study carried out four independent sample t-tests and three paired sampled t-tests. Each t-test compared the difference of means between the two conditions.

Table 1: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Pretest

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Cont.	29	9.1	3.95	-.051	56	0.959
Exp.	29	9.17	5.1			

As shown in Table 1 participants in experimental group ($M = 9.17$, $SD = 5.1$) did not outperform [$t(58) = -.051$, $P = 0.959$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 9.10$, $SD = 3.95$). It means that there is no significant difference between two groups at the beginning of the treatment and they are nearly homogenized.

Table 2: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Quiz 1

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Cont.	29	3.93	1.64	-.354	56	0.726
Exp.	29	4.13	2.41			

As Table 2 reveals participant in experimental group ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 2.41$) did not significantly outperformed [$t(58) = -.354$, $P = 0.726$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.64$) in Quiz 1.

Table 3: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Quiz 2

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Cont.	29	5.06	2.71	-1.28	56	0.209
Exp.	29	5.93	2.26			

As shown in Table 3 the participant in experimental group ($M = 5.93$, $SD = 2.26$) did not significantly outperformed [$t(58) = -1.28$, $P = 0.209$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 5.06$, $SD = 2.71$) in Quiz 2.

Table 4: Result of T-Test for Independent Samples of Posttest

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Cont.	29	12.79	5.14	-2.77	56	0.010
Exp.	29	17.58	8.33			

As Table 4 reveals the participant in experimental group ($M = 17.58$, $SD = 8.33$) outperformed [$t(58) = -2.77$, $P = 0.010$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group ($M = 12.79$, $SD = 5.14$) in posttest session but it is not much significant.

Table 5: Result of T-Test for Paired samples of Control Group

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Cont.	29	9.10	3.95	-4.71	28	.000
Cont.	29	12.79	5.14			

As Table 5 reveals after ten sessions of treatment the participant in control group ($M = 12.79$, $SD = 5.14$) significantly outperformed [$t(28) = -4.71$, $P = 0.00$ (two-tailed)] those participants in control group before the beginning of treatment ($M = 9.10$, $SD = 3.95$). It means that the participants in control group developed their learning of English tenses after receiving deductive grammatical teaching.

Table 6: Result of T-Test for Paired samples of Experimental Group

Groups	No.	M	SD	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Exp.	29	9.17	5.1	-6.72	28	.000
Exp.	29	17.58	8.33			

As shown in Table 6 after ten sessions of treatment the participant in experimental group ($M = 17.58$, $SD = 8.33$) significantly outperformed [$t(28) = -6.72$, $P = .000$ (two-tailed)] those participants in experimental group before the beginning of treatment ($M = 5.06$, $SD = 2.71$). It can be concluded that the participants in experimental group developed their learning of English tenses after receiving dynamic assessment during ten sessions of treatment.

Seemingly both control and experimental groups achieved grammatical knowledge of English tenses after they received different treatment based on the aims of this study. The results obtained from the T-tests revealed that the participants in experimental group outperformed the participants in control group but it was not much significant (Tables 2, 3 and 4). Moreover the results revealed the fact that the more the participants in experimental group took part in dynamic sessions, the much they significantly outperformed the participants in control group on English tenses test. These results showed that compared with deductive grammatical teaching, dynamic assessment does not improve pre-intermediate EFL learners' knowledge more effectively.

A paired sample T-test was carried out to compare the means of two administration of attitude questionnaire both before and after the treatment. The result of this T-test is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Result of T-Test for Paired samples of Attitude Questionnaire Scores

			Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the			
						Lower	Upper			
Pair 2	Postq2 PreQ2	-	0.96552	0.1857	0.03448	0.89488	1.03615	28	28	0
Pair 3	Postq3 PreQ3	-	1.03448	0.32544	0.06043	0.91069	1.15827	17.118	28	0
Pair 4	Postq4 PreQ4	-	1.27586	0.52757	0.09797	1.07519	1.47654	13.023	28	0
Pair 5	Postq5 PreQ5	-	1.06897	0.37139	0.06897	0.9277	1.21023	15.5	28	0
Pair 7	Postq7 PreQ7	-	1	0.26726	0.04963	0.89834	1.10166	20.149	28	0
Pair 8	Postq8 PreQ8	-	1.7931	0.41225	0.07655	1.63629	1.94992	23.423	28	0
Pair 9	Postq9 PreQ9	-	1.51724	0.50855	0.09443	1.3238	1.71068	16.067	28	0
Pair 10	Postq10 PreQ10	-	1.55172	0.57235	0.10628	1.33401	1.76943	14.6	28	0
Pair 11	Postq11 PreQ11	-	1.62069	0.4938	0.0917	1.43286	1.80852	17.674	28	0
Pair 12	Postq12 PreQ12	-	1.24138	1.05746	0.19637	0.83914	1.64362	6.322	28	0
Pair 13	Postindex1 - Preindex1		3.55172	0.57235	0.10628	3.33401	3.76943	33.418	28	0
Pair 14	Postindex2 - Preindex2		4.7931	0.90156	0.16742	4.45017	5.13604	28.63	28	0
Pair 15	Postindex3 - Preindex3		6.72414	1.5788	0.29318	6.12359	7.32468	22.936	28	0
Pair 16	Post index – Pre- index		15.06897	2.47748	0.46006	14.12658	16.01135	32.755	28	0

As Table 7 reveals after twelve sessions of treatment the participants in experimental group had more positive attitudes than those before the beginning of treatment. This illustrates a positive perspective toward learning through DA.

As revealed in Tables 1 to 7, in the control group of this study the routine and deductive trend of teaching English tenses was proved to have been resulted in the improvement of their syntactic

knowledge. However, finally, the results of the comparison of the post-tests in control and experimental groups proved that DA had been more effective and helpful. In this study, DA made the subjects aware of their learning potentialities and facilitated the process of learning English tenses for them. Moreover according to collected information through questionnaire, most of the learners agreed that dynamic assessment prevented their mental agitation and through dynamic assessment they could show what they knew. They also agreed that dynamic assessment was motivating and could help them to prepare for their working tasks. The results reported through the tables confirm the previous discussions for the research questions. The results indicate weighty development of the syntactic knowledge in the dynamic group. It is worth mentioning that this development can be related to both the quality and quantity of feedback that the learners have received throughout the treatment.

In sum, the results of this study, confirms the results of other grammar related studies. The fact of the matter in all similar studies is that dynamic assessment proves to be very helpful for grammar learning. Learners who received DA related treatment ended up having good scores in their evaluation. The results showed that dynamic assessment can be used as an instructional tool for teaching English tenses and also it is necessary and enjoyable in improving learners' ability.

CONCLUSION

Taking the results of this study into consideration, based on the statistical results of the paired sample t-test, there was a significant difference between the results of pre-test and post-test of English tenses learning in the control group. Also with regard to the results of paired sample t-test of experimental group, there was a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test of English tenses learning, which showed that DA had been proved to be successful. In the end, based on the results of independent sample t-test the experimental and control groups differ significantly in a way that experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test. It must be noted that the main characteristic of DA, the theory underlying this study, is not the assessment per se, rather instruction.

The present study gave credit to the usefulness of DA procedures in English tenses learning. It could be inferred that the success of DA might be due to two remarkable reasons at hand: firstly, its effectiveness in learning processes of language and secondly, its creating a different and innovative context of language learning in comparison with traditional ones, both for the learners and teachers. This in turn can bring about lots of benefits for ELT contexts. The outcome of this study analyzed through SPSS (version 20) software indicated that teaching through testing can be an appropriate and useful job and dynamic assessment is completely communicative and enjoyable for the learners. The results also showed that deductive grammatical teachings and teaching through dynamic assessment has meaningful effect on learning of English tenses among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. In addition the findings manifested that those learners who received dynamic assessment during twelve sessions of treatment outperformed the learners who received deductive grammar teaching. On the other hand they had positive attitudes toward learning English tenses through dynamic assessment. It was evidently shown in their posttest scores. The results obtained from this study can definitely be valuable for both EFL teachers and

learners. EFL teachers must have access to the finding of this study to be able to be provided with an appropriate and helpful way of integrating assessment with instruction and EFL learners need to be informed that instruction through assessing (dynamic assessment) helps them to become aware of their weaknesses and strengths; therefore they have opportunities to decrease their deficiencies in their subsequent assessments.

(De) Limitations of the study

The results of this study cannot be generated since like any other study some inevitable limitations were imposed on. First of all, the number of the participants in this study was relatively small for the findings to be generalized to the whole population of EFL students in Iran. Since the sample was small and may not be representative of the larger population of EFL students, and because of segregation rules in Iranian schools, this particular study might have been better studied for qualitative rather than quantitative analysis. Second, the reliability of pretest/posttest fell below 0.70 which is a low reliability and might have affected the results of the study. Third, variables such as gender, age and personal variables were not taken into account because the researcher was not able to take into account these variables for the purpose of this study.

REFERENCES

- Ableeva, R. (2008). The effects of dynamic assessment on L2 listening comprehension In: *Socio-cultural theory and the teaching of second languages* J. P. Lantolf and M. E. Poehner (Eds.). London: Equinox.
- Ableeva, R. (2010). *Dynamic assessment of listening comprehension in second language learning*: Unpublished PhD dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University.
- Aljaafreh, A., & Lantolf, J. P. (1994). Negative feedback as regulation and second language learning in the zone of proximal development, *The Modern Language*, 78, 463-483.
- Anton, M. (2009). Dynamic assessment of advanced second language learners: *Foreign Language Annals*, 42 (3), 576-598
- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Birjandi, P & Ebadi, S. (2009). Issues in dynamic assessment, *English Language Teaching*, 2 (4), 188-198.
- Birjandi, P., & Ebadi, S. (2010). *Exploring Learners' Micro genetic Development in L2 Dynamic Assessment via Online Web 2.0 Technology*: Paper presented in IELTS5, University of Tehran, Tehran: Iran.
- Brown, A. L., & Ferrara, R. A. (1985). *Diagnosing zones of proximal development in: J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), Culture, communication, and cognition: Vygotskian perspectives (pp. 273-305)*. New York: CUP.
- Caffrey, E., Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L.S. (2008) the predictive validity of dynamic assessment: A Review. *The Journal of Special Education*, 41(4), 254-270.
- Ghahremani, D. (2012). The Effects of Implementing Summative Assessment, Formative Assessment and Dynamic Assessment on Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Ability and

- Listening Strategy Use. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 3, Number 2(5), (pp.59-68), spring 2013
- Haywood, H.C., & Lidz, S.C. (2007). *dynamic assessment in practice: Clinical and educational applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacobs, E.L. (2001) the effects of adding dynamic assessment components to a computerized preschool language screening test. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 22 (4), 217–226.
- Jafary, M. R., Nordin, N., & Mohajeri, R. (2012). The Effect of Dynamic versus Static Assessment on Syntactic Development of Iranian College Preparatory EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 5 (7), 149-157.
- Khodamoradi, A., Iravani, H., & Jafarigohar, M. (2013). The Effect of Teacher's Scaffolding and Peers' Collaborative Dialogue on the Acquisition of English Tenses in the Zone of Proximal Development: A Socio-cultural Perspective. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social sciences*, 2 (2), Special issues on teaching and learning ISSN 1805-3602
- Kozulin, A., & Garb, E. (2001) *Dynamic assessment of EFL text comprehension of at-risk students*, Paper presented at 9th Conference of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction, Fribourg, Switzerland.
- Kozulin, A., & Garb, E. (2002). Dynamic assessment of EFL text comprehension of at-risk students. *School Psychology International* 23, 112–127.
- Lantolf, J. P. (2009). Dynamic assessment: The dialectic integration of instruction and assessment. *Language Teaching Journal*, 42 (3), 355-368.
- Molavi Vardanjani, A. (2013). A Critical Study of Iranian EFL Environment, *International Refereed & Indexed Journal of English Language and Translation Studies*. ISSN: 2308-5460 October-December, 2013, 4-19.
- Motallebzadeh, K., Beh-Afarin, R., & Daliry Rad, S. (2011) the effect of short message service on the retention of collocations among Iranian lower intermediate EFL learners. *Theory and practice in Language Studies*, 1 (11), 1514-1520.
- Naeini, J., & Duvall, E. (2012) Dynamic assessment and the impact on English language learners' reading comprehension performance: *Language Testing in Asia*, 2 (2), 22-41.
- Nassaji, H., & Swain, M. (2000) A Vygotskian perspective on corrective feedback in L2: The effect of random versus negotiated help on the learning of English articles: *Language Awareness*, 9, 34-51.
- Pishghadam, R., Barabadi, E., & MehriKamrood, A. (2011) the differing effects of computerized dynamic assessment of L2 reading comprehension on high and low achievers, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2 (6), 1353-1358.
- Poehner, M.E. (2005). *Dynamic assessment of oral proficiency among advanced L2 learners of French*: Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University.
- Poehner, M. E., & Lantolf J.P (2004) Dynamic assessment of L2 development: bringing the past into the future. *Journal of Applied Linguistics JAL*, 1 (1), 49-72.
- Poehner, M.E & Lantolf J. P (2005) Dynamic assessment in the language classroom, *Language Teaching Research* 9, 1–33.
- Poehner, M.E. (2007). Beyond the test: L2 dynamic assessment and the transcendence of mediated learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91, 323–340

- Poehner, M. E. (2008). *Dynamic assessment: A Vygotskian approach to understanding and promoting L2 development*. Berlin: Springer.
- Saeidi M. & Hosseinpour A. (2013) the Effect of Dynamic Assessment as an Instructional Tool on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning: *Basic Appl. Sci. Res.*, 3(10), 421-429.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2002). *Dynamic testing: The nature and measurement of learning potential*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Summers, R. (2008). Computer mediated dynamic assessment: toward an online model of dialogic engagement In: J. P. Lantolf and M. E. Poehner (Eds.), *Socio-cultural theory and the teaching of second languages*. London: Equinox.
- Tajeddin, Z., & Tayebipour, F. (2012). The Effect of Dynamic Assessment on EFL Learners' Acquisition of Request and Apology. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)* 4 (2), Summer 2012, Ser. 67/4 (Previously Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities).pp. 87-118.
- Thouësny, S. (2010). *Assessing second language learners' written texts: An interventionist and interactionist approach to dynamic assessment*: Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications (EDMEDIA), Toronto, Canada.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Zohrabi, M., Torabi, M. A., & Baybourdiani, P. (2012) Teacher-centered and/or Student-centered Learning: English Language in Iran, *English Language and Literature Studies*, 2 (3), 1925-4776.
- Zoghi, M., & Malmeer E. (2013). The Effect of Dynamic Assessment on EFL Learners' Intrinsic Motivation, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4 (3), 584-591.

REPAIR STRATEGIES IN IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' ORAL DISCOURSE

Maryam Salimian Dastjerdi

MA in TEFL, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran

Mohsen Shahrokhi (Corresponding author)

Assistant Professor, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran

Email: shahrokhi1651@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined how Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in the non-English speaking communities handled communication in story-retelling, and uncovered the repair strategies, which they deployed in order to overcome communication break downs and pass comprehensible messages to their interlocutors. In addition, the present study analyzed factors governing the EFL learners' preferences for employing repair strategies. It examined two repair strategies used by male and female EFL learners; self-initiated repair and repetition. The participants were volunteer junior students enrolled in the English Department at Shahreza Azad University, Iran. The results of the analysis revealed that both male and female Iranian English learners resort to strategies of repair in order to compensate for their lack of linguistic items or to gain time to retrieve linguistic item(s) and maintain conversation. Moreover, results indicated that male subjects used strategies of repair more frequently, attributed to the fact that they produced more story events. Another finding was that repetition was used more frequently than self-initiated repair by both groups and that that female participants used less self-repair strategy compared with males. Results implied that, repetition and self-initiated repair can be reinforced for student-student or student-teacher in EFL classroom interaction. In addition, since repair is an element of natural conversation for both native and nonnative speakers, syllabus designers can include these repair strategies in English teaching textbooks.

KEYWORDS: Communication strategies, Self-initiated repair, Repetition, Discourse analysis, Repair strategies

INTRODUCTION

EFL learners try to transmit a comprehensible message to their interlocutors, and they sometimes fail to do so. Students' limited competence can create miscommunication between the students and their teachers and the students themselves. In many situations, students try to solve these miscommunication problems between the teachers and other students to gain an appropriate understanding. Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2003) define conversational repairs as the persistent behaviors that are observed immediately subsequent to the occurrence of a communication breakdown, defined as a situation in which the goal or intent of the behavior is not understood or is misunderstood by the communication partner and, therefore, is not followed by a desired outcome within a reasonable length of time. Understanding how students treat these

communication breakdowns will provide teachers with more insights into how to develop lessons to assist students in the development of their language proficiency. It is proposed that "if educators are aware of the types of conversation breakdowns and the employed repair strategies, they can utilize the necessary instructional strategies to assist students in the development of more sophisticated repair strategies." (Cho & Larke, 2010, p. 2).

Schegloff et al. (1977, p. 361) defined repair as dealing with "recurrent problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding." In addition to linguistic problems (pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, etc.), it may also relate to acceptability problems, such as saying something wrong in a broad sense, that is untrue, inappropriate or irrelevant (Schegloff, 2007). The particular segment of talk to which the repair is addressed, is called the trouble source or the repairable. Drew (1997) suggests that "self-repair is also a mechanism of remedying mistakes in conversation." Research on repair has identified a variety of repair strategies, namely self-initiation self-repair, other-initiation self-repair, other initiation other repair, repetition, paraphrase, confirmation checks, clarification requests and comprehension checks (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 2000; Nagano, 1997; Drew, 1997). Research has also shown that repair, which is a language phenomenon, is necessary for keeping communication smooth and accurate, and it has been evident in the literature that language learners are able to employ many repair strategies in second language interaction (Schegloff et al., 1977, 2000, 2007).

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), self-initiated self-repair takes the form of initiation with a non-lexical initiator, followed by the repairing segment. These non-lexical initiators include cut-offs, lengthening of sounds, and quasi-lexical fillers such as uh and um. In order to repair their errors in problematic talk, language users repeat words and use fillers to gain time and achieve their communicative goal. Schegloff et al. (1977) state that self-initiated and self-completed repair (self-initiated self-repair) occurs when the inter locator who is responsible for the trouble source both initiates and completes the repair. Research on the repair of second language learners (e.g., Krahnke & Christison, 1983; Schegloff, 2000) shows preference for self-initiated repair, although variations can be seen in the amount of initiation (cf. Krahnke & Christison, 1983). Repetition is also a common strategy whose role in communication could be one of the "most effective strategies for promoting comprehension that a speaker can use" (Hoekje, 1984). Rieger (2003) states that repetition, which is a type of self-repair is the most common type of repair consisting of a particular set of repair strategies where the repairable and repairing segments occur in the same turn and the repair is performed by the initiator of the repairable.

One way of modifying, organizing and maintaining conversation is using repair as a communication strategy. Researchers suggest that using communication strategies to prevent communication breakdowns, and to get a message across to the listener lead to second/foreign language learning (Rababah & Bulut, 2007). Therefore, the present study tried to investigate whether there was any significant difference in using strategies of repair (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task. Moreover, this research sought to examine if gender has any significant effect on the usage of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present research will only investigate repetition and self-initiated repair since based on the findings of previous studies these two strategies seem to be the more prominent features of daily communication, and that knowing why and how these strategies are used could help Iranian EFL learners become aware of these strategies, which would help them maintain conversation with their interlocutors. The following questions were addressed in the present study.

- Is there any significant difference in using repair strategies (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task?
- Does gender have any significant effect on the use of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners?

Based on the questions of the study the following hypotheses were formulated:

- There is no significant difference in using repair strategies (self-initiated repair or repetition) among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task.
- Gender has no significant effect on the use of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The course of students was the same. The participants who took part in this study were 30 male and female, in two mixed-sex classes. Since this study is aimed at identifying the repair strategies of discourse that are used by Iranian EFL learners therefore, EFL learners educating in Shahreza Azad university, Iran were considered as the participants. Among them, intermediate level students were chosen based on their English score in the Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT).

Instruments and materials

Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT)

The QOPTs offer an extremely reliable basis for the initial assessment of students of English. This test is a highly economical and easy-to-administer objectively scoreable test, which provides consistently meaningful scores from CEF level A1 upwards. The objective of conducting QOPT was to find intermediate level participants.

Short stories

Another instruments that were used to obtain the required information for the present study comprised five short stories which were selected from the book of "Steps To Understanding" by Hills. All participants were given a print copy of the stories to read 2 days before the performance session. They were then asked to perform a story-retelling task based on these five short stories.

Oral test

At the end of the term, the participants completed an oral English test, which was a way to evaluate their performance in story retelling. Each participant took the test individually. To put it another way, they were asked to perform a story-retelling task based on the five short stories. With the subjects' consent, the oral tests were recorded.

Procedure

The oral test was taken after the QOPT to identify repair strategies which EFL learners use when they speak. Using a digital recorder, the participants were individually audio-recorded while retelling the stories to the researcher. The researcher used gestures, such as nodding, to show that he was following, and interested, and to encourage the participants to continue their retelling. Since real-life conversations require more interaction between speakers, the researcher also tried to interrupt the participants, using words and expressions, such as then, aha, oh my God!, did he do that? oh really! and what happened then? This had a positive impact on the participants' performance, and their motivation to complete the task. The participants' production was carefully transcribed. All pauses and sound lengthening were included in the transcript.

The researcher detected repair strategies in the transcripts of the spoken discourse of the Iranian EFL learners and classified them into two categories of repetition and self-initiated repair base on markers of repair. Markee (2000) identified markers of repair stating that "From a CA perspective, all repairs are likely to be signaled by various markers of incipient repair (pauses, silences, sound stretches, cut-offs and phrases like 'you know' and 'I mean'".

Example of self-initiation self-repair:

Harry Marsh that Emm...in a polite way said why I am Emm... doing.... Emm...the thing like this and driving

Example of repetition:

On the way, the driver said to Harry politely: "could you, could you telling me why we are doing all these things?"

In order to maximize the reliability of the researcher's classification, it was passed to three raters, who were MA English instructors. In order to make the raters' task easier, the strategies were highlighted and classified in context. The raters were asked to verify whether that the researcher's classification was accurate based on the definition of each strategy and their comments were taken into consideration in arriving at the final categories and frequencies.

Data Analysis

In order to investigate the hypotheses of the study, frequencies and percentages of self-initiation, self-repair, and repetition strategies were calculated. The transcription of the short stories were taken into consideration in arriving at the final categories which showed the frequencies and percentages of repair strategies. In order to investigate differences between the strategies of repair employed by EFL learners a Chi-square test was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Difference between self-initiated repair and repetition strategies

As can be seen in Table 1, male participants recorded 179 instances of repair strategies while retelling the story. It was observed that they did their best to report as many events as they could; this was evident in the average number of words used in their oral production, which by means of MS Office word count, was found to be 118 words per story on average. It was also observed that

all the male participants used some instances of repair, either repetition or self-initiated repair. They resorted to the two strategies under investigation at the rate of 124 and 55 instances, respectively.

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Strategy Use among the male Participants

Strategy Type	Frequency	Percentage
Repetition	124	69.273743
Self –Initiated Repair	55	30.726257
Total	179	100%

In addition, Table 2 shows that the female participants used fewer strategies than the males; they employed a total number of 144 strategies of repair, representing both types. Contrary to the male participants, it was noted that the female subjects described only the key events; very specific details were not reported. It was also observed that the female learners were more generic in their story-retelling. This was manifested in the average number of words they produced, which was 70 contrary to the male participants. It was observed that all the participants used instances of repair, repetition and self-initiated repair. But females group used fewer self- initiated repair strategy compared with the male group. They resorted to the two strategies under investigation at the rate of 10 and 55 instances, respectively.

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Strategy Use among Female Participants

Strategy Type	Frequency	Percentage
Repetition	134	93.0555
Self –Initiated Repair	10	6.94444
Total	144	100%

In order to find out whether these differences were significant or not, a Chi-square test was used. The results of this statistical analysis procedure are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test Analysis Results

Table 57. Chi-Square Test Analysis Results			
Strategies	Male	Female	Sig
Repetition	124	134	.0001
Self - initiation	55	10	
$\chi^2 = 26.619$			
df = 1			

The results of Chi-Square, reported in Table 3, reveals that there are significant differences between the two groups, males and females on each strategy (self-initiated repair and repetition)

at $\chi^2 = 26.619$, $P < 0.1$. This implies that the male participants used more strategies because they encountered more problems while retelling the two stories.

Repetition

Repetition was recorded when the subjects repeated some language items in order to delay the production of following lexical item or to gain time to retrieve the required difficult item(s). A closer look at the repetition cases in the present study revealed that the most frequently employed repetition subcategories were repetitions of nouns, personal pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, definite and indefinite articles and demonstrative pronouns.

It was noticed that the repairing segment and the repaired segment were lexically identical (repetition). The use of pauses and fillers, such as *er* and *em* indicated that the subjects encountered some difficulties in retrieving the following lexical item(s) they needed. The male participants performed 124 instances of repetition and female participants performed 134 instances of this. The following excerpts were taken from the performance of the male participants. The repeated words and phrases are italicized, and every three dots mean a second's pause.

- 1) it *it* took a long time.
- 2) After the lecturer finished *er* the writer thanked the translator *translater er* for his good work.

Similarly, the female participants employed repetition as a strategy of repair (134 cases) in order to gain time, retrieve the following lexical item(s), and maintain conversation. The following excerpts (4- 6), which are self-explanatory, are taken from the oral performance of the female group, with the repeated words and phrases presented in italics.

- 3) Many years ago *er* a woman from Africa was invited to *er*... .. *a beth, to bath, bath* house.
- 4) I am looking you because *I want to I want to* know which *er* taps you're turning on.
- 5) One day *er* he came out *er* his office and saw a car.

The most prominent feature of the above excerpts is that the participants stumbled during their speech although there were errors corrected. Levelt (1983) called this a covert error or a potential error which has been discovered before articulation. The editing expressions (*er*...) and (*em*...) signal that the participants thought for some time that an error might be committed in the following lexical item, or they used them because they needed more time to produce the next lexical item(s).

Self-Initiated Repair

In the present study, the male participants resorted to self-initiated repair on 55 occasions. In the following excerpts taken from their oral discourse, the repairing segment and the repaired segments are italicized. In excerpt 7, the speaker might have been planning to produce "how did you translate this long story to a short one?", but, due to her limited linguistic resources he stopped after 'did you', and started a new plan. After hesitation and some pauses, which indicate

the presence of a problem, he produced "how did you er... .. made my long story in a short one?"

- 6) How did you er made my long story in a short story?

The speaker, in excerpt 7, produced "singing" (repairable segment), but she immediately discovered that she was making a mistake in verb tense. Therefore, she corrected it as "is singing" (repaired segment). In the speech event "the man who has (sorry) who had er two patrols", the repairing segment "has", was repaired by telling (sorry). It appears that the speaker was confused by the tense of the verb and fortunately, she could retrieve it, as clearly manifested in her excuse.

- 7) The man who has er sorry who had two petrol.

In excerpt 8, the size of the problem is big for this speaker, and this is evident in this short utterance, which includes two instances of self-initiated repair. First, the speaker corrected the repairing segment "was told" by the repaired segment "he was" and finally by "he told". In the speech event "All her grades have been tense of the verbs", the speaker paraphrased it, but while paraphrasing, she initiated the repair and corrected it. She produced a passive verb then to be verb and at last past verb.

- 8) He wanted to have an interpreter, but during his lecture he *was told*, he *was*, he *told* an amusing story.

The female participants in the present study, on the other hand, resorted to self-initiated repair strategy in 10 cases. For example, the speakers in the following excerpts (9 -10) had a plan they wanted to execute, but due to some difficulties in retrieving the required lexical items, they repeated the repairing segment and corrected the error.

- 9) I have had just a throat operation *my ear er... .. my hearing* is good, but I can't speak.
10) On the way the driver said to Harry politely *would you er could you* telling me why are we doing their things?

Overall, results revealed that repetition was used by both groups as an attempt made by the speaker to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item, while in self-initiated repair, the male and female participants' aim was to monitor and modify an utterance when s/he felt that s/he made an error. The males used fewer repetition strategies, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story-retelling. The females used less self-repair in compare with males. There are high significant differences between males and groups in the use of strategies.

Discussion

Based on the results, it can clearly be understood that repetition was used by Iranian EFL learners and both male and female speakers, as an attempt made by them to plan for a new utterance or to gain time to recall the next lexical item. In self-initiated repair, the male and female participants' aim was to monitor and modify an utterance when s/he felt that s/he made an error. Self-initiated repair was used when the speakers encountered problems with retrieving the target language

item. It was also noticed that self-initiated repair was not always successful; that is, the speakers tried to correct what they thought to be a mistake, but they did not do that successfully. This finding is thus a verification of the view that self-initiated repair is a well-organized, orderly, and rule-governed phenomenon and not a chaotic aspect of spoken discourse (Schegloff et al., 1977; Rieger, 2000).

The findings with regard to the second hypothesis of the study shed light on the impact of gender on the usage of repair strategies by Iranian EFL learners. Based on the results of the Chi-square test it was also found that both groups were keen on taking the risk to transmit comprehensible messages to their interlocutor, who was the researcher in the present study. They repeated to retrieve ideas and lexical items and maintain conversation, and they repaired to produce correct forms or ideas. The participants' use of such strategies made their oral production comprehensible, despite the presence of hesitations and pauses. Although the man used fewer repetition strategies, which could be attributed to the fact that they were more concise in story retelling, i.e., they reported only the major events in the stories. The study also revealed that although self-initiated repair was used by all the participants, the male EFL learners used it more frequently.

All in all, the results of the present study confirm the use of two types of repair: repetition and self-initiated repair by male and female EFL learners. These findings are in line with the results of previous research on strategies of repair (Rieger, 2000; Rieger, 2003; Rababah, 2001). However, it was found that there were significant differences between the male and female groups in terms of the frequency of strategy use. The statistical analysis revealed that the female learners utilized significantly more repetition but less self-initiated repair strategies in the story retelling task, when compared to the male learners' performance. This may have been due to the number of words they produced, which almost doubled that of the females, which could be attributed to fact that influences, since males tried to say all of the events which happened.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the present research sought to investigate the usage of repetition and self-initiated repair strategies among Iranian EFL learners in a story-retelling task. Moreover, the second aim of the study was to examine if gender had any significant effect on the implementation of these two strategies by Iranian EFL learners. The findings revealed that there were significant differences between the male and female participants in terms of the frequency of strategy use. Additionally, it was found that male learners used fewer repetition strategies while female students used less self-repair strategies.

With respect to the implications, this study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on providing some useful insights into syllabus design and language teaching. Analyzing the language teaching books, the researcher has noticed that the repair strategies and initiation techniques used by native speakers of the target language are excluded. Syllabus designers should include these repair strategies in English teaching textbooks because the use of repair is an element of natural conversation used by both native and non-native speakers. As non-native speakers of the target

language do not sometimes know how to repair, if they do, they might rely heavily on transfer from their native languages (Cokal-Karadas, 2010).

In the language classroom, repetition and self-initiated repair should be reinforced for student-student or student-teacher classroom interaction. The realization that these two strategies are natural in everyday conversation, that repetition performs a wide range of functions (Brody, 1986), that self-initiated repair plays a major role in producing comprehensible input (Shehadeh, 1999), and that comprehensible input leads to language learning makes it important for language teachers to implement and encourage their students to resort to these two strategies. Language teachers should encourage students to be risk-takers, and use these strategies, which were classified as communication strategies (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

This study also has some limitations which include the relative lack of control over the characteristics of the individual accent and the tone of voices whose specific features such as their potential intonation, stress may not have been fully controlled. It should be noted that this study was limited in terms of its context: only a relatively small number of participants at a single proficiency level from one Iranian university took part. Further, due to time limitations, the reliability of the data collection instrument was not calculated. In addition, there were only 5 short stories, the results with other more complicated stories may be different. Another limitation of the present research had something to do with the participants; the study was restricted to Intermediate level EFL students of just one university in Iran. Due to aforementioned facts, a word of caution should be taken in to account in generalizing the results.

Therefore, as a suggestion for future research, it is recommended to study other discourse communication strategies such as paraphrasing, substitution, coining new words, language switch, asking for clarification, non-verbal strategies, avoidance, among Iranian EFL learner. In addition, it is suggested to carry out more characterization study on repair strategy usage by hearing-impaired adults and how they use discourse strategies. Finally, it is worth to investigate repair strategies in aphasic discourse.

REFERENCES

- Brody, J. (1986). Repetition as a rhetorical and conversational device in Tojolabal (Mayan). *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 52(3), 255-274.
- Cho, E. H., & Larke, P. J. (2010). Repair Strategies Usage of Primary Elementary ESL Students: Implications for ESL Teachers. *TESL-EJ*, 14(3), n3.
- Cokal-Karadas, D. (2010). Conversational repair in foreign language classrooms: A case study in a Turkish context. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 39, 145-160.
- Drew, P. (1997). 'Open' class repair initiators in response to sequential sources of troubles in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 28, 69-101.
- Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (1983). Plans and strategies in foreign language communication. In Faerch, C., & Kasper, G. (Eds.), *Strategies in Interlanguage Communication*. London.
- Hoekje, B. (1984). Processes of repair in non-native speaker conversation. *ERIC*.

- Krahnke, K., & Christison, M. (1983). Recent language research and language teaching principles. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(4), 625-649.
- Levelt, W. J. M. (1983). Monitoring and self-repair in speech. *Cognition*, 14, 41-104.
- Liebscher, G. & Dailey-O'Cain, J. (2003). Conversational repair as a role-defining mechanism in classroom interaction. *The Modern Language Journal* 87(3), 375-390.
- Markee, N. (2000). *Conversation Analysis*. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.
- Nagano, R. (1997). Self-repair of Japanese speakers of English: A preliminary comparison with a study by W. J.
- Rababah, G., & Bulut, D. (2007). Compensatory strategies in Arabic as a second language. *Poznan Studies in Contemporary linguistics*, 43(2), 83-106.
- Rieger, C. (2000). Self-repair Strategies of English-German Bilinguals in Informal Conversations: The Role of Language, Gender and Proficiency. PhD Dissertation, University of Alberta.
- Rieger, C. (2003). Repetitions as self-repair strategies in English and German conversations. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35, 47-69.
- Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Practices and actions: Boundary cases of other-initiated repair. *Discourse Processes*, 23(3), 499-545.
- Schegloff, E. A. (2000). Overlapping talk and the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language in Society*, 29, 1-63.
- Schegloff, E. A. (2007). *Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis I*. Cambridge.
- Schegloff, E. A., Jefferson, G., & Sacks, H. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language*, 361-382
- Shehadeh, A. (2001). Self-and Other-Initiated Modified Output during Task-Based Interaction. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(3), 433-457.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF BARRON'S IELTS PREPARATION TEXTBOOK

Zahra Riyahifar

Islamic Azad University, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Amol, Iran
Riyahi.1388@gmail.com

Maryam Mortazavi Anari

Islamic Azad University, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Amol, Iran
Maryam.mortazavi49@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

In the English for academic world, the advent of international standardized tests has started a new array of textbook generations for exam preparation. IELTS or TOEFL teachers have a variety of materials available which potentially makes it difficult to choose the right one. In the present paper, Barron's IELTS textbook (Lougheed, 2006) is evaluated using Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework of internal and external evaluation. Evaluating exam preparation textbooks based on the related exam criteria will help teachers select a textbook matching to their students' needs. The results of the evaluation is hoped to benefit English teachers in many of language institutes in that it might give them insight into the course book they use and how they can exploit it better. The result of the external evaluation showed that Barron's IELTS preparation textbook is useful and applicable for candidates who start to prepare for IELTS; the organization of the book is clear and easy to follow for candidates as each module with its related skills is separated from the other. Although the author claims that Barron's IELTS textbook is designed to be used as the 'core' course, candidates need to take as many tests and extra sources and materials as possible. Also the result of the internal evaluation shows that the book is generally valid and is in line with the IELTS standards except that its degree of difficulty is insignificantly lower than the real IELTS test.

KEYWORDS: Internal and external evaluation, textbook, standard tests, IELTS

INTRODUCTION

With the variety of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks available in the market, each following a different methodology, it can be difficult to choose the best for a particular teaching situation. In the English for Academic world, the advent of International Standardized Tests has started a new array of textbook generation, i.e., textbooks for exam preparation. IELTS or TOEFL teachers have a variety of materials available which potentially makes it difficult to

choose the right one. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1984), most ESP or EAP courses, and subsequently textbooks, are based on the needs of such sponsors as universities, companies, and agencies. However, this view overlooks the views of other parties involved such as the teachers, the learners, and the teaching institutes. That's why prior to any textbook evaluation, conducting needs analysis is necessary. With the myriad of available exam preparation course books, it is important that teachers make informed choices when selecting course books which is detrimental to students' success in the exams. Meanwhile, teacher-made materials with a specific group of students and their needs in mind will always assist professional, published materials (Stern, 1992).

Harwood (2005) believe that teachers and learners need the independence and autonomy to take responsibility for their own teaching and learning, and materials writers should modify their textbooks accordingly. He suggests two views towards the material development in EAP: The anti-textbook view which asserts the deficiency of the EAP textbook syllabus. Many teachers may believe that a textbook is the product of a careful collaboration between theoreticians and practitioners. But, there seems to be a lack of fit between how academic writers write and what the textbooks teach about writing. Textbooks are found to understate the variation in style and language which corpora reveal. It is felt that EAP textbook writers rely on intuition or folk beliefs. The second view is the pro-textbook view which considers textbooks as developers. There is plenty of research evidence that many teachers adapt commercial materials, using them to stimulate their thinking and as the basis for providing the most appropriate classes in their context.

Cunningsworth (1995) provides some interrelated disadvantages to the use of a single course book: There can be a lack of variety in teaching procedures; individual student's needs may be overlooked; and creativity and flexibility are underestimated. Although teachers adapt and adopt materials; still the core material for an exam preparation course is the textbook. Textbooks can be relatively suitable for student's needs, even if not specifically designed for them and allow students to review the previous lessons and look ahead to the future topics (O'Neill, 1982).

Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991) that ESP teachers find themselves in a situation where they are expected to produce a course that exactly matches the needs of a group of learners, but are expected to do so with no, or very limited, preparation time. Nunan (1991) states that the selection process can be greatly facilitated by the use of systematic "materials evaluation procedures" (p. 209) which help ensure that materials are consistent with the needs and interests of the learners they are intended to serve, as well as being in harmony with institutional ideologies on the nature of language and learning. According to Garinger (2001), due to the recent growth of materials in the ESL publishing industry, guidelines are necessary to raise teachers' awareness to various course book designs. Relevant evaluation criteria should instruct teachers how to best select course books that fit their certain needs.

The Barron's IELTS textbook (Lougheed, 2006) is going to be evaluated in this paper to provide a framework for more IELTS textbook evaluation in the future. Evaluating exam preparation textbooks based on the related exam criteria will help teachers select a textbook matching to their students' needs. In the following, an explanation of the different types of textbook evaluation and the full description of the IELTS exam will be given. In the second part of the present paper, result of the evaluation based on Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework of the internal and external evaluation will be reported. The model's procedural format and flexibility will allow researchers to fully assess the strengths and weaknesses of the materials being evaluated. In the following, an explanation of the different types of textbook evaluation and the full description of the IELTS exam will be given then the result of the evaluation based on Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework textbook evaluation will be reported.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Course book evaluation methods

According to one classification, there are three types of textbook evaluation: pre-use, in-use, and post-use evaluations (Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997). The pre-use or predictive evaluation of textbooks helps teachers to select the most appropriate textbook for a given language classroom by considering its prospective performance. In-use evaluation aids teachers in the exploration of the weaknesses or strengths of textbooks while they are being used. Finally, post-use, or retrospective evaluation helps teachers reflect on the quality of the textbook after it has been used in a particular learning-teaching situation.

Although requiring adaptation before being submitted to the personal requirements of individual teachers, checklists are effective tools for course book evaluation (Breen & Candlin, 1987; Skierso, 1991; AbdelWahab, 2013). The creation of extensive evaluation checklists by leading experts provides criteria for detailed course book analysis (Cunningsworth 1995). There are a number of valid textbook evaluation checklists, e.g., Cunningsworth's checklist for evaluation and selection contains 45 questions, covering criteria such as aims, design, language content, skills, and methodology, as well as practical considerations such as cost and obtainability. Sheldon (1988) provides an expansive checklist of 53 questions classified under 17 major criteria, which appraises content factors such as accessibility, content, layout and authenticity. Evaluation is made easier, more objective and valid when it is based on a reliable instrument. Most checklists available in the literature lack the expected validity or reliability. This necessitates the need for developing a checklist that is of high validity in terms of the construct domain of its evaluative criteria that accounts for the consistency of the scores resulting from its items. Evaluation checklists must cover the following areas (Sheldon, 1988): Characteristics of textbooks such as layout, organization, methodology, aims; The degree to which a set of materials is not only teachable, but also fits to the needs of the teachers' approaches as well as the

organization's general curriculum; Criteria related to gender and cultural components; The extent to which the linguistic items, subjects, content, and topics match up to students' personalities, backgrounds, needs, and interests as well as those of the teacher and/or institution.

McDonough and Shaw (1993) provide a flexible two-stage model for the comprehensive evaluation of course books. Textbooks can be evaluated internally or externally (Mc Donough & Shaw, 1993): An external analysis of textbooks initiates the examination of the information given about the textbook on the cover of students' or teachers' book and what is indicated in the introduction and table of contents. The main purpose behind the external evaluation of textbooks is to determine the real function of a specific textbook. The physical appearance of the textbook can be evaluated regarding the cover durability and the attractiveness of textbook elements such as the cover, page appearance and the binding. From the blurb or the introduction part of textbooks, the intended audience, proficiency level, the context in which the materials are to be used, the presentation of language items, and the author's views on language and methodology (Mc Donough & Shaw, 1993). On the other hand, internal evaluation of textbooks entails an in-depth investigation into the materials. The internal evaluation shows how much the factors analyzed in the external evaluation stage have internal consistency and relevance. It deals with the presentation of the skills in the book and the grading and sequencing of the materials. For example, where listening skills are involved, are recordings authentic or artificial? Or in the case of speaking, do the exercises reflect real life skills or not? Unique in their coverage of criteria, their 22-point framework is designed both for teachers looking to select a course book, a predictive evaluation, as well as for those teachers looking to identify strengths and weaknesses in course books already used in their working context, a retrospective evaluation.

The IELTS exam

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an international standardized test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers. It is jointly managed by Cambridge English Language Assessment, the British Council and IDP Education Ltd, and was established in 1989. IELTS is one of the two major English-language tests in the world, the other is the TOEFL. There are two versions of the IELTS: the Academic Version and the General Training Version. The former is intended for those who want to enrol in universities and other institutions of higher education and for professionals such as medical doctors and nurses who want to study or practice in an English-speaking country. The latter is intended for those planning to undertake non-academic training or to gain work experience, or for immigration purposes. No minimum score is required to pass the test. An IELTS result or test report form is issued to all candidates with a score from "band 1" (non-user) to "band 9" (expert user) and each institution sets a different threshold. There is also a "band 0" score for those who did not attempt the test. Institutions are advised not to consider a report older than two years to be valid, unless the user proves that he has worked to maintain his level. Candidates receive scores on a band scale from 1

to 9. IELTS is based on the integration of the four skills and it includes all types of questions from multiple choices to written tests. The skills are as follows, respectively:

Listening

Candidates will have to listen to four recorded texts, monologues and conversations by a range of native speakers, and write answers to series of questions. These include questions which test the ability to understand main ideas and detailed factual information, ability to understand the opinions and attitudes of speakers, ability to understand the purpose of what is said and ability to follow the development of ideas. A variety of voices and native-speaker accents is used and each section will be played only once. The Listening component is the same for both Academic and General Training modules.

Reading

The Reading module consists of 40 questions. A variety of question types is used in order to test a wide range of reading skills. These include reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical argument, recognizing writers' opinions, and attitudes and purposes. The Academic version includes three long texts which range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. The texts are authentic and are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. These have been selected for a non-specialist audience but are recognizably appropriate for anyone entering undergraduate or postgraduate courses or seeking professional registration.

Writing

The Writing component of the Academic version includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for anyone entering undergraduate or postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1: In the academic version, candidates will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and are asked to describe, summarize or explain the information in their own words. They may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event. In the general module, candidates are to write a letter based on a topic for task 1.

Task 2: Candidates will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be written in a formal style.

Speaking

The Speaking component assesses candidates' use of spoken English, and takes between 11 and 14 minutes to complete. It includes three parts: the personal information dialogue, the monologue, and the discussion part. Every test is recorded. The Speaking component is also the same for both Academic and General Training versions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study aims at exploring and evaluating the Barron's IELTS preparation textbook to find out to what extent this book helps IELTS candidates prepare for IELTS exam. Based on Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) framework for textbook evaluation, the research questions to be answered in this paper are:

- Does the internal evaluation of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook show that it is in line with the objectives of IELTS test?
- Does the external evaluation of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook show that it is in line with the objectives of IELTS test?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Barron's IELTS preparation textbook based on its internal and external evaluation?

METHODOLOGY

Materials

Barron's IELTS preparation textbook is the main material used in this study. Mc Donough and Shaw's (1993) book with the chapter related to textbook evaluation is the main framework to evaluate the Barron's IELTS book.

Procedure

Since the external evaluation precedes the internal one, the evaluation starts with the investigation of the following characteristics of Barron's IELTS book by simply looking at the preface, blurb, and the table of content part of the book. In the first phase of evaluation, the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context in which the materials are to be used, how the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons, the author's views on language and methodology, the availability of the book in the market, etc. are investigated.

The second phase of the evaluation is the internal evaluation in which the following characteristics of the Barron's IELTS book will be explained:

- The grading and sequencing of the materials where reading/discourse skills are involved.
- The presentation of the skills in the materials
- Where listening skills are involved, are recordings 'authentic' or artificial?
- Are the tests and exercises related to the learners' needs and the content of the course?
- Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles...and is it sufficiently transparent to motivate both students and teachers alike?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

External evaluation

The external evaluation is done by looking at what has been stated explicitly in the "blurb" or claims made on the cover of the text book, the introduction and table of contents (McDonough & Shaw, 1993, p. 67). The following questions are given in McDonough and Shaw's (1993) model:

The intended audience

Although there is no specific age range for taking part in the IELTS exam, the majority of candidates are over 15. Adults or elder teenagers who intend to continue their studies abroad or pursue their dreams by living overseas are the potential audience of this book. It covers both general and academic IELTS preparation skills. Based on the introduction part of the book, international students represent the highest percentage of candidates who take IELTS. An IELTS score is a standard measure of English language proficiency around the world. Government departments and businesses around the globe also require IELTS score or equivalent score for employment or immigration.

The proficiency level

Since Barron's IELTS textbook is a skill book to prepare candidates for an exam to measure their language proficiency, no specific level of proficiency is given by the author. Students at any level of proficiency can take part in the IELTS exam. However, experience shows that pre-intermediate candidates are more likely to benefit from preparation materials than the elementary ones. So at least the pre-intermediate level is needed to make the best of this book.

The context in which the materials are to be used

As stated earlier, Barron's IELTS' main purpose is to prepare candidates for the IELTS exam. Hence, this book is useful for people who need to demonstrate their English proficiency for a specific purpose, e.g., immigration or academic in an English speaking country or somewhere overseas.

How the language has been presented and organized into teachable units/lessons

The content of the book is organized in modules for each skill. The order of the presentation of skills is the same as the test i.e. Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. The units are organized as follows,

- Unit 1, introduction
- Unit 2, questions and answers about IELTS
- Unit 3, preparing for IELTS (including the study plan, tips for success etc.)
- Unit 4, listening module
- Unit 5, reading module
- Unit 6, writing module
- Unit 7, speaking module
- Unit 8, model tests

Each module /unit includes small lessons which are called "target" in this book. Each target is a full explanation of an exam skill followed by a number of exercises to practice that specific skill. The answers are provided at the end of the book. The listening module (unit 4) includes 13 targets, reading module includes 5 targets, writing module has 8 targets, and speaking module consists of 8 modules. At the beginning of each module, different types of IELTS questions are given with samples before the targets.

The author's views on language and methodology

The author claims that the English used in IELTS can be British, Australian, American, or New Zealand English. However, it is more British and Australian oriented. The author also asserts that the language tested will be comprehensible to any learner of English and that test-takers who studied another form of English will not be penalized. The common differences between American English and the English used in other parts of the world are pointed out in the book.

Are the materials to be used as the main 'core' course or to be supplementary to it?

Barron's IELTS textbook is designed to be used as the 'core' course. However, due to the nature of IELTS test, the candidates need to take as many tests as possible and teachers need to make use of as many sources and materials as possible. Hence, this book can also be used as a supplementary material.

Is the teacher's book in print and locally available?

Most, if not all, of the exam preparation courses have the answer key and the typescripts inside them. Even sample essays to the writing tasks are provided within the book. Consequently, no specific teacher's book is needed for these books.

Is a vocabulary list/index included?

There is no separate section for the teaching of vocabulary and structure; instead, they are integrated in the four modules, i.e., during listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

What visual material does the book contain and is it actually integrated into the text?

For some listening, writing (task1), and reading questions, there are maps, charts, graphs and tables. For process type essays some pictures are given. All of the maps and pictures are in black and white. The texture of the paper is of no good quality, the A3 papers with no color tend to be boring for students.

Is the layout and presentation clear or cluttered?

The layout is very professionally presented and this is a very important factor that must not be taken for granted especially in exam preparation textbooks because candidates challenge enough with the test skills and they need not confuse with the layout. As mentioned above, in this book,

each module /unit includes targets. Each target includes the explanation of an exam skill followed by a number of exercises.

Is the material too culturally biased or specific...[or]...represent minority groups and/or women in a negative way?

Barron's IELTS is not written for a certain nationality or cultural group; since IELTS exam claims to have an international and intercultural approach, the topics which divide each unit are universal in nature. Although it seems a certain attempt has been made by the authors to focus on British and Australian accent and culture. The topics of conversation in the listening sections are all about places in Australia, New Zealand, or Britain which is pretty biased. All paragraphs must be justified alignment. With justified alignment, both sides of the paragraph are straight.

Internal evaluation

In this stage of the analysis, as designed by McDonough and Shaw (1993), the "internal consistency and organization of the materials" (p.67) is examined, to discover the extent to which external claims made by the author/publisher correlate with the internal content. Internal evaluation is an in-depth investigation into a book and includes the following questions as proposed in McDonough and Shaw's (1993) model of textbook evaluation:

The presentation of the skills in the materials

Modern course book design entails the integration of the receptive and productive skills (Brown, 1994; White, 1988; Stern, 1992). In IELTS, each test module includes several skills, e.g., in order to answer the listening questions, candidates need to read the questions, and write the answers in essay type questions. The grammar and spelling will be penalized in listening questions. The reading questions also need essay type answers.

The grading and sequencing of the materials where reading/discourse skills are involved.

The sequence of unit presentation is based on the sequence of skills tested in IELTS, i.e., listening, reading, writing, and speaking respectively. With regards to the grading and the degree of difficulty, authenticity plays the key role. Candidates need to take as many real test samples as possible to prepare best for the exam. The exam administration and timing conditions must be practiced and met during the preparation courses. Since Barron's IELTS is a practice book, the skills and even sample exercises are too simple. The main purpose is to teach candidates the exact IELTS skill needed to answer a particular type of question and therefore the material is simplified and cut in small parts for pedagogical purposes. However, the students need to practice on authentic materials. This characteristic of Barron's IELTS is a flaw and necessitates the application of more authentic supplementary materials.

Where listening skills are involved, are recordings 'authentic' or artificial?

The CD provided with the book includes both authentic and artificial recordings for the listening module. The authentic recording in this book may entail two senses: authentic as related to the real world and authentic as used in a real IELTS test before. Some of the recordings are made slower and really shorter than the real IELTS listening so that the candidates can practice skills separately. However, real IELTS needs holistic amalgamation of all question types and skills. The model tests at the end of the book can provide good practice on the interaction of all the skills.

Do you feel that the material is suitable for different learning styles...and is it sufficiently transparent to motivate both students and teachers alike?

Candidates who are willing to take the IELTS are strongly motivated either intrinsically or instrumentally. Easy exercises and clear examples and targets in Barron's IELTS help novice test-takers gain more self-confidence, hence, more motivation. Clear explanations are also useful for teachers especially the inexperienced ones. It is worth mentioning that only for a beginner course on IELTS this book can be very encouraging. For more advance practices supplementary sources are needed.

Are the tests and exercises related to the learners' needs and the content of the course?

The results of the initial needs analysis show that IELTS candidates have the following expectations from their IELTS preparation course and this book relatively meets their needs. Most candidates need

- To have their course as short as possible
- To have a clear vision of the whole exam and the course
- To face real tests and test situations
- To be motivated by the textbooks and the teachers
- To be exposed to the real writing and speaking samples of other candidates.
- To have a textbook which is organized and easy to work with
- To be able to follow some tasks through self-study.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation presented in this paper was based on a prior needs analysis of IELTS exam candidates and a valid model (McDonough & Shaw, 1993). Teachers can evaluate textbooks, make adaptations, and make the most of them. Textbooks are too inflexible and they reflect the pedagogic, psychological, and linguistic preferences and biases of their authors. Some proponents of authentic classroom language models have argued that the problems with many textbooks are not necessarily the fact that they are culturally or socially biased, but that they are artificial in their presentation of the target language. The scripted unauthentic language found in many textbooks does not lead to communicative practice, but instead can lead to an oversimplification

of language and unrealistic views of real-life situations. However, they actually help teaching and learning, one cannot deny the fact that textbooks still maintain enormous popularity and their evaluation and improvement is crucial.

REFERENCES

- AbdelWahab, M. M. (2013). Developing an English language textbook evaluative checklist. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 1 (3), 55-70.
- Breen, M., & Candlin, C. (1987). "Which materials? A consumer's and designer's guide." In Sheldon, L. E. (ed.), *ELT textbooks and materials: Problems in evaluation and development* (pp. 13-28). London: MEP/ The British Council.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Teaching by principles*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your course book*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA research and language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Garinger, D. (2001). Textbook evaluation. *TEFL Web Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.teflweb-j.org/v1n1/garinger.html>.
- Harwood, N. (2005). What do we want EAP teaching materials for? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 4, 149-161. doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2004.07.008
- Johns, A., & Dudley-Evans, T. (1991). English for specific purposes: International in scope, specific in purpose. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25, 297- 314.
- Lounghed, L. (2006). *Barron's IELTS*. New York: Barron's Educational Series.
- McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (2003). *Materials and methods in ELT* (Second edition). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology*. London: Prentice Hall.
- O'Neill, R. (1982). Why use textbooks? *ELT Journal*, 36(2), 104-110.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42 (2), 21-37.
- Skierso, A. (1991). Textbook selection and adaptation. In Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.), *teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Newbury: Newbury House.
- Stern, H.H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching*. Oxford: University Press
- White, R. (1988). *The ELM curriculum*. London: Blackwell..

BIO DATA

Zahra Riyahifar is an M.A. student in TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Amol, Iran. She is currently teaching in different English institutes. Her research interests are language testing, curriculum development and textbook evaluation, and pronunciation.

Maryam Mortazavi Anari is a senior M.A. student in TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Amol, Iran. She is a high school teacher. Her research interests are needs analysis, ESP and EAP courses, and second language acquisition.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF ORAL QUESTIONING AND QUIZ ON EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY LEARNING AND RETENTION

Nava Nourdad (Ph.D.)

University of Tabriz
nourdad@tabrizu.ac.ir

Zahra Babaie (M.A.)

zahrababaie@outlook.com

ABSTRACT

Considering the advantages of formative assessment over summative assessment on the one hand and the importance of vocabulary knowledge for EFL learners on the other hand and reviewing the results of previous empirical studies on success of formative assessment the present study aimed at completing the studies in the related literature by comparing the success of two commonly used formative assessment types namely quiz and oral questioning on learning vocabulary and retention of the learned items. To this end 41 pre-intermediate learners participated in this study and were randomly assigned into two experimental groups of oral questioning and quiz and underwent 36 hours of treatment. The results of this quasi-experimental study with pre-test, immediate and delayed post-tests revealed that there is not a significant difference between the success of these assessment types on neither vocabulary learning nor retention. The findings imply that language teachers can take the advantage of any or both of these formative assessment types based on their learners' needs and teaching context.

KEYWORDS: Formative assessment, vocabulary learning, vocabulary retention, oral questioning, Quiz, summative assessment

INTRODUCTION

Learning vocabulary is considered as a drudgery for foreign language learners. The problem, however, is not just learning vocabulary, but forgetting the learned vocabulary items sometime after learning them. Vocabulary knowledge has been neglected or considered as a secondary emphasis in foreign language programs since it is felt that students need to master basic grammatical patterns and the ability to communicate in English. Some researchers (Twaddell, 1973; Wilkins, 1974; Richards, 1976; Carter & McCarthy, 1988) claim that little importance has been given to vocabulary and the teaching of vocabulary or learning new words and phrases is often seen as an unimportant value, and even it is neglected most of the time in foreign language teaching. It was found by Janjula et al. (2010) that EFL learners need good knowledge of vocabulary to be successful in language learning, and they must be able to use them fluently and appropriately to be efficient language users. This sufficient vocabulary knowledge will result in effective language learning and use (Al-Jarf, 2007). As Wilkins (1974, p. 111) states, "without

grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". So vocabulary knowledge is an important component for developing language skills. Consequently, limited vocabulary knowledge hinders both communication and language learning of EFL learners. In EFL contexts that most learners learn English only in classroom and their teachers rarely use fluent English language as the medium of instruction the importance of vocabulary learning increases even more.

Twaddell (1973) admits that learners get an ability to understand and use words in the foreign language, but claiming the reason why it is not really taught is that no single method has gained a general acceptance in teaching vocabulary. Hedge (2000) highlights the neglect of vocabulary learning and teaching research in literature and maintains that "this neglect sits uncomfortably with the significance placed on vocabulary learning by learners themselves" (p.110). Language learners need to master vocabulary to meet their communicative needs in the classroom.

Some researchers believe that effective vocabulary instruction provided through intervention instruction is essential for students struggling to acquire vocabulary (Qian, 2002; Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007). In order to provide effective vocabulary instruction, teachers need a vocabulary assessment that can identify students who are at-risk in vocabulary development. This assessment would show which students require extra vocabulary support through whole class instruction or vocabulary interventions. One approach to deal with learning issues is to use assessment tools for the sake of learning. Formative assessment serves the dual purpose of giving the teacher information on the effectiveness of the lesson and giving students information on the current state of their learning. Such information can guide future instruction decisions. Formative assessment is tightly linked with instructional practices. Teachers need to consider how their classroom activities, assignments, and tests support learning objectives and allow students to communicate what they know, then use this information to improve teaching and learning.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Vocabulary learning and retention has been the center of scholarly debates and empirical investigation (Kamuche, 2005; Kapricke & Roediger, 2007; Kwan, 2010; Mutai, 2012; Babaie & Nourdad, 2014). Many researchers have looked at the issue of the vocabulary learning and retention from different perspectives and they have adopted different methodologies to examine the effects of manipulations of vocabulary presentation on the nature of its learning and retention .

Mutai (2012) for instance investigated the extent to which oral questioning, as a teaching strategy, affected the performance of EFL students in Kenya. The study employed the mixed methods research design. To collect data, the study used questionnaires, interviews, documentary data and non-participant observation. Both qualitative and quantitative data analyses were employed. It emerged that oral questioning as a method of teaching was not being utilized as recommended in secondary schools. Teachers' awareness of oral questioning was limited. Teachers were not guided enough to use oral questioning properly, for example they did not pause to give learners time to respond to the questions. Rendering formative assessment tools repeatedly is a vital part of effective learning (Kwan, 2010). Kwan (ibid.) investigated the effect

of two assessment tools of formative assessment: 'one-minute paper' and 'daily quiz'. Comparing major characteristics of the one-minute paper and the daily quiz, he referred to the weaknesses of one-minute paper. He proposed that daily quiz should be used instead. Although both tools allowed useful feedback between teachers and students, the daily quiz facilitated the process of retrieval which assisted learning. He also conducted the end-of-term survey based on students' opinions about the usefulness of the daily quiz and the results proved its' usefulness .

Gholami and Moghadam (2013) also investigated the effect of weekly quizzes on Iranian high school students' performance on final achievement test. They reviewed the literature in chronological order from the earliest study of testing on learning, grounded on washback effect theory. They mentioned that proponents of the idea claim that frequent quizzes motivate practice and review and provide feedback to students and teachers. They conducted a quasi-experimental study and the participants of their study were divided in two experimental and control groups. The former group received weekly quizzes and the latter just took midterm exam. T-test procedure compared two groups' mean scores and the result showed outperformance of quiz group over no quiz group .

Babaie and Nourdad (2014) in their study on the effectiveness of commonly used formative assessment types on vocabulary learning and retention found out that both quiz and oral questioning during instruction helped learning the vocabulary items for pre-intermediate EFL learners and also caused better retention of the learned items. They recommended that EFL teachers to include these two types of formative assessment in their academic management to obviate the problem of vocabulary knowledge for their learners.

Reviewing the related literature, one can find the rarity of studies that examine the assessment impact on vocabulary learning and retention. The studies mentioned above each has looked at the effect of assessment on learning. They have not, however, made a clear comparison between the effect of various assessment types on learning and retention of learning. To close this fundamental gap in the literature of formative assessment and complete the previous studies this study attempted to compare the efficacy of two assessment types of oral questioning and quiz on vocabulary learning and retention.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since previous studies prove the positive effect of formative assessment specially quiz and oral questioning in EFL contexts this investigation just focused on a comparison between these positive effects. In line with this purpose the present study aimed at answering the following two research questions:

1. Do oral questioning and quiz differ in their effect on vocabulary learning?
2. Do oral questioning and quiz differ in their effect on vocabulary retention?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present study were 41 female pre-intermediate EFL learners within the age range of 16 to 25. Since it was important to have the same teacher for both of the experimental groups and due to some limitations in the number of pre-intermediate classes participants were selected based on convenient sampling.

Instruments

The following instruments were used for data collection in the present study:

Preliminary English Test (PET)

The standardized PET test was administered to participants in the two intact classes to ensure their homogeneity in terms of English proficiency. PET includes speaking, listening, reading and writing sections designed for the speakers of other languages by Cambridge University.

Vocabulary Pre-Test, Post-Test, and delayed post-test

The researchers developed a question bank consisting 100 vocabulary-items from which three parallel 30-item vocabulary- test sets were made. They were used as vocabulary pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test.

Procedures

The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental design because although it lacked random selection, it had benefited from random assignment. There were two experimental groups of oral questioning and quiz with 20 and 21 learner in each under investigation. Pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test approach was applied to estimate the impact of the independent variables, written quiz and oral questioning, on vocabulary learning and retention as the dependent variable.

At the first stage of the study participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups. The instructor of both groups were one of the researchers and the same teaching method and materials were used. The homogeneity of the groups was verified using PET. Three sets of teacher made parallel vocabulary tests each including 30 items were applied as pre-test, immediate post-test and delayed post-test.

After the pre-test participants in both groups underwent treatment for 36 hours during two months, during which they had the same test contents each session but different assessment methods (oral questioning vs. quiz). On the last session, both groups were given the immediate post-test. And after a time interval of seven weeks they were given their delayed post-test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the research questions of the study, the mean scores of four sets of tests for the two groups were compared by t-test formula. An independent t-test was used for each of the following between group comparisons: two mean scores of PET test; two mean scores of the pre-test; two mean scores of the immediate post-test; and two mean scores of the delayed post-test.

To make sure that the proficiency level of the participants was not intervening with the findings it was considered to be equal for the two experimental groups and somehow taken under control in the study design. Consequently, at the beginning to have a sound basis for the comparison of the two groups, PET test results of the both were compared. Table 1 reflects the results of this initial comparison.

Table 1: Proficiency test mean score comparison for the two groups

	Levene's Test for equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	t	df
Equal variance assumed	.05	.82	.73	58
Equal variance not assumed			.73	57.67

As table 1 shows there was no significant difference between the proficiency level of the two experimental groups at the beginning of the study ($t=.73$, $p\leq 0.05$) so it was concluded that the two groups were almost at the same level of proficiency at the beginning of the study. The second independent samples t-test was applied for making a comparison between the vocabulary pre-test scores of the quiz and oral questioning groups. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Pre-test mean score comparison for the two groups

	Levene's Test for equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	t	df
Equal variance assumed	.15	.70	2.61	58
Equal variance not assumed			2.61	57.89

As demonstrated in Table 2 the difference between the means of vocabulary pre-test for the quiz and oral questioning groups was not significant ($t= 2.61$, $p\leq 0.05$). In other words at the beginning of the research the participants in both groups were similar as far as their knowledge of the vocabulary was concerned.

After presenting the two experimental groups with their own specific formative assessment types (oral questioning and quiz) as the treatment of this research design their vocabulary learning were compared by comparing the mean scores of the immediate post-test for the two groups. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Immediate post-test mean score comparison for the two groups

	Levene's Test for equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	t	df
Equal variance assumed	.17	.68	4.34	57
Equal variance not assumed			4.34	56.22

Table 3 shows that there is not a significant difference between the mean scores of quiz and oral questioning groups' immediate post-test. It could be inferred that these two formative assessment types were not different in their effect on vocabulary learning.

The second dependent variable of the present study was retention of the learned vocabulary items. To show the effect of the two above mentioned formative assessment types the last comparison was done between the delayed post-tests of the two groups, the results of which are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Delayed post-test mean score comparison for the two groups

	Levene's Test for equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	t	df
Equal variance assumed	.39	.53	3.43	58
Equal variance not assumed			3.43	57.97

Table 4 shows that the mean scores of the two groups' delayed post-test were not significantly different ($t= 3.43$, $p \leq 0.05$). It could be inferred that the two types of formative assessment investigated in this study namely quiz and oral questioning were equally helpful in retention of the learned vocabulary items.

As analysis of the data revealed, there was not a significant difference between the two types of formative assessments investigated in this study (quiz and oral questioning) in terms of vocabulary learning and retention. This study was a supplement to a previous research in the literature (Babaie & Nourdad, 2014) which had proved the positive effect of both quiz and oral questioning on EFL vocabulary learning and retention but had not made a comparison between the two assessment types.

From a practical point of view, many teachers in EFL classes ignore the importance of true formative assessment approach and they just devote their time to assess the learners' achievement in a traditional summative way. Therefore, the present study suggests that English teachers considering the findings of the related literature as well as the findings of the present study can benefit from two appropriate assessment types, namely, oral questioning and written quiz, regarding their own context of teaching. Knowing that formative assessment is better, more complete, more modern, more precise and more useful than summative assessment. They can benefit from both types of oral questioning and written quiz and they can choose each on the basis of their context, affective and cognitive needs of the learners, the nature of subject matter and educational objectives, because the present study showed that in practice there is no difference between the two. The findings of this study can be used in the fields of syllabus design, language assessment, material development and teaching methodology.

CONCLUSION

Vocabulary learning and retention are among the major problems of EFL learners and are considered as drudgeries for most foreign language learners. A solution solely focusing on teaching manipulation, without considering other educational aspects such as assessment methods cannot be fully accomplishing for sure. This serious issue was taken into account in this study and two types of formative assessment namely oral questioning and quiz which are commonly applied in Iranian academic context including foreign language classes were

compared in terms of their efficiency in vocabulary learning and retention of EFL learners. Based on findings emerging from this study, it was concluded that there is not a significant difference between the positive results of these types of formative assessment, so based on the needs of their learners and their learning context language teachers can take the advantage of any of them in order to have a better vocabulary learning and retention. The findings can also have implications for curriculum developers in decisions on the nature and type of instruction/assessment to include in various educational systems.

Limitations of the study

Like many other studies, this study also suffers from some limitations. Firstly, the type of sampling which was employed in the present study was the convenient sampling and not the random sampling. The research was limited to available group selection, instead of individual subject selection through randomization. Secondly, the participants of the study were all female EFL learners.

REFERENCES

- Al-Jarf, R. (2007). Teaching vocabulary to EFL college students online. *CALL-EJ Online*, 8(2).
- Babaie, Z., & Nourdad, N. (2014). The effect of quiz and oral questioning on vocabulary learning and retention of EFL learners. *IJELLH*, 2(5), 253-268.
- Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (1988). *Vocabulary and language teaching: applied linguistics and language study*. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Coyne, M., McCoach, D., & Kapp, S. (2007). Vocabulary intervention for kindergarten students: Comparing extended instruction to embedded instruction and incidental exposure. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 30(2), 74-88
- Gholami, V., & Moghadam, M. (2013). The Effect of weekly quizzes on students' final achievement score. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science*, 1, 36-41.
- Janjula, A., Leksirirat, P., & Kaewprodid, A. (2010). Learning achievement and satisfaction by using multimedia computer on English vocabulary for students. *The Journal of King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok*, 20(2), 354-362.
- Kamuche, U. F. (2005). Do weekly quizzes improve student performance? *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 9(3), 188-193.
- Karpicke, D. J., & Roediger, L. H. (2007). Repeated retrieval during learning is the key to long-term retention. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 57, 151-162.
- Kwan, F. (2010). Formative assessment: the one-minute paper vs. the daily quiz. *Journal of Instructional Pedagoies*, 5(May), 1-8.
- Mutai, C. N. (2012). A critical review of oral questioning technique in secondary school English language teaching in Eldoret municipality, Kenya. *Journal of Emerging Trends In Educational Research And Policy Studies*, 3(3), 323-330.
- Qian, D. (2002). Investigating the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and academic reading performance: An assessment perspective. *Language Learning*, 52(3), 513-536.
- Richards, J.C. (1976). The role of vocabulary teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10 (1), 77-89.

Twaddell, F. (1973). Vocabulary expansion in the TESOL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 7 (1), 61-79.

Wilkins, D.A. (1974). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Billing and Sons Ltd.

AN ANALYSIS OF HIGH-RATED DIFFICULTIES OF PNU STUDENTS INTERPRETING ENGLISH POLYSEMIOUS WORDS

Hadi Heidari (Corresponding Author)

M.A graduate of TEFL, English Teacher, Education Department of Shahrood State, Ardebil Province, Iran

E-mail: hheidari67@gmail.com

Seyyede Fateme Puryahya

High school Principal, Education Department of Shahrood State, Ardebil Province, Iran

E-mail: f.puryahya@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Learning the vocabulary of the language to be learned is essential for its learning and an average learner needs to know at least 3600 English words in order to read an unsimplified text (Nation, 1975). The situation even gets worse when the reading material contains some polysemious words for which there are no idea to assign which meaning. This problem is accentuated among learners who have little contact with the L2 words and contexts and it seems to be a great problem for Payam Noor University students in Iran who are parts of distance education system with little access to authentic contexts and materials. So, they need to have a good understanding of the problematic vocabulary like polysemious words and their meaning in languages they want to learn. This paper investigates some of the high rated difficulties of 48 English translation major students of Payam Noor University (PNU) of Khalkhal Branch in learning and using English Polysemious words gathered based on the problems occurred during their class hour in courses of "Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose". For gathering the required data which consisted of high-rated problematic English Polysemious words, the researchers used a record player which recorded the students' voices answering the instructor's questions directed at having them use the different vocabularies based on some of their textbooks and assuring whether their interpretations of the polysemious words were correct or not together with checking of their meaning and state of polysemy in Persian. Alongside it, based on an error prediction of Persian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, some of the areas contributing to the problems were investigated and some suggestions to solve the problems were suggested. It was found that the students had difficulties in learning and being able to use the underlying meanings of the words due to the problems like the poor kind of instruction they had undergone which may be resulted from factors like the insufficient class sessions for PNU students and also the students' insufficient efforts in getting the underlying meanings of the words. It is suggested that more class sessions should be devoted to such students by the officials of PNU alongside specifying more talented instructors who teach based on the underlying meaning and making students familiar with the active vocabulary learning techniques.

KEYWORDS: Polysemious words, PNU (Payam Noor University), underdifferentiation, underlying meaning

INTRODUCTION

The history of language teaching has always seen the ongoing debates between the proponents of the either the theory of “vocabulary first” or “grammar primary” as the building block of language teaching and the shifts in recent decades towards teaching grammar inductively seems to emphasize the great significance Vocabulary knowledge considered by both first-language and second-language researchers in language competence (Grabe, 1991; Frederiksen, 1982). And so, language learners should have a long-term plan for learning and retention of vocabularies actively or passively using any strategies and techniques at their disposal and it seems that learning problematic word with two or more related meanings (known as polysemous words) should be given due importance in learning the language.

Polysemy is believed to be the central phenomenon of lexical semantics (Ricoeur, 1975) and it is a term used in semantic analysis to describe the situation in which a word has two or more related meanings (Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 1999). In spite of the simplicity of the definition, there seems not to be a clear-cut boundary for the definition and as for the importance of the term in our study, it is better to define this “somehow muddy field in linguistic research” (p.14). In order to understand polysemy better and based on the category given by Ibarretxe-Antuñano(1999), words should be analyzed in three layers in order to determine their state of polysemy: first, etymological information about the words should be gathered in order to show that those words which are of the same origin are polysemic. Another criterion for the analysis of words is based on unrelatedness vs. relatedness of their meaning based on the native speaker’s feeling about the connectedness or irrelevance of certain meanings. And finally, based on the central or core meaning of the word we can elaborate on its state of polysemy. The selection of the polysemous words and their state of polysemy in the current article will be based on this categorization.

Pustejovsky (1995, as cited in Krifka, 1998) believes that polysemy occurs in one of the following forms:

- count/mass alternations
- Animal/meat
- Object/Stuff an object is made up
- Stuff/Kind
- Stuff/Portions
- Plant/food alternation
- Containers and contained
- Figure/Ground reversal
- Product/producer alternation
- Process/result alternation
- Alternations involving location
- Place/people
- Capital/government

The reason why PNU students were selected as the participants of this study goes back to their improper exposure to English classes and subsequently their due problems in recognizing and learning active and passive vocabularies through limitations of exposure and contact with

different kinds of vocabularies –like polysemous ones--. For instance, in the courses under study (Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose), the students are partially present in the classes in less than 4 sessions for each course and in fact, the officials have declared that these classes are held for the aim of just problem-solving on the part of the students and if there are no problems mentioned and faced on their sides—as the nature of such classes with most students studying at the final days before the exam--, then the instructor has no obligation to start teaching units. So, such students seem to have numerous problems regarding the main skills of language learning and areas like pronunciation and vocabulary learning and retention.

An important point which is of crucial importance in discussing the findings of the study is that the problems that students encounter in assigning meanings to polysemous words can be categorized into different levels and the category which is mostly used in the current study is the hierarchy of difficulty presented by Prator (1967) in which he categorizes the learner's problems into the following levels:

Hierarchy of difficulty:

1. Transfer - no difference
2. Coalescence - one item covering two in L1
3. Underdifferentiation - absence
4. Reinterpretation - different application of existing item
5. Overdifferentiation - new item
6. Split -two items covering one in L1 (Prator, 1967).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Teaching the students about the different senses and meanings of the polysemous words is not that simple. Nagy (1997, cited in Parent, 2009) believes that language learners can deal with related senses of polysemous words in two basic ways:

The first is sense selection through which the language learner is expected to select the appropriate sense among those senses using his mental power.

The other is Reference specification which requires a core or underlying concept for all the words, having the same senses for all contexts.

The model of vocabulary acquisition proposed by Meara (1997, cited in Schmitt and McCarthy) seems to be of great importance to both language teachers and learners. Some of the key findings of this model are as follows: the mental lexicon is a network; learning a word is a matter of connecting the newly encountered word to one, or more, already known. This could be a first language word or a second language one. Links may be one-way or, ideally, two-way. Words connected with one-way links are those that exist in our passive vocabulary—words we know when we hear them but not necessarily available for productive use. Both native speakers and L2 learners have such words. Further, the number of connections varies: the more connections, the more well-known the word is.

It is the remarkable simplicity of the model that deflects significant criticism. The counterargument, that the lexicon does not resemble a network, is the more untenable position. The appeal Meara's model has for polysemy is the ease in which it can be developed to accommodate it.

Klepousniotou's (2001) in his study of learning polysemous words showed that there must be a single mental representation and a single basic sense for learning polysemous words. He believed that the process of sense creation is the building block of polysemy and during this process, based on a basic sense; extended senses are generated for polysemous words.

In his experimental study with seventy low English proficiency level Japanese high school students, Nakahara (2005) compared two approaches to teaching polysemy known as the widespread sense selection approach and core meaning one (the experimental group).

The group taught by core meaning gained better results than the control group. One of the main findings and conclusions of the study was that based on cognitive linguists' analyses of metaphoric and metonymic relations, it is the task of the teachers to improve the students' understanding of the core and peripheral meanings of polysemous words and their relationships. Nakahara (2005) further concluded and declared that teachers having difficulty in teaching polysemous words will have two options left: either to present students with all of the meanings of the polysemous words, or presenting the overall underlying meaning.

This notion of underlying meaning comes from the work of Nation (1990, 2000) who introduces it reporting on the work of Visser (1989), based on a pedagogical procedure for teaching polysemes during which students are presented with two meanings of a polyseme in context and are given a simple task for each meaning followed by asking a state of what features are common to both senses. Srinivasan and Snedeker (2011) also asserted that the understanding of polysemous words primarily in the first stages of meaning development is based on a conceptual and meaningful base, different from those of homophones which seem to be represented at phonological level.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What polysemous vocabularies are the high-rated problematic words for PNU students'?
2. What are the reasons for such words to be problematic and make students difficulties in understanding and interpretation?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population of the present study consisted of 48 students in English translation major who were studying in Payam Noor University (PNU) of Khalkhal Branch during the fall semester of 2014-2015. The students had the proper and right command of English language based on the information elicited from their grades and scores in the previous semesters which were beyond

the mean score 15 out of 20 and they were in their third year of education, however, some of them showed difficulties in understanding the essential words in the reading materials.

Instruments

For gathering the required information which consisted of high-rated problematic English Polysemous words, these data were gathered using a record player which recorded the students voices answering the instructor's questions directed towards having them use the different vocabularies and assuring whether their interpretation of the polysemous words was correct or not. This information was elicited from the reading materials during their class hour in courses of "Simple English Poetry, An introduction to English Literature 2, and Simple English Prose"--which are published by Payam Noor University publication and taught by the corresponding author of the study--together with the checking of their meaning and state of polysemy in Persian. Alongside it, based on an error prediction of Persian EFL learners, some of the areas contributing to the problems were investigated and some suggestions to solve the problems were suggested.

Procedure

Based on the findings, 20 high-rated problematic English polysemous nouns and verbs in English were chosen and after checking their meaning and state of polysemy in English and Persian, the researchers had an error prediction of Persian EFL learners. The researchers just accepted those vocabularies as polysemous words that all of the meanings of that word were found under one lexical entry in Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 5th Edition (2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here, the results of the study of analyzing the PNU students' high-rated problematic English polysemous words are presented and discussed using the following table.

Table 1: the analysis of the PNU students' high-rated problematic English polysemous words

Number	English polysemous word (percentage of being problematic)	English state of polysemy	Persian meaning	Persian State of polysemy	Error prediction of Persian EFL learners
1	Literature (68%)	1. Written works, especially those regarded as having artistic merits 2. Books and writings on a particular subject 3. Promotional or advisory leaflets and other material	ادبیات	ادب و هنر نوشتجات مطبوعات مواد چاپی	As you can see here, the three meanings mentioned for the word "Literature" have mental relationships with each other. They all refer to written works in some ways, so the language learner seems not to have much difficulty in learning and applying them in his own language, however; most of the students made mistakes to match the meaning when it referred to the second meaning and associated it with the first meaning.

2	Protection (35%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The action of protecting 2. A person or thing that protects 3. The document guaranteeing safety 4. The payment of money to criminals to prevent from their attack 	محافظت	سايه(بالاي سر كسي) حراست حمایت حفاظ	Here we have different alternations for the word " <i>Protection</i> ". The relationship between them is much more abstract and so its meaning potential will be highly dependent upon its surrounding context. So, it can have the meaning of an action, a person, a document or a payment and that's why language learners made mistakes in its meaning association as there is an " <i>Underdifferentiation</i> " in Persian meaning.
3	Tail (42%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The hindmost part of an animal 2. Something downwards or backwards 3. The final, more distant or weaker part 4. The lower or hanging part of a shirt or coat 5. The side of the coin without the image of the head 6. A person's buttocks 7. A person secretly following another one 	دم	دنياه عقب پرووي دنيه تعقيب	This is the word which made some students make mistakes in the understanding the phrases like "head and tail of a coin" and a proverb like "not being able to make head and tail of sth" which seems to be culturally embedded in different languages and so, students with lower familiarity with the target language culture and its idiom and proverbs is exposed to errors.
4	Country (72%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A nation with its own government 2. Districts outside large urban areas 3. An area or region with regards to its physical features 4. relating to country or western music 	کشور	ديار ملت آحاد وطن	Evaluating students' understanding about this word, they only had the meaning "an area of land with its own government" in their minds even when the other meanings were sought. The students believed that it was their teacher's problem to only give this meaning to the word country and they overlooked the other meanings of this word especially the one that refers to districts outside large urban areas.
5	Pure (34%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not mixed or adulterated with any other substance 2. Innocent or morally good 3. Perfectly in tune and with a clear tone 4. Theoretical rather than practical 5. Complete, nothing but. 	خالص	پاك محض عفيف اصيل بي شائبه	In the 3 rd and 4 th meanings there seems to be a kind of " <i>Underdifferentiation</i> " in Persian meaning and the the Persian translation seems no to conform to it, however; the other meanings are the level one transfer which a meaning can easily be transferred to the target language, so the difficulties produced may be attributed to the teacher's

					competence in the teaching and the student's intake of the word.
6	Suit (38%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A set of outer cloths made of the same fabric aimed to be worn together 2. Any of the sets into which a pack of playing card is divided 3. A complete set of sails for a ship or for a set of spars 	يك دست لباس	ست لباس جامه	Look at the three meanings in English. There is a word in common in the three meanings: "SET" the understanding of which is the key to learn the meanings of the word "Suit". In Persian meaning this word is neglected and it is not transferred in the Persian translation. So this word is challenging for those learners who haven't noticed the core concept SET.
7	Stage (30%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A point, period or step in a process 2. A section of a journey or race 3. A raised floor or platform for the act of actors or speakers 4. A floor of a building 	صحنه	مرحله منظره سن نمایش	In this example we can see another layer of meaning included called "Homonymy". So the first 2 meanings are totally different from the second 2 meanings and it is a source of difficulty, but wiser students may have minor problems regarding this word as for the word <i>صحنه</i> we have both meanings <i>مرحله</i> and <i>سن نمایش</i> which are contributing to the English meanings mentioned.
8	Material (44%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The matter from which a thing is or can be made 2. Items needed for an activity 3. Cloth or fabric 	ماده	جنس جسم مناسب مربوط مادي	This example seems to be easily transferred and not problematic at first but it is not that simple. The word "MATERIAL" has a greater range of meaning and usage in English rather than in Persian. For example, the meaning which refers to a cloth can't be grasped so easily by Persian speaker and so in error prediction this meaning is a candidate for students' mistakes.
9	Coach (26%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A comfortably equipped single-decker bus used for longer journeys 2. A railway carriage 3. Economy-class seating in an aircraft or train 4. A closed horse-drawn carriage 	کالسکه	واگن راه آهن کالسکه کودک	You can have a look on the different ranges of meanings in the two languages and can infer that the Persian language learner will have difficulty in transferring the meaning. It is obvious that the Persian meanings listed here can't be of equal meanings with the English counterpart and so, we can say that this example will produce difficulty for those who have not acquired the whole range of meanings of the word <i>Coach</i> .
10	Trade (7%)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The buying & selling of goods. 2. A transfer in sports 3. A job requiring manual 	تجارت	حرفه داد و ستد مبادله نقل و انتقال	In this example you can exactly see that the meanings mentioned for the word "Trade" actually have the same counterparts in Persian too.

		skills & training 4. A particular area of business			The transfer of meaning is rapid in this example. For instance, when we talk about "نقل و انتقال" in Persian, you can easily perceive that we are talking about a special field (sports) and the activation of new meaning is highly automatic. This can be related to the collocation which exists between one entity (here "نقل و انتقال") and the other one (sports).
11	Principal (34%)	1. The most important person in an organization, the head of a school 2. A fully qualified practitioner 3. A sum of money on which interest is paid 4. Main (adj.)	مدیر	مهم اصلي رئيس	For the word " <i>Principal</i> " there are four meanings, three of which can be inferred from one another and they have mental relationships with each other. The only meaning which is totally different from the other three is the third meaning which is the monetary shadow of meaning of the word Principal. So, neglecting this case this word also doesn't seem challenging unless the learner would be mistaken between this word and the word " <i>Principle</i> ".
12	Forge (22%)	1. Make or shape a metal object by heating or hammering it 2. Create (sth strong) 3. Produce a fraudulent copy or imitation	جعل کردن	ساختن کپی کردن مکاری کردن	This is a word which has 3 different meanings which are culturally embedded. Without having knowledge of English how a Persian speaker can know that the word has a meaning like "آهنگری" in Persian? So the Persian learner of English will have difficulty in transferring this word and it will be a point of difficulty.
13	Rob (28%)	1. Take property unlawfully from 2. Steal 3. Overcharge 4. Deprive someone of something deserved	دزدیدن	چاپیدن لخت کردن غارت کردن ریودن	This word seems to be of middle difficulty for the language learner. The first two meanings are " <i>Coalesced</i> " into the Persian word "دزدیدن" while the other 2 meanings (<i>Overcharge</i> & <i>Deprivation</i> which show the effect of culture in constructing them) are examples of " <i>Underdifferentiation</i> " for the word Rob in Persian. So the learner will do have a problem in this word.
14	Encounter (64%)	1. Unexpectedly meet or be faced with 2. Having an unpleasant struggle with	مواجه شدن	تصادف کردن مصادف شدن دست به گریبان شدن دچار شدن	This example seems to be the opposite of the previously mentioned example. There are 2 meanings in English for the word " <i>Encounter</i> " in English while the Persian word "مواجه شدن" can be interpreted in 4 different ways. So the word " <i>Encounter</i> " will have

					both Reinterpretation (different application of existing item) and Overdifferentiation (new item being introduced).
15	Border (47%)	1. Form a border around or along 2. Be adjacent to 3. Come close to	مرز گذاشتن	حاشیه گذاشتن محدود کردن	The meanings provided here in English and Persian are only the same at the first meaning. The other two are totally different and the meanings in one language are absent in the other. So the language learner will have difficulty in assigning meaning to the word if the aim of vocabulary is not the first meaning.
16	Spring (63%)	1. Move suddenly upwards or forwards 2. Cause to rise from cover 3. Originate or appear from 4. Move suddenly by the action of a spring	جهیدن	قابل ارتجاع بودن ظاهر شدن جست و خیز کردن جوشیدن	The internal relationship between the English meanings makes their go togetherness high even if they refer to different entities. The meanings are culturally interwoven with English so it is not surprising that because of cultural differences, the meanings provided by the Persian learner are different from that of English.
17	Compact (26%)	1. Exert force on to make more dense 2. Form by pressing the component parts together 3. compress	به هم فشردن	سفت کردن جمع و جور کردن متراکم کردن	In this word we can see another key word which is the same in three meanings related to the meaning of the word "Compact" and it is revealed in the third meaning "Compress". If we only have this specific meaning in our mind when we hear the word, depending on the context we can have a clear meaning of that word. Fortunately we have the Persian equivalents of the English form and so the Persian learner of English if trained well seems not to have any problem with this word.
18	Direct (34%)	1. Control the operation of 2. Supervise 3. Tell or show the way 4. Give an order to	هدایت کردن	نظارت کردن دستور دادن معطوف داشتن	The word "Direct" is a word that can have a host of meanings depending on the context. For example in movies, the word has a meaning different from what we expect in Persian. Or we can say that as the Persian word is polysemous too, the polysemous meanings of the Persian word don't sound like the original English word. As an example, the word " " doesn't seem to mean <i>direct</i> in situations like observing the rules or observing as

					an civil engineer. So the words and their meanings should be treated cautiously.
19	Weigh (9%)	1. Find out how heavy sth is 2. Have a specified weight 3. Balance in the hands to assess its weight 4. Be cumbersome	وزن کردن	سنجیدن موازنه کردن روی باسکول رفتن (اصطلاح ورزشی)	The word seems to be of medium difficulty. Having a look on different meanings of the word "Weigh", we can see that some of the meanings are absent in Persian (like the forth meaning) but it doesn't seem to make any problems because this meaning of the word can be arrived at by <i>Analogy</i> . So for the English learner it is vital for understanding of the text to have a kind of creativity and to think higher than what the word exactly means and can mean.
20	Tear (26%)	1. Pull or rip apart or into pieces 2. Make a hole or split in 3. Damage by overstretching 4. Demolish something	پاره کردن	دراندن گسیختن بریده شدن	The word "Tear" has lots of meanings from among which we only focused on these four meanings which have come under one entry. As you can see, the meanings mentioned in the have different flow of meaning, so if somebody wants to assign meaning to the word, not only should he have a clear understanding of what meanings the word may have, but he should also use context to assign proper meaning. If he think about the word as having the only meaning of " " without the other meanings that it can have, he won't be able to think about "Damaging" when we are talking about "Tearing".

Based on the findings of this study, some of the problems of the PNU students in interpreting the polysemous words can be related to the poor kind of instruction they have undergone and the fact that most of the English teachers and instructors do not seem to have a clear picture for teaching words and they just go with translating words from the L1 to L2 without referring to other underlying meanings. It is also generally believed that when the teachers come across with the polysemous words which they find problem with explaining it, they should have in mind that teaching a polysemous word which definitely is different from teaching an ordinary vocabulary and it has its own difficulty. One finding which is supported by the findings of the current study in teaching polysemous words comes from Yarowsky (1992) who uses Roget's Thesaurus to disambiguate word senses of English words using statistical models of major categories. He believes that the most probable categories of words can be determined by searching the surrounding words for indicators of each category. These indicator words are obtained and weighted during training and by examining the hundred surrounding words for indicators of each

category. The system used by Yarowsky's (1992) is a large training corpus and a thesaurus based one and he uses a list of indicator words along with their weights for each category subsuming the words are to their root forms in order to gain more useful statistics. One of the main benefits of association of vocabularies in the system is that the problems of disambiguation of concrete nouns are solved by the broad context.

Another method for teaching polysemous words supported by the findings of the current study is using the findings of corpus and corpus studies. A corpus is simply defined as a large collection of linguistic evidence mainly naturally occurring data either written texts or a transcription of recorded speech. Such data can easily be used for different purposes in different contexts and situations. A large variety of corpora in English and in other languages have been compiled in electronic format for various purposes over the past few decades. Mosavi Miyangah uses corpus to teach the vocabulary and especially polysemous words and she also emphasizes the importance of dictionaries by asserting that "a straightforward way to find translations of the given terms is to use a bilingual dictionary; however, this method alone faces some problems due to one-to-many correspondences in a bilingual dictionary" (p.5) and it paves the way to using the corpora for the aim of teaching vocabularies and polysemous words.

Another interesting method of vocabulary teaching with the aim of reducing the chance of getting mixed up comes from Nation (1990) in which he recommends using something like picture messages or pictogram alongside the polysemous vocabulary in order to make it better understood. It can be achieved by teaching the underlying concept by showing several uses. For example, the word fork has different meanings to refer to a utensil for eating, a part of a bicycle, a part of a road, and a part of a branch. Nation offers using a simple shape like this $_C$ to teach the word. This way, the learning process will be more meaningful and it won't require a heavy mental burden for learning it.

Öztürk also talks about a sense called the core meaning sense or the basic sense which is the most concrete, frequent and literal of all the meanings of the word and therefore conceptually easier to understand and it is central to the understanding of other meanings because the latter are often figurative extensions from the core meaning (p.25) and it has shown that L2 learners have superior knowledge of these senses a polysemous word has when they want to refer to an entity.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the current study was to find and analyze the PNU students' high-rated problematic English polysemous words. As the results of the study showed, one of the most important factors leading students to uncertainty in assigning meaning to words rises from the point that most of Iranian teachers and instructors do not have a broader picture in vocabulary teaching and as the students complained, most of them suffice to only translate a given word from the target language to the native one without referring to other areas of meaning, denying the underlying concept of how to teach a vocabulary suggested by most of the researchers like Nation (1990) and Laufer (1997). Nation (1990) believes that only when a student can talk about a learned vocabulary that he knows its written and spoken form, its meaning, its grammatical pattern, its collocation,

association, frequency, as well as its register. For this reason, he refers to two types of vocabulary knowledge: receptive knowledge—being able to recognize words while reading or listening—and productive knowledge—being able to produce words while reading or speaking. One of the main objectives of a teacher should be enhancing this ability in vocabulary usage and use in students. The result of the Laufer's (1997) review of several researches about the definition of a word is summarized in a list of word features involved in the learning of a new word, including word form, word structure, and some other aspects of the word like its syntactic pattern, its relation with other words like its synonyms, antonyms, common collocations, and hyponyms, as well as its multiple meanings like metaphorical, cognitive, and affective meanings.

Another problem of these students was their insufficient talents and efforts in dealing with unknown vocabularies and assigning different meanings to words—especially those which were underdifferentiated in the target language—which can be resulted from their lack of familiarity with different techniques and strategies in reading comprehension and guessing the unknown words from the context. This problem can be referred to the system of education known as “Distance Education” supported by PNU which is aimed at adult students who are too busy to attend the classes, while most of the students in the conducted study were did not have such qualification.

The findings of the current research should be taken as an alarm by PNU officials who do not specify much class sessions for translation major students and for example, the sum of the sessions for the three courses investigated by the current researchers held by PNU was overall 8 sessions—three sessions of which should be devoted to mid-term exams as specified by PNU system of education—and the word “Distance Education” which is the main ideology behind such instruction and classes, should not be any excuse and give way to raising students who are dependent to only inauthentic materials in print and only attend classes for the sake of taking the score of 6 out of classroom sessions and studying just for the exams.

Limitations of the Study

One of the main limitations of the study, as mentioned in previous sections, was the insufficient class sessions for PNU students. For example, the course “Simple English Poetry” was held only for two sessions (one of which was specified for mid-term exam). Another problem the researchers faced was the nature of distance education which supposes the students as rightful even when they are absent. So, even a student who does not attend any classes, can gain the highest score in such system. It was one of the main limitations of the study which caused most students to attend classes partially.

REFERENCES

- Feredrikson, J. R. (1982): A componential theory of reading skills and their interactions. In Mislevy, R. J. (ed.) *Advances in the psychology of human intelligence. Volume I*. Hillsdale NJ: Lauren Earlbaum.
- Grabe, W. (1991): Current Development in second language Reading research. *TESOL Quarterly*. 25, 375-406.

- Ibarretxe-Antuñano, B. I. (1999). *Polysemy and metaphor in perception verbs: a cross-linguistic study*. Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy . University of Edinburgh.
- Klepousniotou, E. (2001). The processing of lexical ambiguity: Homonymy and polysemy in mental lexicon. *Brain and Language*, 81, 205-233.
- Krifka, M. (1998). polysemy generative model. *Lexical semantics, Polysemy*. LIN 393S.
- Laufer, B. (1997). *What's in a word that makes it hard or easy? Intralexical factors affecting the difficulty of vocabulary acquisition*. *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*. N. Schmitt and M. McCarthy, eds. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 140-155.
- Meara, P. (1997). *Towards a new approach to modelling vocabulary acquisition*. *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy*. N. Schmitt and M. McCarthy, eds. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 109-121.
- Mosavi Miyangah, T. (n.d). *Solving the Polysemy Problem of Persian Words Using Mutual Information Statistics*. Payame Noor University of Yazd (unpublished M.A Thesis).
- Nakahara, A. (2005). *The effect of instruction of underlying meaning of polysemous words*. Ph.D. dissertation, Retrieved from ProQuest (UMI No: 3178817).
- Nation, I.S.P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. Boston, Masschusetts: Heinle & Heinle publishers.
- Nation, I.S.P. (2000). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Öztürk, M. (1998). *Knowing What a Word Means: Acquisition of Noun Polysemy in English by Turkish Learners*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, university of reading.
- Parent, K. (2009). *Polysemy, A second language pedagogical concern*. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in applied linguistics. Victoria University of Wellington
- Prator, C. (1967). *Hierarchy of Difficulty*. Unpublished classroom lecture. University of California at Los Angeles.
- Srinivasan, M., & Snedeker, J. (2011). Judging a book by its cover and its contents: The representation of polysemous and homophonous meanings in four-year-old children. *Cognitive Psychology*, 62, 245–272.
- Yarovsky, D. (1992). *Word Sense Disambiguation Using Statistical Models of Roget's categories Trained on Large Corpora*. Proceedings of 15th international conference on computational linguistics, pp.454—60.

THE EFFECT OF PRAGMATICS-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION ON PROMOTING SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS INVOLVED IN WRITING

Fatemeh Monesan

*M.A graduate of Islamic Azad University, Garmsar Branch, Iran
Email: moonesan2011@gmail.com*

Afsane Ravandpour

*PH.D Student of Tehran University in International Campus of Kish, Iran
Email: afsane.ravandpour2009@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of pragmatics-focused instruction on promoting sociolinguistic competence and language ability confidence of Iranian intermediate EFL learners involved in writing. It was carried out at Kanoon Zaban Institute in Semnan (Iran) among 60 intermediate female learners with the age range of 19 to 26 through a quasi-experimental research design. The researcher administered a Nelson test to determine the homogeneity of the participants regarding their general English language proficiency level. Participants were not randomly assigned into two groups. After coming up with the conclusion that the two groups were homogeneous, both groups completed written discourse completion tasks (WDCT) and self-assessment questionnaire (SQA) as pretests. During 8 weeks of treatment, in the experimental group, students received instruction in compliment that consisted of lessons about Persian compliment, English compliment, comparing Persian and English compliment and they were also provided with meta-pragmatic information. It should be mentioned that the control group was not provided with any meta-pragmatic information after the treatment was over. At the end of the treatment, the participants in both groups answered the same WDCT and SAQ as posttests. A t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups, the result showed that the learners' mean score in the experimental group was significantly higher than the learners' mean score in control group. In sum, the results of analyses are indicative of the fact that applying pragmatics-focused instruction has significant effect on both the sociolinguistic competence and language confidence of Iranian intermediate EFL learners in language ability.

KEYWORDS: Pragmatics, Pragmatics-focused Instruction, Sociolinguistic Competence

INTRODUCTION

Background

For many years, learning a second or foreign language was equated with linguistic or grammatical accuracy. But now, the communicative approach to language learning has put grammar – centered classes to one side and has fostered the use of communicative strategies

(Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.76). Communicative competence is concerned with the achievement of functional abilities in the target language (TL) with the final purpose of understanding and producing language that is appropriate to communicative situations in accordance with specific sociocultural parameters (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.24).

Sociocultural factors such as differences between the first and target culture can mislead the learner in language production and interpretation. Whether we are speaking in our first or second language, we are influenced by sociocultural norms or constraints that affect the way we communicate (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.93).

Sociolinguistic competence as one of the aspects of communicative competence enables us to create and interpret language that is appropriate to a particular language use setting (Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990b, p.14). According to Levinson (1997), pragmatics and sociolinguistics share many areas of common interest. Sociolinguistics has contributed much to certain areas of pragmatics, especially the study of social deixis, speech acts and their use.

However, pragmatics in turn has much to contribute to sociolinguistics; for in trying to understand the social significance of patterns of language usage, it is essential to understand the underlying structural properties and processes that constrain verbal interaction. Although, there is a small body of data, based on research of pragmatics instruction in second or foreign language classrooms, there is no evidence of empirical research on the effects of pragmatics- focused instruction on sociolinguistic competence of EFL learners.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics can be defined as the study of linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their usage properties and processes. Inter language pragmatics mainly concerns with how native speakers differ from non – native speakers in interpreting and producing a speech act in the TL (Kasper & Rose, 2001). Leech (1993) and Thomas (1983) divided pragmatics in two components: pragma linguistics and socio- pragmatics. Pragma linguistics refers to the sources for conveying communicative acts and rational or interpersonal meanings. Such resources include pragmatic strategies such as directness routines and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts. Socio – pragmatics is considered as the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretations and performance communicative actions.

Pragmatics - Focused Instruction

It is clear that various aspects of pragmatics can be developed through instruction. Similarly, studies in classroom research claim that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.29)

Meta Pragmatic Information

This concept concerns the explicit knowledge a learner has of the pragmatic weight of language and whether the learner can contribute to what is acceptable and what is unacceptable in the target culture (House and Kasper, 1981)

Sociolinguistic Competence

The concept of sociolinguistic competence is linked to Hymes' notion of communicative competence. Hymes argued that language users need to be able to not only create and understand grammatical utterances, but also learn knowledge about cultural norms in order to judge the social situation correctly so as to produce appropriate speech. The sociolinguistics goal might be to show how specific differences in pronunciation or grammar lead members of a speech community to make judgments about the education or economic status of a speaker (Canal & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983).

Statement of the Problem

For many years, linguistic "grammatical competence" has been a major feature of second language acquisition. A learner was said to have acquired a new language, when he or she could produce sentences that were grammatically correct. However, that same person often had difficulties when establishing a conversation with a native speaker. Learning the form of a language does not necessarily mean that a speaker is able to use that language in a way that is socially and culturally appropriate (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.115).

Since even fairly advanced learners often lack communicative competence, the need to develop learner knowledge of different aspects of communicative abilities seems imperative. However, much less attention has been given to provide opportunities for learners to practice communicative ability in classroom research thus far.

Now in this study, by considering the instruction of pragmatics as the purpose of classroom research, we intend to know whether it helps learners produce and recognize socially appropriate language in context. For example, whether learners will be able to use social deixis according to social distance, social power, rights, obligations, and degree of imposition involved in a particular communication. Also, a self-assessment questionnaire will be used in this study, since that instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability. For that purpose, we suppose that SQA might serve as an interesting pretest /posttest indicator of self – confidence.

Significance of the Study

A learner in the process of acquiring a second language must be able to process linguistic input successfully; however, without the ability to understand the context in which an utterance is produced, the ways through which the context is affected, the discourse properties and sociolinguistic impact of the utterance, the learner cannot be said to have acquired the new language (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.88). Until recently, studies in second and foreign language acquisition have focused mostly on the phonological, morph - syntactic and lexical levels, investigating how learners come to acquire the form of the language. But now, it is emphasized that more attention should be paid to the cultural aspects of language learning with the recognition of language as an essential means of Human communication.

Since the main purpose of language learning is communication, a learner must develop in terms of not only linguistic competence, but also sociocultural awareness, attaining a useful

understanding of how language functions in social and cultural contexts. (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.89)

Due to the difficulty of teaching communicative knowledge, teachers of EFL especially in our country often overlook teaching it, and instead focus on the grammatical aspects of language. At institutions, only textbooks with conversation are designed to be models for learners. These textbooks cannot provide realistic input to the learners, cannot help learners in interpreting and producing a speech act in a particular context, and also cannot provide an opportunity for learner to recognize the appropriateness of an utterance within a given context. As a result, EFL students are extremely weak in this regard.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early in the twentieth century, language teaching focused primarily on grammar and translation of written text. The shift of focus to speaking competence in more recent years fostered the idea of communicative competence that is the ability to speak a language proficiently (Kasper & Rose 2001). Different notions of communicative competence, proposed by Hymes from the perspective of linguistic anthropology (1971) and by Habermas (1984) from the vantage point of social philosophy, served as guiding constructs for the design of communicative competence as the overall goal of language teaching and assessment. An influential and comprehensive review of communicative competence and related notions was offered by Canal and Swain (1980), who also proposed a widely cited frame work of communicative competence for language teaching and testing.

Pragmatic competence

The concept of pragmatic competence was originally identified by Canale and Swain (1980) under the term “sociolinguistic competence” and considered a component of the construct of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Even today pragmatic competence, although widely used, remains a fairly extensive and vaguely defined term (Vyatlina, 2007).

The common idea of all the model of communicative competence is the fact that grammatical knowledge is not sufficient for successful communication and learners need to develop their pragmatic competence. Kasper and Roever (2005, p. 318) explain becoming pragmatically competent as the process of establishing sociopragmatic and pragma linguistic competence and the increasing ability to understand and produce sociopragmatic meanings with pragma linguistic conventions (Soler & Martinez -Flor, 2008, p.6).

Speech act theory

Speech act theory (SAT) describes how language can be used to do things instead of merely commenting on the state of the world. SAT describes sentences that make things happen. For example, a couple is not married until the pastor utters the word, “I pronounce you man and wife”. Another example is a worker becoming unemployed after his boss tells him, “you are fired”. This phrase once uttered, causes the employee to lose his job. In both of these situations, it is the act of saying the phrase that is important (Mwiyelee, 2005).

Goffman defines speech act as frames with a conversational meaning or intent such as request, apologies, orders, and advice. This theory was originated from John L. Austin's work in the 1940s and 1950s. Which he published in 1962 as a book entitled *How to Do Things with Words*. John R. Searle (1969, 1979) developed and codified the speech act theory. The emergence of SAT theory is attributed a direct reaction to the philosophical tradition of logical positivism. The approach claims that if a sentence can be verified or objectively assessed as true or false, that sentence is said to be meaningful.

Pragmatics in language teaching

The findings of studies indicate that pragmatics is covered in a wide range of courses across programs (sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Introduction to linguistics, Teaching Method, SLA, etc.) and the time spent covering pragmatics varies from no time at all, to more than 8 weeks, depending on the program. A great deal of variation was also found in graduate program directors and faculty members beliefs about the role of pragmatic in the TESOL curriculum, another study was conducted by Riddiford and Joe (2010) about the tracking the development of socio pragmatic skills. Socio pragmatic skills have been identified as important aspects of communicative competence in the workplace (e. g. Clyne, 1994; Geluykens & Pelsmaekers, 1999; Candlin, 2002). Most earlier studies in the area of socio-pragmatic instruction focusing on requests have involved short interventions conducted in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts with little input beyond the classroom (e.g., Alcon-Soler et al.2005; Rose, 2005; Takahashi, 2001 & 2005). Moreover, research instruments used to analyze socio-pragmatic features have mostly yielded controlled elicitation data such as discourse completion tasks (DCT) and oral interviews rather a combination of both controlled and spontaneously occurring discourse data, which ensures greater reliability (Geluykens, 2007).

Sociolinguistic competence

Second language (L2) learner's use of sociolinguistic features of discourse has attracted the attention of a number of scholars since the late 1980 (Bayley & Preston, 1996; Bauley & Regan, 2004; Dewaele & Mougeon, 2002, Preston 1989; Regan, Howard & Lemee, 2009). Several special issues in international journals have been devoted to the development of sociolinguistic competence in the L2 in the last two years (Baylay and Regan, 2004; Dewaele and Mougeon, 2002, 2004).

To be sure, several authors (Etienne & Sax 2006, Leister, 1994, Van Compernelle, 2009; Van Compernelle & Williams, 2009 a; among others) have advocated pedagogical models for teaching sociolinguistics and stylistic variation in classroom settings.

Previous studies have certainly shown that classroom learners typically have for opportunities to develop their sociolinguistic competence given the relatively formal level of teacher and textbook discourse to which they are exposed (see, e.g., Mougeon, Rehner, Nadasdi, 2004; Van Compernelle & Williams, 2009 b). Even when pedagogical models are proposed, they tend to ascribe great importance to the mechanistic process of input-output, whereby exposure, in the sense of input, to naturally occurring language is purported to be beneficial for learners, that is, their eventual output or performance. Consequently, the role of the teacher becomes secondary,

one in which he or she simply presents materials or presses the play button to start a film rather than engaging students in collaborative teaching learning activity (Van Compernelle, 2009; Van Compernelle & Williams, 2009a).

Within second and foreign language education context, recent assessment research, and policy have acknowledged the importance of incorporating sociolinguistic competence into the measurement of language ability. The national standard in foreign language education project (1996) emphasized that it is (the acquisition of the ability to communicate in meaningful and appropriate ways with users of other language that is the ultimate goal of today's foreign language classroom (p.3; Long & Norris in press). Common to such measures is the use of criteria for scoring, reporting, and interpreting examines performances according to degree of sociolinguistic appropriateness exhibited, in light of the particular contextual constraints represented with assessment tasks (Kasper & Rose, 2001).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

To fulfill the purpose of this study, which is the effect of pragmatic – focused instruction on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in speaking, the following questions are investigated:

Q₁: Does pragmatic – focused instruction have effects on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL involved in writing?

Q₂: Does pragmatics – focused instruction have a facilitating effect on confidence in language ability?

The null hypotheses formulated for this study are as follows:

H₀₁: Applying pragmatics – focused instruction does not have any effect on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing?

H₀₂: Applying pragmatic – focused instruction does not have any effects on learner confidence.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

For the purpose of this study, two classes from Kanoon Zaban institute in Semnan (Iran) were chosen. Because of institutional constraints, it was not possible to assign students randomly, thus making it necessary to work with intact groups. They were 75 Persian speaking female learners and the age range of students varied between 19 and 26 years old.

A Nelson battery test (see Appendix A) was administrated to find out the homogeneity of participants regarding their proficiency level. After analyzing the data, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study. Finally two groups of 30 students were the participants of this study. Since our groups were selected intact, one of them was considered as control group and the other one as an experimental group randomly. It must be mentioned that the other students, who did not have the necessary requirements for the purpose of this study, were not virtually excluded from

the groups but received the treatment within the group, even though their scores were not taken into consideration in any stage of this study.

Instrumentation

Data were collected using three instruments: language proficiency test, self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse completion taken test (WDCT).

Language proficiency test

First a Nelson test was administrated to the students. After gathering the data regarding to the Nelson test and estimating the mean scores of both groups, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean score were selected as homogenous and took part in this study. (The reliability of the test was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha formula which was 0.845).

Pre-test and post-test

Pre-test

Self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse-completion task test (WDCT) were carried out as pre-tests. Both of these questionnaires incorporated the same eighteen compliment scenarios (see the Appendix B for the scenarios). The SAQ format, as used in this study, was developed by Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1992, 1995). This questionnaire presents a number of scenarios involving potential language use and requires participants to indicate what they believe to be the level of their ability to respond appropriately in those contexts. Essentially, then, the SAQ measures participant's level of self-confidence in their own sociolinguistic competence. Given that instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability (Rose & Kasper, 2001), we felt that the SAQ might serve as interesting pre-test/ post-test indication of self-confidence. We also would like to note that Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1995) found that learner's self-rating on their SAQ correlated highly with Ns rating of their speech act performance, indicating that SAQ might reasonably serve as a useful rough estimate of sociolinguistic competence, although certainly not as the basis of any high-stakes decisions. The WDCT used in this study also incorporated the same scenarios that appeared on the SAQ, and was modelled essentially on the ubiquitous discourse-completion task (DCT) format (see, e.g., Blum-Kulka, Mouse & Kasper, 1989). This test requires the students to read a written description of a situation (including such factors as setting, participant roles, degree of imposition) and asks them to write what they would say in that situation. (For research on WDCT, readers are referred to Blum-Kulka, 1982, 1983; Bergman & Kasper, 1993; Rose, 1995; Johnston, Kasper & Rose, 1998). The fact that both of the instruments used in this study were written questionnaires merits some discussion. As with other classroom-based research in pragmatics, sociolinguistic ability as well as other areas of second language acquisition, it is often not feasible to measure instructional effects other than through the use of written questionnaires designed for that purpose (Rose & Kasper, 2001, P.156). Although in some cases it may be possible to observe learners interacting in the target language (as was the case with Billmyer, 1990a, 1990b) a foreign language context generally does not afford such possibilities. Use of written instruments, then, appears to be inevitable (Kasper & Rose 2001, p.156).

We would like to make clear, however, that we are fully aware of the limitation of questionnaire, particularly regarding the sort of information they yield (Rose & Kasper, 2001). It is crucial to understand that questionnaires are indirect measure- that is, the data resulting from responses to questionnaires are not the result of direct observation (Kasper & Rose, 2001). It is worth noting that the responses were scored by three raters on a 5-point Likert scale. (Ranging from 1 very bad to 5 very good), with the sum of the average ratings for each item as the score on the WDCT.

Post-test

The same post-tests were administrated as pre-test, then a T-Test was calculated to see whether there is a significant difference between two means or not.

Procedure

The data collection procedure went through various steps. At first, a Nelson test considered of 50 items was administrated to these two classes including only woman participants. This was an attempt to see whether they are eligible participants with respect to the purpose of the present study. In the second phase of the study, both control and experimental answered the same self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and written discourse completion task test (WDCT) as pre-tests. Then the treatment sessions were offered over 8 weeks (90 minutes, per week). Finally, the same (SAQ) and (WDCT) were administrated as post-tests to all two groups.

Treatment

Two intact groups took part in this study: one experimental group and the other as control group. The control group received no treatment, but completed both written discourse completion tasks (WDCT) and self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) during the same periods as the experimental group. Both control and experimental classes covered the same textbook as part of the regular course curriculum. In the experimental group, students received instruction in compliment over eight weeks that consisted of lessons about Persian compliment, English compliment, comparing Persian and English and they were also provided with meta-pragmatic information.

The treatment lasted approximately 30 minutes in every session. The rationale for beginning first with L1 in pragmatics-focused instruction is discussed in Rose (1994b), who argues that such an approach makes pragmatic concepts more accessible to learners. In the first session, compliment was introduced as a speech act which is the focus of instruction in the next following sessions. The experimental group received three types of materials in each session. One was handouts in which detailed metapragmatic information on the target compliment forms was provided. Of course, metapragmatic explanations were presented in both first language and target language, as suggested by Bardovi-Harlig (1996) in order to boost their self-confidence and enhance their motivation.

In addition, examples from Persian help students to examine how compliment function in their own language. Care was taken to refer to the actual use of the target compliment forms in the discourse (role-plays) and their function in the particular relationship (i.e., the status low to high, social distance). In other words, the teacher explained variables such as relative power and social distance that involved the power of the speaker respective to the hearer, distance between the

speaker and hearer, and degree of familiarity and solidarity respectively. For each session, the participants were required to compare their Persian compliment expressions and those applied by the native speaker in the corresponding situation and discover any differences in compliment realization patterns according to social context.

Second treatment was involving students in translation activities, which categorized under motivation phase of pragmatic awareness-raising tasks by Eslami-Rasekh (2005). One of the voluntarily performed role-plays was written on the board in Persian. Then, the students were asked to translate the compliment made in the conversation into English. All suggested alternatives were selected to be written on the board, followed by the teacher's explanation on pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic characteristics of compliments in English.

The last treatment included film segments containing compliment exchanges, as Rose (1997) suggested that film is capable of providing both the target language for detailed discussion and analysis, as well as the rich contextual detail useful for such analysis. It should be mentioned that the control group was not provide with any meta-pragmatic information after the treatment was over.

The participants in both groups participated in the post-tests. After that, the scores on the pre-test and post-test were used for the purpose of validation. Then, the correlation between the scores of pre-test and post-test was estimated through a T-test.

Design

Among the several research designs, the one which seems to best fit the purpose of the present study is quasi-experimental design. The participants in this study were selected intact. In order to compensate for the main problem of this design, lack of internal validity, the researcher took advantage of the Nelson Battery Test before the treatment got started. Through this, the researcher made sure that all learners were at the same level of English language proficiency. Therefore the suitable design for this research would be an intact group pre-test- post-test design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of pragmatics-focused instruction on promoting sociolinguistic competence and language ability confidence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing. As mentioned before, two classes from Kanoon Zaban institute were chosen for the purpose of this study. A Nelson battery test was administrated to find out the homogeneity of subjects regarding their proficiency level. After analyzing the data, those who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study. Finally, two groups of 30 students were the participants of this study. Since our groups were selected intact, one of them was considered as control group and the other one as an experimental group randomly. It must be mentioned that the other students who did not have the necessary requirements for the purpose of this study, were not virtually excluded from the groups but received the treatment within the group, even though their scores were not taken into consideration in any stage of this study.

Table 1 and figure 1 present the descriptive statistics of the initial participants of this study who took the NELSON test.

Table 1: NELSON test descriptive statics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
score of Nelson-test	75	32	18	50	42.21	5.171
Valid N (listwise)	75					

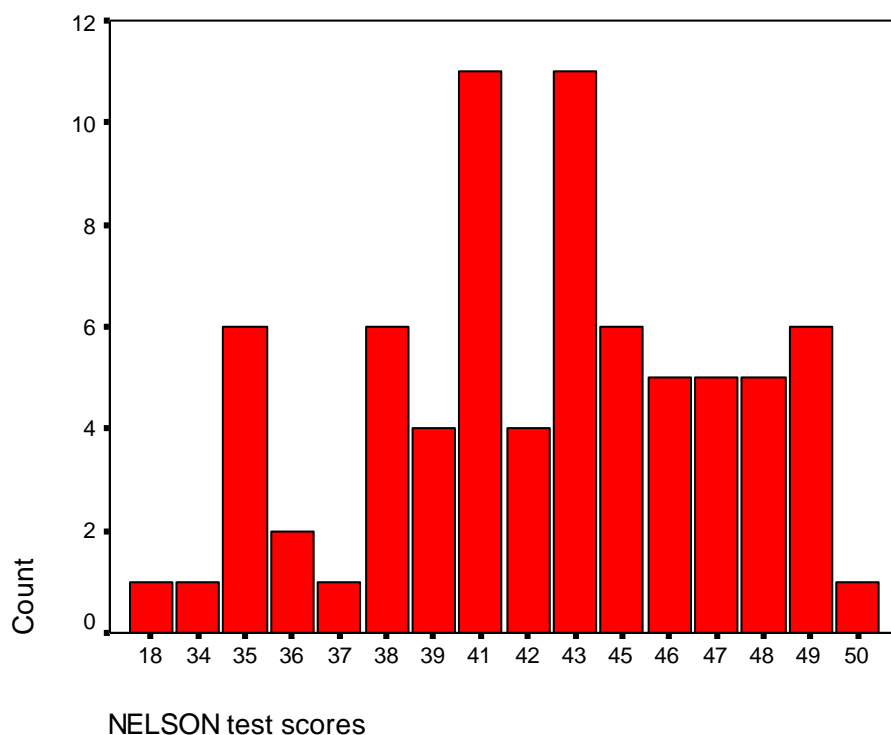


Figure 1: NELSON test scores of the participants

Since those students who were located one standard deviation above and below the mean in the normal distribution curve were chosen for the purpose of the study, students with NELSON test scores within 47.38 and 37.03 were finally selected to collect the necessary data.

Data analyses

As mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, in the second phase of the study, both control and experimental groups' participants answered the same self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) as a measure of confidence and written discourse completion task test (WDCT) as a measure of sociolinguistic competence on the pre-test. After that, the treatment sessions were offered over 8 weeks (90 minutes, per week). Finally, the same SAQ and WDCTs were administrated as post-tests to the two groups.

In order to carry out the data analyses of this study, first descriptive statics were calculated, and then the mean comparisons statistics such as t test and ANOVA were employed. Below, each research question is investigated separately.

Q₁: Does pragmatics – focused instruction have effects on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL involved in writing?

In order to answer this question, the students' scores on WDCTs were used on the pretest and posttest. Since three raters rated the WDCTs, it was necessary to calculate the inter-rater reliability of the ratings. This was done by computing Intraclass correlation (ICC) coefficients among the three raters' ratings on the two groups' pretests and posttests. Table 2 presents all the ICC coefficients, which are evidently acceptable, that is above .90.

Table 2: ICC coefficients among the raters

Average of raters	Number of cases	Number of raters	ICC correlation
Pretest-control	15	3	.98
Posttest-control	15	3	.97
Pretest-experimental	15	3	.97
Posttest-experimental	15	3	.98

Next, the average of the three ratings was used as the final data for the investigation of this research question. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of these average ratings for the two groups.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the average ratings on WDCTs

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	Skewness
Pretest – control	15	31.67	49.00	41.8667	5.30319	-.835
Posttest – control	15	31.00	49.67	41.8444	5.75680	-.447
Pretest - experimental	15	31.00	51.67	42.8000	7.00204	-.634
Posttest - experimental	15	41.00	58.33	51.1556	5.16992	-.728
Valid N (listwise)	15					

In order to see whether each group had improved on the posttest after the treatment, the means of pretest and posttest of each group were compared via paired-samples t test the results of each are presented in Table 4. Evidently, all the skewness values (table 3) are within the acceptable range (between -1 and 1) to allow for running paired-samples t test as a parametric test which requires the data to be normally distributed.

Table 4 presents the results of paired-samples t tests, which is indicative of the fact that only the experimental group has shown significant improvement in terms of sociolinguistic competence on the posttest; experimental group $t(14) = -5.194$, $p < .05$, control group $t(14) = .020$, $p > .05$.

Table 4: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Control-pretest/posttest	.0222	4.40502	1.13737	-2.4172	2.4616	.020	14	.985
Pair 2	Experimental-pretest/posttest	-8.3556	6.23032	1.60866	-11.8058	-4.9053	-5.194	14	.000

Although the above analysis shows significant improvement on the posttest for the experimental group, the posttests of both groups were compared with one another by employing ANOVA to take into account the pretest differences between the two groups. In other words, as the descriptive statistics show the pretest means of the groups are not equal, and in order to compare the posttest means of the two groups one needs to control the differences of the pretest means (covariate) of the two groups by means of employing ANOVA. In order to employ ANOVA, several assumptions need to be checked initially. The first of these is the assumption of normality, which was just found to have been observed since the descriptive statistics provided above showed that the skewness values are within the acceptable range (i.e. between 1 and -1). The next assumption is to do with the homogeneity of variances, which was found met based on Table 5 ($p > .05$).

Table 5: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances (a)

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.035	1	28	.853

Table 6 demonstrates the results of the check on the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes and the main ANOVA results. The first row in Table 6 indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes is met; Interaction $F(1,27) = 1.681$, $p > .05$.

The second row shows that the groups were indeed different on the pretest; Pretest effect $F(1,27) = 13.668$, $p < .05$, and finally the next row shows that the groups are significantly different on the posttest; Group $F(1,27) = 28.231$, $p < .05$, eta squared = .51 large effect size.

Table 6: ANOVA results

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
GROUP * pretest (interaction)	33.792	1	33.792	1.681	.206	
Pretest (covariate)	281.690	1	281.690	13.668	.001	.336
GROUP	581.841	1	581.841	28.231	.000	.511
Error	556.473	27	20.610			
Total	66355.889	30				
Corrected Total	1488.389	29				

Tables 7 and 8 provide the posttest means of the groups before and after being adjusted after taking into account the effect of pretest mean differences (i.e. covariate). Evidently, the experimental group is of higher mean both before and after ANOVA adjustments. In sum, the results above indicate that the null hypothesis of this study is rejected. In other words, applying pragmatics – focused instruction has significant effect on the sociolinguistic competence of Iranian EFL learners involved in writing.

Table 7: Unadjusted means before controlling the covariate (Pretest)

GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	51.1556	5.16992	15
Control	41.8444	5.75680	15
Total	46.5000	7.16406	30

Table 8: Adjusted means after controlling the covariate (Pretest)

GROUP	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental	50.917(a)	1.174	48.508	53.326
Control	42.083(a)	1.174	39.674	44.492

Q₂: Does pragmatics–focused instruction have a facilitating effect on confidence in language ability?

In order to answer this question, the students' scores on SAQ were used on the pretest and posttest. Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics of SAQ scores for the two groups.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics on SAQ scores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	Skewness
Pretest-control	15	18.00	32.00	25.6667	4.08248	-.733
Posttest-control	15	22.00	32.00	26.8000	3.02844	-.385
Pretest-experimental	15	23.00	32.00	27.6000	2.99523	-.437
Posttest-experimental	15	27.00	35.00	31.4667	2.32584	-.501
Valid N (listwise)	15					

In order to see whether each group had improved on the posttest after the treatment, the means of pretest and posttest of each group were compared via paired-samples *t* test, the results of each are presented in Table 10 below. Evidently, all the skewness values (Table 9) are within the acceptable range (between -1 and 1) to allow for running paired-samples *t* test as a parametric test which requires the data to be normally distributed.

Table 10 presents the results of paired-samples *t* tests, which is indicative of the fact that both groups have shown significant improvement in terms of confidence in language ability on the posttest; experimental group $t(14) = -4.549$, $p < .05$, control group $t(14) = -2.915$, $p < .05$. In order to see which group has shown more improvement in terms of confidence on the posttest, the effect sizes for the above *t* test analyses were calculated. The effect size for the experimental

group was 1.45 while the one for the control group was .32. This means that the experimental group has shown more improvement in terms of confidence in language ability.

Table 10: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Control-pretest/posttest	-1.1333	1.50555	.38873	-1.9671	-.2996	-2.915	14	.011
Pair 2	Experimental-pretest/posttest	-3.8667	3.29213	.85002	-5.6898	-2.0435	-4.549	14	.000

Despite the fact that the above analysis shows a little more significant improvement on the posttest for the experimental group, the posttests of both groups were compared with one another by employing ANOVA to take into account the pretest differences between the two groups. In other words, as the descriptive statistics show, the pretest means of the groups are not equal, and in order to compare the posttest means of the two groups one needs to control the differences of the pretest means (covariate) of the two groups by means of employing ANOVA.

In order to employ ANOVA, several assumptions need to be checked initially. The first of these is the assumption of normality, which was just found to have been observed since the descriptive statistics provided above showed that the skewness values are within the acceptable range (i.e. between 1 and -1). The next assumption is to do with the homogeneity of variances, which was found not met based on Table 11 ($p < .05$); however, this could not cause any serious problem since the groups were of equal size.

Table 11: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
12.414	1	28	.001

Table 12 demonstrates the results of the check on the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes and the main ANOVA results. The first row in Table 12 indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes is met; Interaction $F(1, 27) = 6.680$, $p > .05$.

The second row shows that the groups were indeed different on the pretest; Pretest effect $F(1, 27) = 26.114$, $p < .05$, and finally the next row shows that the groups are significantly different on the posttest; Group $F(1, 27) = 24.040$, $p < .05$, eta squared = .47 large effect size.

Table 12: ANOVA results

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
GROUP * pretest (interaction)	21.211	1	21.211	6.680	.086	
Pretest (covariate)	100.364	1	100.364	26.114	.000	.492
GROUP	92.393	1	92.393	24.040	.000	.471
Error	103.769	27	3.843			
Total	25830.000	30				
Corrected Total	367.467	29				

Tables 13 and 14 provide the posttest means of the groups before and after being adjusted after taking into account the effect of pretest mean differences (i.e. covariate). Evidently, the experimental group is of higher mean both before and after ANOVA adjustment.

In sum, the results above indicate that the null hypothesis of this study is rejected. In other words, applying pragmatics – focused instruction has significant effect on the language confidence of Iranian EFL learners in language ability.

Table 13: Unadjusted means before controlling the covariate (Pretest)

GROUP	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Con	26.8000	3.02844	15
Ex	31.4667	2.32584	15
Total	29.1333	3.55967	30

Table 14: Adjusted means after controlling the covariate (Pretest)

GROUP	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Con	27.311(a)	.516	26.252	28.370
Ex	30.956(a)	.516	29.897	32.014

In sum, the results of the above analyses are indicative of the fact that applying pragmatics – focused instruction has significant effect on both the sociolinguistic competence and language confidence of Iranian EFL learners in language ability.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings are based on the research questions and the results of pre-test and post-tests of SAQ and WDCT at the beginning and ending of the study.

The mean score and differences mean of pre-test, post-test of self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) are presented in table 4.9 Table 4.9 displays the pretest and post test result of the SAQ for the control and experimental groups. Participants were asked to rate their ability to respond appropriately in a given scenario, with 1 being very unsatisfactory and 2 completely appropriate. As the table shows, the posttest scores indicate a rather high degree of confidence in the ability to

use English appropriately; it appears that instruction had a positive impact on the self-confidence of the experimental group. According to Rose and Kwain-fun (1999) instruction may have a facilitating or debilitating effect on confidence in language ability. The result of post-test in this study showed that the effect is facilitating. Of course the result of the present study reject finding of Rose and Kwain-fun that claimed the effect of instruction on learner's self-reliance was negative.

The mean score and difference mean of pre-test and post test of written-discourse completion tasks (WDCT) are presented in table 4.3. The data obtained from the post-test showed some valuable findings to be considered. The table indicates that there were improvements in the experimental group. This group was able to demonstrate significantly better improvements than the control group. This finding is in line with major finding of (e.g., Billmyer, 1990a, 1990 b; Kubota, 1995) that showed a greater degree of effectiveness for meta pragmatic instruction over no instruction. The Written discourse completion task test were scored by three raters, then inter rater reliability (percentage of agreement) was calculated.

Limitations and Delimitations

The present study, like other studies, suffers from some limitations. Some factors and conditions are beyond the control of the researcher.

First, in the foreign language in which these data were collected, the students did not interact spontaneously in English outside the classroom. The context for the use of English, then, was pedagogical.

Second, as Babbie (1998, p. 274) points out, questionnaires cannot measure social action. Also, according to Rose and Kasper (2001), questionnaires are inherently artificial. But use of written instruments in classroom- based research appears to be inevitable (Rose & Kasper, 2001).

In the present study, SAQ and WDCT were used for gathering data, however, we are fully aware of limitation of questionnaires, that is, and the data gathering from responses to questionnaire are not the result of direct observation.

There are also other limitations and delimitations were imposed upon the research design.

1. The students' age, gender and personal variables were not controlled.
2. In EFL setting, natural native speaker data is not easily accessible.
3. The evaluation of learners' sociolinguistic competence in terms of how much it approximates native speaker norms is a very difficult task.
4. This research was delimited to Iranian EFL learners; hence the result will be applicable only in the domain of Iranian EFL teaching.

Suggestions for further research

Seliger and Shohamy (1989, p.254) stated that every research project opens new ways for further study (The nature of research is such that the more answers are obtained, the more questions arise). Researchers have indicated that gender is an important variable in every study with regard to the purpose of the study gender finds more importance, but because of the institutional constraints, it was impossible to take both male and female participants in the same class. So, it is

recommended to replicate the experiment with a representative sample of female and male participants. Learners who took part in the present study were intermediate learners in Kannon Zaban and their abilities were high. As indicated by their high scores on proficiency test (Nelson test). So, it is not clear whether similar results would be obtained with a less advanced students. Although limited, the work by Wildner-Bassett and Tateyama et al (1997) appears to indicate that pragmatics is teachable to beginning learners. This should be encouraging to language instructors particularly in foreign language settings where learners do not have as many opportunities to interact with NSs of the target language as in the second language (L2) setting and the role of instruction becomes more important. Future research could look at how pragmatic-focused instruction affects beginner learners in a foreign language context.

The advantage of oral discourse completion task (ODCT) over written discourse completion task (WDCT) is that ODCT encourage oral production (both listening and speaking). The researcher in the present study was eager to use ODCT for gathering data, but because of institutional constraints, it was difficult to administer, it requires two audio cassette recorders, so, it is recommended to replicate the experiment with using ODCT instead of (WDCT).

REFERENCES

- Aktuna, S .D., & Kamisli, S. (1996). *Linguistic of power and politeness in Turkish: Revelation from speech act*.
- Alcón, E. (2005). *Does instruction work for pragmatic learning in EFL contexts? System*, 33(3), 417-435.
- Alcón, E. and Martí'nez-Flor, A. (2005). Editors' introduction to pragmatics in instructed Language learning. *System* 33 (3), 381-384.
- Alcón, E., & Martí'nez-Flor, A. (2008). *Pragmatics in foreign language contexts*. In Alcón, E. and Martí'nez-Flor, A. (eds) *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing* (pp. 3-21). Great Britain: Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental consideration in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (1999). *Exploring the interlanguage of interlanguage pragmatics: A research agenda for acquisition pragmatics. Language Learning*, 49, 677-713.
- Bardovi-Harling, K (2001). *Empirical evidence of the need of instruction in pragmatic* in K .R. Rose & G. Kasper (eds.): *Pragmatic in Language Teaching* .New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Mahan-Taylor, R. (2003). *Teaching pragmatics*. Washington, DC: United States. Department of State.
- Behnam, B., & Niroomand, M. (2011). An investigating of Iranian EFL learners` use of politeness strategies and power relation in disagreement across different proficiency levels. *Ccsenet. Vol (4). No. 4*. December 2011.
- Bossewitch, J., & Preston, D. M. (2011). *Teaching and learning with video annotation*
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Crystal, D. (1985). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

- Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2005). Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners. *ELT Journal*, 59(3), 199-208
- Fernandez, B. M., & Fontecha, F.A. (2008). *The teach ability of pragmatic in SLA*. Porta Linguarum.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in language classroom*: Oxford University Press.
- Hinkel, E. (Eds) (2005). *Hand book of research in second language teaching and learning*. London.
- Holmes, J. (2006). Politeness strategies as linguistic variable. In Mey, J. L. (Eds.) (2009) *Concise Encyclopedia of pragmatic*. (Second edition). Elsevier. PP. 711-723
<http://www.carla.umn.edu>
- Holtman, K. C. (2005). *Complimenting by second language learners of French*. Doctoral dissertation. (UMI No. 3177632)
- Ishihara, N., & Chi, J. C. (in press) .Authentic video in beginning ESOL classroom: Using a full length feature film for listening and speaking strategies.
- Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (1993). Interlanguage pragmatics: An introduction. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp.13-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kasper, G., & Rose, K. R. 2001. Pragmatics in language teaching. In K. R. Rose and G. Kasper (Eds.). *Pragmatics in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Kasper, G., & Rover, C. (2005). Pragmatics in second language learning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 317–334). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishing.
- Kasper, G., & Schmidt, R. (1996). Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 149-169.
- Kreutel, K. (2007). “I’m not agree with you”. ESL learners` expression of disagreement. *TESL - Ej. Volume 11*.
- Martínez-Flor, A. (2007). Analyzing request modification devices in films: Implications for pragmatic learning in instructed foreign language contexts. In Alcón, E. and Safont, M.P. (eds). *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning* (pp. 245-280). Amsterdam: Springer.
- Martínez-Flor, A., & Fukuya, Y.J., (2005). The effects of instruction on learners’ production of appropriate and accurate suggestions. *System*, 33 (3), 463-480.
- Mey, J. L. (Eds.) (2009) .*Concise Encyclopedia of pragmatic*. (Second edition). Elsevier.
- Mwinyelleh, J. B. (2005). *The acquisition of pragmatic competence in L2 classroom*: Giving advice in Spanish .Published doctoral dissertation. (UMI.No.3203792)
- Owen, J. S. (2001). *Interlanguage pragmatic in Russia: A study of the effect of study abroad and proficiency level on request strategies*. (UMI No. 3035194)
- Pearson, L.E. (2001). *Pragmatic in foreign language teaching: the effect of instruction on L2 learners` acquisition of gratitude, apologies, and directives*. (UMI No. 3035102).
- Pellet, S.H. (2005). *The development of competence in French Interlanguage pragmatics: The case of the discourse marker “donc”*. Doctoral dissertation. (UMI No. 3217159)
- Pizziconi, B. (2006). Politeness. In Mey, J. L. (Eds.) (2009) .*Concise Encyclopedia of pragmatic* .(second edition). Elsevier. PP. 706-711

- Richard, J. C, Plat, J., & Plat, H. (1992) .*Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Longman.
- Richard, J. T., & Renanday, W. A. (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology to current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, K. R., & G. Kasper. (2001). (eds.): *Pragmatic in language teaching* .New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, K.R. (2005). On the effect of instruction in second language pragmatics. *System*, 33 (3): 385-399.
- Rose, K .R., & Ng Kwai-Fun. (2001) .*Inductive and deductive approaches to the teaching of compliment and compliment responses* in K . Rose and G. Kasper (eds.): *Pragmatic in language teaching* .New York: Cambridge University Press. PP .145-70
- Schauer, G.A. (2009). *Interlanguage Pragmatic Development*. London: Continuum
- Soler, A.E. (2005). Does instruction work for learning pragmatics in the EFL context? *System*, 33,417-435
- Soler, E. A., & Martinez-FLor, A. (Eds.) (2008). *Investigating pragmatics in foreign language Learning, teaching and testing*
- Spencer-Otay, H. (Eds.) (2008). *Culturally speaking: Culture, communication, and politeness theory*. Second edition. Continuum
- Tada, M. (2005). *Assessment of EFL pragmatic production and perception using video prompt*. (UMI NO. 3176853)
- Takahashi , S. (2001). *The role of input enhancement in developing inter language pragmatic competence* in K.R. Rose and G. Kasper (eds.) *pragmatic in language teaching* .New York: Cambridge University press .PP.171-99
- Tateyama, Y. (2001). *Explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatic* in K .R. Rose and G.
- Thomas, J. (1983). Cross-cultural pragmatic failure. *Applied Linguistics* 4 (2), 91-112
- Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning pragmatics from ESL & EFL textbooks: How likely. *TESL_EJ*, 8 (2).
- Vyatkina, N. A. (2007). *Development of second language pragmatic competence: The data-driven Teaching of German modal particles based on the learner's corpus*. Doctoral Dissertation. (UMI. No. 3266216).
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

THE EFFECT OF GESTURES ON VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND RETENTION

Omid Allaf-Akbary

Adjunct Lecturer, University of Mohaghegh Ardebili, Ardebil, Iran

Zahra Mosalli

Adjunct Lecturer, University of Mohaghegh Ardebili, Ardebil, Iran

ABSTRACT

The lexicon regarded as the building blocks of any language causes some difficulty in the course of language teaching and learning. Particularly, due to lack of language input, learners in foreign language contexts experience such trouble more than those in second language contexts. On way through which the teachers can help their beginner learners to tackle such a demanding job is to accompany the target words with the related gestures. That is because such attempt brings more modality into the scene leaving more traces in the memory along with better retention of the words. The present study investigates the possible effect of gestures in vocabulary acquisition and retention. To this end, 20 children as true beginners were selected and assigned into two groups of experimental and comparison. Then, 12 frequent words of English which were able to easily “pictured” or “gestured” were put forward. Producing and repeating the words, participants in the experimental group had to gesture. However, those in the comparison group were required to show the picture of the words posed to them. Then, their answers were tallied on an individual-based approach. The answers were compared applying an independent samples t-test. The results indicated that the gesture group had a better performance in the retention of the selected words compared to the picture counterpart. This study might have messages for both language teachers and learners as well as syllabus designers. In beginning level, it is believed that books with pictures can help the learners learn the vocabulary items. Moreover, teachers can use the gestures in the class to convey the meaning of the unknown words to the learners.

KEYWORDS: Gesture, mnemonic span, retention, vocabulary learning

INTRODUCTION

Language is at the center of human life. We utilize this powerful apparatus to express our love and hatred, to chat and gossip, to praise and insult, and so forth. Without it many of our daily activities are meaningless. Interestingly, some people are able to do all these things in more than one language. Nowadays, learning a foreign language is regarded as an essential component in the curricula at different educational levels. In particular, learning the English language due to its widespread use around the world has become a necessity in our society. Gass et al. (2013) put forward an idea that “learning vocabulary is not a one-time affair. It is unrealistic to believe that a learner hears a word or, in the case of some pedagogical methods, memorized a word, with the outcome being full knowledge of the word” (p. 212).

There is unanimous agreement among the experts in the field that lexical items are the building blocks of any language (Thornbury, 2002). By referring to the issue of vocabulary as a neglected area of research put forward by Meara (1980), Boers (2013) convincingly argues that building a broad and deep foundation in vocabulary is something inescapable in the process of learning any second or foreign language including English. Therefore, one of the first and foremost responsibilities of language learners is trying to develop a broad and deep knowledge of this language component. Accordingly, the most important duty for a teacher that can have a determinant role in his succeeding, is not only to provide the students with useful words in their education but also with more general words, rich vocabulary and the skills for learning and using those words in their life (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004). Cook and Singleton (2014) claimed that “in some languages the very term for word indeed also has the sense of “speech” or “talk”. We can refer in this context also to the English expression *to have a word with someone*, which obviously means having a talk with someone rather than just uttering a single word to someone” (p. 38).

Classifying vocabulary studying into two broad areas of intentional and incidental learning, Nation (2001) states that for the former, there are a lot of techniques and activities for doing so ranging from memorization to vocabulary learning strategies to guessing from context and so on. These techniques and tactics have to be suited to learners’ levels of language proficiency, their age, personal interest and their cognitive growth. For the latter, however, extensive reading and listening have been proposed by experts including Krashen (1989). Nonetheless, research has indicated that incidental learning in terms of vocabulary tends to be a very slow process (e.g. Laufer & Roitblat-Rozovski, 2011). Spolsky et al. (2015) supported a claim that “memory for vocabulary is, in part, innate –a key element in a person’s intelligence, since verbal skills play a significant role in determining how intelligent someone is” (p. 275).

Having scratched the surface of the above claims and counterclaims, it goes without saying that, intentional learning will pay the price at least in the short run. So, one way through which the teacher can approach the burden of vocabulary teaching, the focus of the present study, is to use gestures in vocabulary learning with beginners. Generally speaking, these learners have not formed an oral foundation of the language they are learning. Therefore, it would pay the price to equip them with other less demanding tools such as gestures.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When we speak, we regularly gesture as an integral part of communicating. Broadly speaking, gesture is “a movement of the face or body which communicates meaning, such as nodding the head to mean agreement” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 246). Many spoken utterances are accompanied by gestures which support or add to their meaning. Sign language, for example, is a system of communication based entirely on gestures. Gestures can be described in terms of their formal, structural properties such as the configuration of the articulators (hands, arms, etc.), the place of articulation (gesture space), and the form of the movement (Yule, 2010).

In the second language classroom, especially when it comes to children, teachers behave in a specific way: the way they speak and the way they gesture are altered by the classroom situation and the type and level of learners (Gullberg, 2008). They slow down their speech, and they intensify the articulation of every word and of the prosodic parameters to make sure that the students will understand them better. For the same reason, they use gestures. In fact, gestures help the teacher give an odor of multimodality to the learning process, i.e. leaving a host of traces in the memory (Foster, 2009).

In addition, providing the young learners with the relevant gestures is a multidimensional process. First, it opens up the first requirement for learning vocabulary items, i.e. noticing (Schmidt, 1990). As Nation (2001) argues, in order to learning take place paying attention to linguistic items especially lexical items is necessary. In other words, learners need to consciously notice the words if the ultimate aim is to subsume those items into the system of mental lexicon (Schmitt, 2010). This noticing might be influenced by different factors including the importance of the word in the provided input, earlier encounters of linguistic items, learners conception of the efficiency of those items, and the instructor's preoccupation with the selected items (Ellis, 1990).

Closely related to the issue of noticing in vocabulary learning, is the notion of involvement load put forward by Laufer and Hulstijn (2001). Put simply, this hypothesis states that the learning, recall, and retention of vocabulary items depends on the total amount of the mental effort invested on the learning experience. In other words, the more involved the learner in learning experience, the higher the chance of learning and retaining lexical items. They argue that involvement in a task consists of three factors of need, search, and evaluation (Hulstijn and Laufer, 2001). While teaching a new word, attempt must be made to include as many of these factors as possible. Moreover, in order to have a long-lasting learning experience especially in terms of young learners, language teachers must consider the usefulness of utilizing a myriad of modalities to increase the chance of learning and long-term retention of vocabulary items (Laufer, 2005).

Language teaching experts dealing with young learners advise teachers to use gestures to illustrate their speech and thus to improve the children's understanding and memorization of the foreign language items, particularly words. As empirical findings indicate, the learning of vocabulary during second language acquisition appears to be facilitated by associating words with gestures (Kelly, McDevitt, & Esch, 2009). Specifically, learning emblematic gestures with vocabulary words (Allen, 1995), learning and producing a gesture while repeating the words (Tellier, 2007), and using gestures to provide redundant information relative to the meaning of the word by the teacher (Kelly et al., 2009), have all been demonstrated to produce significant learning and retention when compared to learning words without gestures.

It should be mentioned that the concept of gesture itself is not that much clean, neat and straightforward. Gesture can be functionally used for different purposes. For instance, Tellier (2007) argues that gestures can be employed in at least three ways: the first one is using them for classroom management purposes (e.g. initiating and ending the class hour), the second is for

evaluative aims (e.g. error correction), and the third is explanatory goals (e.g. giving explanation of new vocabulary items). It is this last category that the present study has been dedicated.

Empirical Studies

Before going to the main study some research endeavors of the previous studies are reviewed. The first relevant study that I could spot was a research by Cohen and Otterbein (1992). Working with three groups of adult subjects, their participants had to watch a video containing several different sentences in their L1 and then to write down as many sentences as they could remember in a free recall task. Each group received the same verbal input but the videos were slightly different: one just presented the sentences, the second showed somebody illustrating each sentence with pantomimic gestures, and in the last video, sentences were accompanied by non-pantomimic (i.e. meaningless) gestures. The results indicated that those subjects who were exposed to sentences illustrated by pantomimic gestures remembered significantly more sentences than subjects who did not see the gestures and subjects who saw non-pantomimic gestures.

Another related study by Allen (1995) is on the impact of gestures on memorization of L2 sentences. Allen (1995) worked with 112 American university students in French. A control group and a comparison group were shown 10 French sentences and their English equivalents on a screen and they also heard a teacher pronouncing them 3 times. The students were told to repeat them. The experimental group's procedure differed only in that the students were also provided with an illustrative gesture for each sentence, which they saw three times (with the three repetitions of the sentence) and had to reproduce. However, they did not repeat the sentences, only the gestures. Then, immediately after all 10 sequences, a posttest was given in which the teacher produced the 10 French sentences in a different order and during the pause after each sentence the subjects had to write down the English equivalent. The comparison group and the experimental group were given the gestures as well. There were 5 sessions of this kind with different groups of 10 French expressions. The results showed that the students presented with illustrative gestures recalled more sentences than the others. The experimental group who reproduced the gestures did significantly better than the comparison group who only saw them during the posttest. Therefore, this study confirmed the effect of reproducing gestures on vocabulary recall in L2 by adult learners. However, it suffers from two limitations. First, the L2 sentences were always given to the subjects with the L1 translation, but the sentences to be memorized were French idiomatic expressions which are not always directly translatable. Second, subjects were asked during the post-test to give the L1 equivalent of the L2 sentences that were only used as stimuli. The study thus does not assess how many expressions in L2 subjects have remembered with gestures, but rather how many expressions they can translate. The experiment therefore dealt mainly with passive knowledge of the vocabulary, that is, the ability to recognize and translate but not to produce the L2 items. It is therefore not clear whether gestures affect active knowledge of L2 vocabulary. It is also not known whether gestures affect the memorization of lexical items in L2 in child learners.

The other relevant study comes from Tellier (2005, cited in Tellier, 2007). It involved 32 French children with the age range of 4 to 5 who were divided into two groups. They had to watch 3

videos (each contained a list of 10 words in the L1). The children watched the videos alone with the experimenter and had to do a free recall task immediately afterwards. The three videos watched by the control group only presented them with words pronounced by a person on the screen. The first video watched by the experimental group was the same as the control group, the second video was illustrated with gestures and the third with pictures. The experimental group had significantly better results with video 2 and 3. This suggests that the use of visual modalities (pictures and gestures) improves short-term memorization in a free recall task. However, there was no statistical difference between the effect of the picture and of the gesture on memorization. In this case, gestures acted as a mere visual modality since they were only looked at.

The last similar study was conducted by Tellier (2007). Employing 42 French speaking children, it examined whether reproducing gestures has a greater impact on children's memory span than merely looking at them with the children ranging from five to six. Everything was similar to the study reviewed above except that images were not used and that children were asked to repeat the words out loud in their first language after listening to them. There were three groups for the study. A control group listened to the words and repeated them. A first experimental group (EG1) listened to the words and repeated them as well but also looked at illustrative gestures with each word. A second experimental (EG2) group was told to listen to the words, repeat them, look at the gestures and reproduce them. They were then given a free recall task. Results show that the second experimental group (EG2) did significantly better than the two other groups (control and EG1). This points to an effect of the reproduction of gestures on short-term memorization in the L1.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In order to bridge the existing empirical gap i.e., whether pictures and gestures significantly influence the process of vocabulary learning and reproduction by children using their L2 meaning system as the point of departure, based on the studies reviewed above, the aim of the present study is to investigate the role of gestures in second language learning compared to pictures, particularly in the realm of vocabulary development, i.e. vocabulary acquisition and retention by children as true beginner learners of English. More specifically, this research attempt tries to answer the following research question:

RESEARCH QUESTION

RQ: *Does gestures help the children remember the meaning of new words better than pictures?*

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Twenty children were selected from among the starter learners aspiring to learn English as a foreign language in Rezvan Language Institute in Ardabil, Iran. They were all aged 5 years. As there is a strict policy in this institute to place their language learners at the same level as

accurately as possible, based on the interview, two classes which had not studied English and did not have any previous English background were picked up as the participants of the study. Then they were placed in the so-called two groups of “picture” and “gesture”. The participants in the former formed the comparison and the latter shaped the experimental group, hence, 10 children in each group. This grouping is done this way since there are two groups each of which uses a type of treatment (picture or gesture).

Instrumentation

In this study, there were twelve words at the lower level of cognitive demand on the part of the children. They were selected in a way that would be able to be “pictured” or “gestured”. The words were: ‘book’, ‘cold’, ‘cry’, ‘drive’, ‘heart’, ‘look’, ‘scissors’, ‘snake’, ‘swim’, ‘think’, ‘walk’, ‘write’. These words were cross-checked against Longman 3000 Common Words (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2009, 5th Edition) in order to make sure that they belonged to the first thousand frequent words of English. Then, after the treatment, an individual-based assessment session was held for the children as the subjects of the study and their scores were tallied. In gesture group, the teacher showed twelve pictures and the subjects were required to present the corresponding words. It accompanies with physical movement (gestures) on the part of the teacher. However, in picture group, the teacher provided the learners with twelve pictures and they made an attempt to produce the corresponding words. Each correct answer gets one positive point out of twelve. The tests were based on counting frequency.

Data Collection

The study lasted four weeks, one session per week. In each session, four words were presented to the subjects. And the last session was used for assessment purposes. The selection of the four items in each session was done according to the notion of mnemonic span. It refers to the number of items a subject can memorize from a list heard once (Baddeley, 1999). The average score is 7 items plus/minus 2 (Miller, 1956) for an adult. However, it is lower for children and increases with age and cognitive development (Baddeley, 1999). The mnemonic span is about 2 items at the age of 2, 4 items at the age of 5, 5 at the age of 7, 6 items at the age of 9 and 7 at the age of 12 (Foster, 2009).

The children in the experimental group were given the words with the accompanying gestures pantomimed by their teacher. At the same time, they were asked to repeat each word and “gesture” the word for five times. For the comparison group, the subjects were supposed to see the pictures and repeat the corresponding words. Since both experimental and control groups had their own specific treatment, namely “learning by **gesture** for experimental group and learning by **picture** for comparison group”, hence, the design of the research is *comparison group design*. After completing the treatment cycle, they were assessed on their ability to remember those words in the fourth session of the last week of the treatment phase. In other words, to see the strength of the associative learning in two modes (picture vs. gesture), the same subjects were tested on the same words; recording the results. Finally, the two pieces of the assessment were cross-checked against each other using a t-test to see any significant difference on the effect of gesture in vocabulary learning and retention. However, it needs to be mentioned that, in the

course of treatment during other sessions, the participants in both groups were busy learning the English alphabet.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this section is to determine if the variation observed among the mean scores of the two groups participating in the study was larger than would be expected by chance. The scores of the retention assessment were fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. Then using a t-test the two groups were compared to spot any possible statistically significant difference. What follows is first the descriptive statistics table then the table of t-test:

Table 1: Group Statistics

Grouping		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score	Experimental "Gesture"	10	6.20	1.033	.327
	Comparison "Picture"	10	4.10	.994	.314

As the Table 1 shows, the total number of subjects is 20 (in fact two groups 10 each). The mean scores for experimental (gesture) and comparison group (picture) are 6.20 and 4.10 respectively with the standard deviations of 1.033 for the former and .994 for the latter group. At first glance, as the mean scores indicate, there is a perceptible difference between the participants in terms of their performance on the retention of the mentioned 12 words which were the basis of the assessment. But the question is: Does this difference reach statistical significance or not? To this end, an independent samples t-test is run in order to pinpoint any possible significant difference from a statistical point of view:

Table 2: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Score	Equal variances assumed	.151	.702	4.632	18	.000	2.100	.453	Lower	Upper
	Equal variances not assumed			4.632	17.974	.000	2.100	.453	1.147	3.053

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it was mentioned earlier, the purpose of the assessment was to examine whether children were able to produce the English words by looking at the pictures or gestures in a different order than the one of the repetitions and had to name them. The picture group gave a mean of 4.10 correct

words ($SD = .9941.17$) and the gesture group 6.20 words ($SD = 1.033$). The difference between the means of answers of both groups was thus 2.10 words. As it can be observed from the Table 3.2, the F value is .151 which means that we have not violated t-test's assumption in this regard (Dörnyei, 2007). Based on the results of Table 3.2, the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is .000 which is an indication of a significant difference between the experimental and comparison groups. Therefore, it should be determined which line in the table should be used in reporting the results. It is shown that the value of Sig. is .702 which is larger than .05. So the first line of the table is reported. Taking a look at the first line, it is obvious that Sig. (2-tailed) is .000 and less than .05. As a result, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and comparison groups. In other words, the results of the independent samples t-test confirmed that the observed difference was significant and revealed the effect of the reproduction of gestures on the retention of the mentioned words.

As it was inferred in our research question, the experimental (gesture) group did have a good performance compared to the comparison (picture) group in recalling the mentioned 12 words. It seems that when several modalities are combined in teaching and learning vocabulary items the ultimate achievement is accomplished by more efficiency and effectiveness. This findings is in line with the results of the studies reviewed above. Therefore, the take-home message of the present study for teachers is to involve the children in process of learning as wholly as possible. In other words, the teachers should involve children both physically and mentally to take advantage of the best of the both worlds.

It is necessary to mention that the findings of the present study and similar studies must be interpreted with caution. Even if the findings in the literature in this domain are somewhat contradictory, it would nevertheless be interesting to assess the impact of gestures on the memorization of different classes of words in second language acquisition. For instance, one may wonder whether or not action verbs are easier to memorize with gestures than nouns. This is because some research seems to suggest that some words are learned differently that others (Nation, 2001) based on their distinct characteristics.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study aimed to examine the effect of gestures on the acquisition and retention of the English vocabulary by the young children who were true beginners. As it turned out, the gesture group outperformed the picture group in recalling the twelve target lexical items. The superiority of gestures over pictures can be attributed to the number of modality that they include. Gestures involve the three modes of modality, i.e. auditory, motor, and visual (Tellier, 2007). The first one deals with the teacher repetition of the pronunciation of the words while providing the relevant gestures. The second one refers to body movement as the gesture is employed. And finally, the third one refers to being able to see gesture while producing the relevant word. This is in line with the trace theory of memory (Baddeley, 1999) which argues that if a phenomenon leaves more traces in the memory chances are that will be remembered with a high probability. However, when these traces are in different modes of modality they make the tracing process in memory richer and facilitate retention.

Therefore, involving the body in the learning process is relevant in the classroom which is the cornerstone of some language teaching methods such as Total Physical Response (Richards & Rogers, 2001). However, to make best of the gesture world, the language teacher should make sure that the children reproduce the gestures while repeating the words; otherwise, they will not have the desired and desirable effects. All this is done in order to have a mixed complementary effect on the process of tracing in the memory which helps the memorization of words be approached easily and much more efficiently. Of course, it should be born in mind that when it comes to vocabulary learning, all words are memorizable but some words are more memorizable than others. For example, in the experimental (gesture) group, the two items of 'cry' and 'walk' had the maximum frequency among other words (seven for the former and eight for the latter). Or in the comparison (picture) group, the highest frequency went to 'book' and 'cry' with six for the former and five for the latter (See the Appendix). All in all, as it we saw in the Results, those subjects in the "gesture" group remembered more words than the counterpart group. Therefore, we can conclude that gestures speak louder than pictures in vocabulary learning and retention for children.

Language teachers particularly those who are busy with teaching kids have to remember the findings of the present research endeavor. They must try as far as possible to make use of gesture in their classrooms. As it went earlier, this helps to have an active classroom in which their learners energetically spend their full potential on learning new stuff. Consequently, this investment of energy results in more learning and retention on the part of children. In addition, it leads to a favorable environment which is conducive to have a better and long-lasting learning. Furthermore, the materials developers and syllabus designers should attempt to include in the initial modules of their materials those words being capable of easily gestured or pictured in order to have an optimum learning rate.

Suggestions for further research

The results of the present study must be interpreted with caution. In other words, it suffers from some limitations which need to be addressed in other replication studies. One of those limitations is the number of participants. Examining 10 children in each group of experimental and comparison puts the findings of the study in danger when it comes to external validity. Also, as it went earlier, the mnemonic span is different for children at different age ranges. Therefore, trying to replicate the study with children of different ages is desirable. Another issue is the type of words. Some words are remembered better due to their length, a good denotation or connotation or their equivalents in the source language (Nation, 2001). Another issue is the number of repetition in each attempt. For example, the mean of remembered words in the picture group was 4.10 out of 12. One possible explanation for this small number is the number of repetition which was five in the present study.

REFERENCES

- Allen, L. Q. (1995). The effects of emblematic gestures on the development and access of mental representations of French expressions. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 521-529
- Baddeley, A. D. (1999). *Essentials of human memory*. Psychology Press: Hove.

- Boers, F (2013). Cognitive linguistic approaches to teaching vocabulary: Assessment and integration. *Language Teaching*, 46, 208-224.
- Cohen, R. L., & Otterbein, N. (1992). The mnemonic effect of speech gestures: Pantomimic and non-pantomimic gestures compared. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, 4(2), 113 -139.
- Cook & Singleton (2014). *Key topics in second language acquisition*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1990). *Instructed second language acquisition*. Basil Blackwell: Oxford.
- Foster, J. K. (2009). *Memory: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gass, S., with Behney, J., & Plonsky, L. (2013). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (4th ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Gullberg, M. (2008). Gestures and second language acquisition. In N. C. Ellis & P. Robinson (Eds.), *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition* (pp. 276–305). London: Routledge.
- Hulstijn, J. H., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 51, 539–558.
- Kelly, S. D., McDevitt, T., & Esch, M. (2009). Brief training with co-speech gesture lends a hand to word learning in a foreign language. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 24, 313-334.
- Krashen, S. D. (1989). We acquire vocabulary and spelling by reading: Additional evidence for the input hypothesis. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73, 440–464.
- Laufer, B. (2005). Focus on form in second language vocabulary learning. *EUROSLA Yearbook*, 5, 223–250.
- Laufer, B., & Hulstijn, J. H. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: The construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 1–26.
- Laufer, B., & Roitblat-Rozovski, B. (2011). Incidental vocabulary acquisition: The effects of task type, word occurrence and their combination. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(4), 391–411.
- Meara, P. (1980). Vocabulary acquisition: A neglected area of language learning. *Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts*, 13, 221-246.
- Miller, G. A. (1956). The magical number seven, plus or minus two: Some limits on our capacity for processing information. *Psychological Review*, 63, 81-97.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pikulski, J. J., & Templeton, S. (2004). *Teaching and developing vocabulary: Key to long term reading success*. Available at www.eduplace.com.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th ed.). London: Longman.
- Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 129-158.

Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. London: Palgrave.

Spolsky, B., Inbar-Lourie, O. & Tennenbaum, M. (2015). *Challenges for language education and policy: Making space for people*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Tellier, M. (2007). How do teacher's gestures help young children in second language acquisition? *Proceedings of the meeting of International Society of Gesture Studies, ISGS 2005: Interacting Bodies, June 15–18, ENS Lyon, France*. <http://gesture-lyon2005.ens-lsh.fr/IMG/pdf/TellierFINAL.pdf>

Yule, G. (2010). *The study of language* (4th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix: The frequency count of the answers

E(G) Group	book	cold	cry	drive	heart	look	scissors	snake	swim	think	walk	write	Total
1	×	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	5
2	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	7
3	✓	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	6
4	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	5
5	✓	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	✓	7
6	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	7
7	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	6
8	×	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	5
9	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
10	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	6
	6	6	7	6	4	3	4	3	5	3	8	7	

C(P) Group	book	cold	cry	drive	heart	look	scissors	snake	swim	think	walk	write	Total
1	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	3
2	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	4
3	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	5
4	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	3

5	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	4
6	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	4
7	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	6
8	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	4
9	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	5
10	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	3
	6	4	5	4	2	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CALL AS A COGNITIVE STRATEGY IN RENDERING EFL LEARNERS TO ENGAGE LEARNERS IN READING COMPREHENSION

Maryam Meshkat, Associate professor in TEFL
Shahid Rajaee Teacher Training University, Tehran, Iran
Email: maryammeshkat@yahoo.com

Roghayeh Mohammadpoor, MA Student in TEFL
Shahid Rajaee Teacher Training University, Tehran, Iran
Email: rmohammadpoor14@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Decades of research has supported strategy instruction and; by the same token, the integration of technology into different aspects of language learning seems to be worthwhile or perhaps an indispensable part of language learning and teaching. Hence, the present study investigates the effect of computer-assisted language learning or technology-based approach as a kind of strategy invested in order to enhance Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension by engaging the learners in the task. To this end, 60 grade three EFL learners of a highschool in one of the districts of Tehran were selected on the basis of an availability sampling procedure. Readings were instructed to the experimental group by applying Information and Communication Technology (ICT); however, the control group was taught the readings in the traditional way using only the book. To investigate the learners' improvement, a t-test was run. The results of the posttest were significantly different, accordingly ($p < .05$). Based on the findings of the study, technology enhanced instruction in the field of language learning particularly in reading comprehension contributes to EFL learners' accomplishments in the task. In addition, the teachers are proposed to be aware of their learners' needs and interests; in this regard, the teachers themselves act like major decision makers who ought to employ strategies to solve learning problems and facilitate language learning in order to have successful learners in their classes. Finally, research demonstrates that CALL is required to be an essential part of learning and teaching.

KEYWORDS: Computer assisted language learning, technology, strategies, reading comprehension, engaged learner.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research study is to investigate the impact of technology; in other words, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on teaching English readings in an EFL setting. A setting like Iran in which reading, as one of the significant and major sources of input to EFL learners, plays an essential role in language learning. On the other hand, as it is evident,

the Iranian EFL learners especially the ones receiving English instructions at schools, come across serious problems dealing with English readings.

Based on the researchers' careful observations, the students consider reading as a difficult and complicated activity; consequently, they tend to show no interest, or better say, unwilling to deal with English readings. Thus, the researchers made an attempt to find a solution and exert a strategy in order to facilitate language learning and render the learners into interested and diligent students who wish to solve their language learning problem. Accordingly, technology based approach is utilized, due to the fact that one of the important outcomes of a study done by UK Research on ICT-based program was to change the learners' attitudes, ultimately led to learning and learner achievement in the related field (Marzban, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Logic behind Technology and Engaged Learner

Technology and its relation with education was once declared by Ehrmann who persuaded other researchers to set forth some relevant questions about the usefulness of technology on education in 1997 (Ehrmann, 1997).

The sole concept of technology is not functioning alone; nevertheless, it is capable of presenting language teachers the chance to think about their classrooms, teaching and learning goals, what and hows of learning, and learner needs; finally, find the answers to the aforementioned questions and apply technology where it is required (Egbert, 2007). It is worth mentioning that technology needs to be integrated to education in regard with learning and instructional goals.

The main goal, according to the teachers, is language learning. Moreover, it is preparing a learning environment which enhances language learning. To achieve this goal, they may use a tool like technology. Likewise, learning goals must be taken into account the time when personal goals for studying a language is discussed. For doing a task, other factors such as individual differences, competencies, and motivations should also be considered. Finally, teachers as researchers ought to realize the necessity of being proficient in '21st century skills' (Egbert, 2005). The skills, according to Egbert, are: knowledge acquisition, problem solving, critical thinking, production, inquiry, communication, and creative thinking. These skills should be emphasized without which the learners will not be prepared for their future lives.

Based on Egbert (2005), the skills are comprising the main part of the learning and playing a major role for learners' goals in such technology-filled lives where teachers as experts need to choose, adjust, and then, if the need arises produce 'technology based media'. For changing the students into engaged learners, the teachers should cast utmost attention on the learners' needs, wants, and interests. Further, according to McKenzie (1998), students can be supposed as engaged learners if they participate in real life tasks, interactive learning, discovery learning, collaborative learning, strategic learning and at the last point, take responsibility of their language learning task.

As Meltzer and Hamann (2004) argued, the teacher can rely on three helpful strategies for engaging the learners in the activity. The strategies comprised of establishing a class environment in which real life and authentic activities regarding the learners who should be involved and interacted in the tasks which are also 'challenging and differentiated'. Differentiated tasks remarked since according to the scholars, all of the learners should achieve the one similar goal but they may have different ways to achieve that goal.

Technology (here computers) can support language learners or learning and also language teachers in creating 'language and content resources' entailing a great deal of variety, interaction, a very big database and inquiry, problem solving, supporting 'multimedia input', and at the end, meaningful learning (Egbert, 2007).

In addition, Egbert (2007) demonstrates the advantages of technology use. To begin with, it is mainly used for making language learning more efficient. It can be repeated endlessly and quickly, function as a nonhuman instructor which is also objective one, providing plenty of resources for learner choices. Further, they are designed to motivate the learners and prepare the means for the learners to master the basic skill (Kleiman, 2001).

Since reading is not an easy activity, if it is particularly set out without considering different levels of reading ability, can lead to reluctant but not engaged readers. For engaged readers, Egbert (2007) proposes 'Thinking Reader Software' as a sample software for the teachers to utilize for teaching reading effectively.

Cognitive Strategies

The current study is discussing strategies from a new dimension. Strategies and their application were discussed since 1970s (O'Mally & Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1975). Based on Oxford (1990), strategies are supposed to be related to the main goal of language learning, often a conscious effort aimed to solve problems.

Among Oxford strategies, cognitive strategies, as direct strategies are strongly deemed to be necessary for both comprehension and production. From strategy classification, using resources for receiving and sending messages listed as a subpart of receiving and sending messages is one of the cognitive strategies applied to four skills and thought to bring benefits to language learners. In addition, application of technology is previously mentioned in the practicing part. Further, it is suggested to be among 'a nonprint resource' which is employed to gain the meaning of what is heard or read in the target language and produce messages in the target language as well. Using such resources can also aid the learners to get ready for speaking skills (Oxford, 1990).

CALL

Computer assisted language learning (CALL), a recent matter of debate has been used so extensively every where, ranging from homes to workplaces, that language teachers now commence to think about the way they can exploit the computers for language learning (Warschauer, 1996). In order to grasp CALL, its development, and the way it is used for language learning, a brief overview on the history of CALL which entails examining the

following three phases of CALL apparently needed to be discussed. According to Warschauer (1996), the phases are Behavioristic CALL, Communicative CALL, and Integrative CALL.

History of CALL

Behavioristic CALL

Although Behavioristic CALL existed in 1950s, it came into use in 1960s and 1970s. The period comprised of programs targeted to provide repetitive language drills which were called 'drill and practice' (also 'drill and kill'). 'PLATO' system is one of the examples of Behavioristic CALL. It entails doing vocabulary drills, grammar explanations, and translation tests many times (Ahmad et al, 1985).

Communicative CALL

The second phase of CALL, Communicative CALL, began with the advent of communicative approach in the 1970s and 80s, the time when the need for real life communication instead of mechanical drills in Behavioristic CALL existed. The logic of Communicative CALL was to design the activities with the purpose of building 'intrinsic motivation' and establishing 'interaction' between the learners themselves and computers as well (Stevens, 1989 cited in Warschauer, 1996).

During the Communicative CALL, three kinds of CALL programs were utilized. In the first program, the computer is working like a 'tutor' in an extensive way. Based on Taylor and Perez (1989), the second model of communicative period entails computers working both as a tutor and 'stimulus' designed to stimulate the learners' participation in authentic activities and critical thinking. 'Sim City' is one of the programs related to the second model. In the third model, computer is called a 'workhorse' or a tool which supports language learning through enabling the learners to use the language. Among the examples of this period, 'concordancers' acting like a tool or means used for learning (Taylor and Perez, 1989).

Integrative CALL

The foundation of Integrative CALL is decided by two technological resources, 'multimedia' and 'Internet'. Through multimedia or 'hypermedia', the learners find their own way by using a mouse. In this case, the learners will benefit in some ways. In addition to creating real world environment for the learners, it brings skills together in one activity. 'Dustin' as one of the examples, designed to represent the actions, a student arriving at U.S.A airport take at different parts of the airport (Schank and Cleary, 1995). Another technology of integrative period is the Internet or 'Computer Mediated Communication' (CMC) which helps the users send and receive information they wish by using emails. They can also use web for a variety of purposes.

In spite of the fact that CALL and its use is becoming widespread, the case of 'normalization' of technology in education and classrooms has not occurred completely. Based on Bax (2003), normalization happens when technology is getting one part of the individuals' daily life as CALL (Book Assisted Language Learning) and PALL (Pen Assisted Language Learning) have already become; plus, when individuals are working with computers with no fear and acting like a normal part of their life. The last point, normalization happens when it becomes a part of learning by

examining learner needs first and then applying technology in order to serve those needs (Bax, 2003).

Reading Comprehension

English has recently been considered as one of the most significant subjects the educational system of Iran; consequently, it has been one of the necessary subjects taught at all levels of study. Among the four language skills, reading is supposed to be one the crucial skills for EFL learners. As Richards and Schmidt (2010, p.483) state "reading is an activity of perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents. This can be done silently (silent reading). The understanding that results, is called reading comprehension". In addition, many methods of teaching reading have been implemented so far. However, the results yield success with some of methods with a specific group of learners (Hassanzadeh, 2013). Based on National Education Act of 1999: (as cited in Wichadee, 2011, p.1), "In organizing the learning process, educational institution and agencies concerned, shall provide substance and activities in line with the learners' interests and aptitudes, bearing in mind individual differences".

RESEARCH QUESTION

Therefore this study aims to find an answer to the following research question.

Research Question: Does CALL and technology affect Iranian EFL learners reading comprehension positively?

In line with the above research question, the following null hypothesis was posed:

Null Hypothesis: CALL and technology does not affect Iranain EFL learners reading comprehension positively.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of computer assissted language learning and technology on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. The method of the study including the participants, instrumentation, procedure, design, and data analysis are explained.

Participants

For the sake of this study, sixty participants were chosen from among 75 female grade 3 students studying English at grade three in one of the highschoools of Robat Karim (one of the districts of Tehran in Iran). Their age range was approximately 16-17 years. Having used the quasi-experimental group research design, the researcher assigned two grade three classes to the control (n = 30) and the experimental group (n = 30), arbitrarily.

Instrumentation

The main purpose of the study was to find the impact of utilizing technology in EFL classrooms on reading comprehension ability. In this regard, three instruments were employed. They can be explained as follows:

Proficiency Test

A Proficiency Test namely, Nelson 100A English Proficiency Test was administered to guarantee the homogeneity of the subjects. A pilot study had also been done with 30 female grade three students of the same highschool in order to check the reliability of the test before it was administered to the participants of the study. Accordingly, Cronbach's Alpha reflecting reliability turned out to be 0.80.

Reading Comprehension Test

A test of reading from PET was selected from the Preliminary English Test and administered as the pre-test and post-test. The reliability and validity of the test were supported and determined by University of Cambridge ESOL. To further check the reliability of the mentioned test, it was piloted among 30 grade three students of that highschool. The resulting reliability which was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, yielded a higher reliability that was 0.77. It should also be claimed that the readability of these reading tests and the readings used in the study were both checked to ensure that the reading tests selected for this test were at the level of examinees.

Students' Textbook

The reading materials selected to be taught in this research study were all chosen from grade three English book in highschool. The book includes 6 reading comprehension passages. Both control and experimental groups were taught the same passages; however, as noted before, the readings were taught to the experimental group applying powerpoints and multimedias made by the teacher herself.

Procedure

The following steps were taken in order to test the research hypothesis of this study:

In order to homogenize the participants in this study, the standard Nelson 100A Test was administered at the outset of the study after being piloted. It consisted of 50 multiple choice items of knowledge of English structures. The time allotted to take the test was 30 minutes and the scoring was estimated out of 50. In this respect, sixty participants were chosen from 75 female grade three students as target participants of the research and divided into two control and experimental groups, 30 participants in each group. After considering the reliability of the reading test and estimating the readability of the reading materials in order to ensure they are close to each other, one of the tests in PET was chosen and first piloted among other students and then administered to the participants as the pretest, including 5 parts followed by 35 multiple choice questions. The time allotted was 35 minutes (one minute for each question). The participants in the experimental groups had 8 sessions of treatment between the pretest and posttest. As mentioned before, the experimental group was instructed applying technology; accordingly, the readings were taught using powerpoints and multimedia program. The powerpoints were made up to combine sound, images, and written text together in order to keep the learners motivated for better outcomes. At the end of the experiment, the reading test was given to two groups again to find out if there are any significant differences caused by the treatments.

Design

This study was conducted through a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design. It was non-randomized because both control and experimental groups were selected from already formed groups of TEFL learners.

Data analysis

In order to test the hypothesis formulated in this study an independent t-test was used. It was used to examine the effect of technology on the students' reading comprehension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To probe the effect of technology-enhanced instruction on the improvement of the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners, an independent t-test was applied to analyze the data coming from pretest and posttest as well. As displayed in Table 1, the assumption of normality of groups before the treatment was met through the results of t-test in the pretest ($p > .05$).

Table 1: Independent t-test: Pretest of Reading Comprehension

Pretest	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.457	.122	-.518	58	.606	-1.23333	2.37907	-5.99555	3.52889
Equal variances not assumed			-.518	56.630	.606	-1.23333	2.37907	-5.99801	3.53134

As revealed in Table 2, the experimental group ($M = 24.1333$) showed a higher mean in comparison with the control group on the posttest of reading comprehension after controlling for the possible effect of the pretest. This was followed by the control group ($M = 16.5000$)

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics; Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	CONTROL	30	16.5000	8.02904	1.46590
	EXPERIMENTAL	30	24.1333	7.16184	1.30757

Based on the results displayed in Table 3, $p < .05$, representing a large effect size, it can be concluded that technology-enhanced instruction had a significant effect on the EFL learners' reading comprehension. Thus the null-hypothesis that technology-enhanced instruction does not affect the learners' reading comprehension positively **was rejected**.

Table 3: Independent t-test: Posttest of Reading Comprehension

Posttest	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.065	.800	-3.886	58	.000	-7.63333	1.96433	-11.56536	-3.70130
Equal variances not assumed			-3.886	57.258	.000	-7.63333	1.96433	-11.56645	-3.70022

According to the results of this study, it can be argued that CALL affects the learners' reading comprehension positively; further, it caused a noticeable improvement in their reading comprehension. Also, according to the researchers' vigilant observation, technology integrated instruction could help the learners remain involved and engaged in the task. This finding is in full agreement with Marzban (2010). The researcher surveyed the improvement of the learners in reading comprehension through CALL. The results of his study revealed that CALL could significantly affect the learners' reading comprehension. Further, Smith (2000) asserted that CALL programs facilitate learning with respect to speed, individualized instruction, authenticity, efficiency, and administration (cited in Marzban, 2011). As a final point, the findings of some other research studies support this study in the way that all claim a positive relation between achievement in English and technology. (Navdal, 2007; Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2011; Satharasinghe, 2004; Taylor et al., 1999).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, technology enhanced instruction in the field of language learning especially in reading comprehension contributes to EFL learners' accomplishments in the task. Accordingly, utilizing technology as a type of strategy is intended to make learning more effective and aid the learners in order to become engaged in the reading task. In addition, as noted before, research demonstrates that CALL is required to be a part of learning and teaching or perhaps an indispensable part quickly. The results of this study may also bring some important implications for EFL teachers and specifically for Education Office. First, teachers should be aware of their learners' needs and interests; in this regard, the teachers themselves act like major decision makers. Nonetheless, this study proposes technology-enhanced language learning and teaching in order to make the learners both interested and involved in the language learning task.

Second, Education Office is suggested to hold several theoretical and practical workshops on CALL for some reasons. Since the researchers, as teachers, believe that for keeping the students as engaged learners, they ought to employ strategies or tactics in order to solve learning problems and facilitate language learning in their classes as well. Like wise, the workshops are recommended to be held in order to eradicate the teachers' computer anxiety (esp. those who are immigrants of CALL), make the teachers acquainted with CALL and how it works in language classes, and instruct them how to utilize CALL, for instance, by making their own powerpoints and multimedias in order to have successful language learners. However, the current study encountered a few limitations. This study did not compare two genders; all of the subjects were female; moreover, the center of attention in this study was mainly restricted to teaching the readings in the learners' highschool book; the teacher wished to teach some other new and authentic readings outside the book but due to the case of time limitations, it was not possible.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad K., Corbett G., Rogers M., & Sussex R. (1985). *Computers, Language eLearning and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bax, S. (2003). CALL-past, present, and future. *System*, 31, 13-28.
- Egbert, J. (2005). *CALL Essentials: Principles and Practice in CALL Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL, Inc.
- Egbert, J. (2007). *Supporting Learning with Technology: Essentials of Classroom Practice*. Columbus, OH: Pearson/Merrill.
- Ehrmann, S. (1997). Engines of inquiry: Asking the right questions: What does research tell us about technology and higher learning? Retrieved October 30, 2006, from <http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/guide/ehrmann>.
- Hassanzadeh, A. (2013). *The Effect of Self Directed Language Learning on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension*. MA thesis, Shahid Rajaei University, Tehran. Iran.
- Kleiman, G. (2001). Myths and realities about technology in K-12 schools. In D. Gorden (ed.), *The Digital Classroom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Letter.
- Marzban, A. (2011). Improvement of reading comprehension through computer-assisted language learning in Iranian intermediate EFL students. *Procedia Computer Science*, 3, 3-10.
- McKenzie, J. (1998). Grazing the net: Raising a generation of free range students. *Phi Delta Kappan* 80, 26-31. Online version available at <http://fn.org/text/grazing.html>.
- Meltzer, J., & Hamann, E. (2004). *Meeting the Literacy Development Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners through Content Area Learning. Part One: Focus on Motivation and Engagement*. Providence, RI: The Brown University Education Alliance/Northeast and Islands Regional Education Laboratory.
- Navdal, F. (2007). Home-PC usage and achievement in English. *Computers & Education*. vol. 49, 1112-1121.
- O'Mally, J. M., & Chamot, A. U., (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Oxford, R.L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Rahimi, M., & Yadollahi, S. (2011). Success in learning English as a foreign language as a predictor of computer anxiety. *Procedia Computer Science*, 3, 175-182.
- Richards J. C., & Schmidt, R. 2010. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (4th edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the "good language learner" can teach us? *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 41-51.
- Satharasinghe, A. (2004). *Computer literacy of Sri Lanka*. Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka. Available online at: [www. Statistics.gov.lk/cls2004/index.htm](http://www.Statistics.gov.lk/cls2004/index.htm).
- Schank, R.C., & Cleary C. (1995). *Engines for education*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Taylor, C., Kirsch, I., Eignor, D., & Jamieson, J. (1999). Examining the relationship between computer familiarity and performance on computer-based language tasks. *Language Learning*, vol. 49, 219-274.
- Taylor, M.B., & Perez, L.M. (1989). *Something to do on Monday*, La Jolla, CA: Athelstan.
- Warschauer, M. (1996) Computer Assisted Language Learning: An Introduction. In S. Fotos (Ed.), *Multimedia Language Teaching* (3-20) Tokyo: Logos.
- Wichadee, S. (2011). Developing The Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model to enhance English reading ability and self-directed learning of undergraduate students. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning*, 8(12), 43-52. Retrieved from: journals.cluteonline.com/index.php/TLC.

FACTORS AFFECTING CALL INTEGRATION IN ELEMENTARY EFL COURSES: IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

Malihe Sangarzadeh

Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch
Department of English, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
Corresponding author email: malihesangarzadeh@gmail.com

Farhad Fahandezh Saadi Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This study examined English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' perceptions of factors affecting their integration of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in the classrooms. The data was collected through questionnaires distributed to fifty EFL teachers who taught elementary level of Students' proficiency in five different English language institutions in Bandar Abbas, Iran. In order to get in-depth results, interview was conducted by fifteen EFL teachers based on the results of the questionnaire. The results revealed the positive perceptions of teachers toward the use of computer and also the finding indicated the positive perceptions of the factors that affect their teaching. The results promise implications for renewing EFL programs and teacher training/ education courses. It is hoped that the outcomes of this study can be used in shaping innovational practices in the Iranian EFL Educational System.

KEYWORDS: EFL Teachers' Perceptions, Computer Assisted- Language – Learning (CALL)

INTRODUCTION

Computers are increasingly widespread, influencing many aspects of our social and work lives, as well as many of our leisure activities. As different tasks involve human computer interaction, computer skills and knowledge have become more positively correlated with both occupational and personal success. In most cases, the teacher is key to effective implementation of the use of computers in the educational system and they have tremendous potential to transmit perceptions and values to students, it is important to understand the biases and stereotypes that teachers may hold about the use of computers and the factors that act as facilitators to teachers' positive computer usage (Askar & Umay, 2001). Therefore, the decision regarding whether and how to use computer technology for instruction rests on the shoulders of classroom teachers.

In the literature, few studies have been accomplished in order to investigate what makes English language teachers use computer, the internet materials, resources and software in the language classroom. In order to help language teachers learn about and use technology effectively, we need to know more about the transfer of CALL experience, background and knowledge to the classroom. More specifically, we need to know to what extent computer attributes (availability, complexity, relative advantage, observability, and finally trainability) on the one hand and

teachers' perceptions, computer competence, influence teachers' use of the computers in the language classrooms (Albirini, 2004).

The perceptions of teachers play an important role in educational interaction as well as instructional choices and as such are fundamental in examining the outcome of technological integration in the classroom (Albion & Ertmer, 2002; Becker, Ravitz, & Wong, 1999; Pajares, 1992). In fact, teachers' perceptions of technology have been found to be among the most critical variables in predicting the successful use of technology during educational activities (Becker et al., 1999).

A growing number of studies on CALL focus on CALL-classroom comparisons (e.g., Gerosa, & Giuliani, 2008), students' perceptions and attitudes of CALL. Clearly, previous research already offers new insights that come through vividly from students' own voices and experiences in CALL environments. However, To the best knowledge of the researcher, very limited research has been undertaken to evaluate the perceptions of language teachers on the implementation of CALL. Furthermore, while there is still limited research addressing the perceptions of EFL teachers toward the implementation of CALL. (Aydinli & Elaziz, 2010; Wiebe & Kabata, 2010). The present study is designed to examine Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of the use of CALL. The study findings offer important insights for Iranian EFL teachers who want to support their language classrooms with technology such as computers, multimedia, the Internet, and educational software. Also, this study will provide information that proves effective to teachers embracing CALL integration for a wide range of teaching English. Finally, understanding the different qualities of teachers' roles in CALL-enhanced language learning classrooms might aid teachers in implementing effective CALL curricula for EFL students. More specifically, this study explores the factors that affect implementation of CALL in EFL classrooms in Iran; (b) Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of CALL in EFL classrooms in Iran and whether Iranian EFL teachers have a clear-cut understanding of the roles of teachers in CALL classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous literature on the attitudes of EFL instructors has shown that EFL instructors have positive perceptions of the integration of CALL in teaching languages. To begin with, Cope and Ward (2002), conducted a study on perceptions of CALL of experienced teachers, asserted that teachers with little or no professional development in the use of technology in the classroom were less likely to use it in the classroom and were less likely to see the benefit of technology usage in the classroom. Royer (2002) found that the more teachers were involved in actually setting up classroom technology the more likely they were to use that technology for instruction (Royer, 2002). This is why it is important for teachers to receive technology skill training. This is not to say that the progress of technology use in the classroom changes the role of the teacher. Wang (2002) found that teachers saw their roles as being more teachers centered and fewer students centered in classrooms that did not have computers. However, teachers did not think that they would teach differently or that their roles would be different in a classroom with computers. Alshumaimeri (2008) found the positive correlation between a teacher's attendance during training, both for computer as well as CALL, and a positive attitude toward the use of IT

approaches to learning in the Saudi classroom. He also, recommended actions include specialized training for EFL teachers who are required to integrate CALL into regular classroom instruction. Teachers are seen to be active agents in the process of changes and implementation of new ideas as their perceptions may support or impede the success of any educational reform such as an innovative technology program or the integration of technology to support teaching and learning (Woodrow, 1991). Thus, attention has recently been paid to the role of teachers in technology supporting classrooms, some researchers focused on the relationship between teachers' perceptions and technology integration. Some researchers have directly examined teachers' perceptions of CALL in various linguistic contexts. For example, Burnett (1998) conducted a case-study evaluation of teachers' attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs toward a writing program called Assistant Francais in the computer-equipped French classroom. This study found that studied teachers had diverse experiences of the implementation of computer into language teaching in classrooms. Teachers preferred to use students' first language (English) to explain technical vocabulary and provide lesson instructions in the belief that this will make content comprehensible for language learners. Specifically, "teaching students how to use the computer programs was considered more important" than teaching the second language (Burnett, 1998, p.114). As a result, teachers focus on students' learning product instead of learning process in computer-equipped classrooms. Kessler and Plakans (2008) explored seven ESL/EFL teachers' attitudes, and confidence in using CALL with a particular emphasis on digital audio and video in ESL classrooms. The findings indicated that the participants were integrating CALL in their course assignments. Specifically, they used audio or video for teachers' feedback, listening or speaking assessment, and students' self-assessment or self-study. To be more exact, the participants only used audio or video as an assessment tool. In terms of the types and levels of confidence, Kessler and Plakans (2008) divided them into three categories: highly confident, contextually, and less confident, and summarized his findings: "high confidence is not synonymous with high/integrated use" and "the teachers who used audio the most in integrated ways were those expressing contextual confidence" (p.278). The highly confident teachers spent less time using CALL than contextually confident and less confident teachers. Kessler and Plakans (2008) further suggested that teachers should start thinking about the importance of familiarizing themselves with technology for language teaching through repetitive practices. In addition, having time for practice, high quality of instructions and technical supports are needed. Park and Son (2009) conducted a study on the perceptions of Korean in-service EFL teachers of the use of CALL. The authors found that the teachers have positive perceptions of the use of CALL in EFL courses. The EFL teachers believed that computers were very beneficial to provide sufficient input as well as authentic materials and contexts for students. In another study on the perceptions of Arabic and English teachers on the use of technology in their classes in schools of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Ismail, Almekhlafi (2010), using questionnaires and interviews, found that the teachers were agreed with integration of technology in their teaching.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1 What are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of the factors affecting their integration of CALL in the classrooms?
2. What are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of their integration of CALL in the classroom?

3. What are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles in CALL integrated classrooms?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of fifty EFL teachers volunteer were selected to participate in the study. All of them were experienced teachers working at Shokooh, Dana, Farhikhtegan, Ariya, Arta language institutes in Bandar Abbas. Iran. The sample was comprised of twenty five male and twenty five female teachers, identical in number (ranging from 20-40 years) and their teaching experience ranged from 3 years to 13 years while their experience in using computers for work-related purposes ranged from 4 years to 6 years.

Instruments

Questionnaire

The design of questionnaire came from previous research on computer- assisted – language learning (Albirini, 2004; Bordbar, 2010; Dashtestani, 2012& Sahin Kiozil, 2011).The33 items questionnaire consisted of two parts based on five points Likert Scale format with ('Strongly Agree', 'Agree', Neutral, 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree') was used. The questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part dealt with background information of the participants (ages and level for students; years of teaching experience and which language skills and CALL applications integrated in their teaching).

The second part was about the factors that influence CALL integration in their classrooms, general perceptions of using CALL and teachers' perceptions of their roles in CALL classrooms with sub scales of "Perceived experiences with CALL", "The roles of ESL and EFL teachers" and "The factors affecting teachers' CALL integration". The content validity of the questionnaire was established by a panel of three EFL experts. To determine the reliability of questionnaire Cronbach Alpha analyses were conducted as measures of consistency and a reasonably high rang of reliability (0.8) was found.

Interview

In order to gather concrete data about the use of CALL, a sample of fifteen teachers with randomly selected from the teachers participated in face-to-face interview. The questions for the interview paralleled the sections in the questionnaire. Similar to the questionnaire study, three EFL and educational technology university professors validated the content of the interview questions. All research participants gave their verbal consent to the recording of their interview, as well as having them used for research purposes. In this study, 20-minute interview was conducted with 15 EFL individually to follow up their responses to the questionnaire. The participants' names are not real; the researcher used pseudo names for the participants.

Procedure

At first questionnaire employed in the study was piloted with representative samples of the correspondent group of EFL teachers. Second the piloted questionnaire was administered to convenient sample of fifty EFL teachers in institutions in Bandar Abbas. Due to different locations of the participants, questionnaire handed in to the teachers participating in the study in

their working place. It took about thirty three minutes to complete the survey. After quantitative phase had been completed, the qualitative phase started. A sample of fifteen teachers participated in the interview. The interview took place in their workplace. The interview lasted between fifteen to twenty minutes and all audio –taped and then transcribed. Data from the interview were analyzed qualitatively and described according to the main interview questions and presented as statements of the teachers responses to the questions.

Data analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire imported and analyzed using SPSS (version 19.0) package. Frequency means and standard deviation (SD) utilized to report descriptive data. Frequency distributions used to measure how often certain scores occur (Salkind, 2008). In addition, mean is “the sum of all the values in a group, divided by the number of values in that group” (Salkind, 2008, p.20), whereas SD “represents the average amount of variability in a set of scores” (Salkind, 2008, p.37). The qualitative data analyzed using interpretive qualitative approach (Glesne, 1998). Within this paradigm, “it is possible to understand the subjective meaning of action (grasping the actor’s beliefs, desires and so on) yet do so in an objective manner” (Schwandt, 2000, P.193).

The interview was conducted with the teachers individually to follow up their responses to the questionnaire. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. Data from the interviews were analyzed using interpretive qualitative approach and described according to the statements of the teachers’ responses to the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Investigating the First Research Question

The first research question of this study inquired what are Iranian EFL teachers’ perceptions of the factors affecting their CALL integration. The frequency and percentage of the teachers’ responses to all 15 items of the perception questionnaire are provided in Table 1 below. As can be seen in the figure, the item that received the most positive responses (*Disagree*=74.0%) and (*Strongly disagree*= 14.%) of the participants was *Item 14: “I do not use CALL because I lack technical support for the use of technology”*; however, the table indicates that the item that got the least positive responses (*Agree* =36.0%) and (*Strongly agree* = 10.0%) from the participants was *Item 3: “I use CALL because I have pedagogical knowledge of how to integrate CALL for language learning?”*.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Responses to All Items Related to Factors Affecting Their CALL Integration

Item	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. I use CALL because I am aware of how CALL impacts my teaching.	0	.0	2	4.0	13	26.0	26	52.0	9	18.0
2. I use CALL because I have a positive attitude toward CALL.	1	2.0	2	4.0	5	10.0	24	48.0	18	36.0
3. I use CALL because I have pedagogical knowledge of how to integrate CALL for language learning.	0	.0	5	10.0	22	44.0	18	36.0	5	10.0
4. I use CALL because I have the ability to use technology.	0	.0	4	8.0	15	30.0	26	52.0	5	10.0
5. I use CALL because I know how to integrate CALL into my classroom.	0	.0	3	6.0	11	22.0	32	64.0	4	8.0
6. I use CALL because I have administrative support.	0	.0	4	8.0	22	44.0	22	44.0	2	4.0
7. I use CALL because I have students with the ability to use technology.	0	.0	2	4.0	13	26.0	32	64.0	3	6.0
8. I use CALL because my students understand the purpose of the use of technology.	1	2.0	3	6.0	20	40.0	25	50.0	1	2.0
9. I do not use CALL because my students lack the language levels to use technology.	6	12.0	29	58.0	12	24.0	3	6.0	0	.0
10. I do not use CALL because I rely on textbooks.	4	8.0	37	74.0	7	14.0	2	4.0	0	.0
11. I do not use CALL because I do not have time to integrate CALL into my language classrooms.	5	10.0	37	74.0	5	10.0	3	6.0	0	.0
12. I do not use CALL because I lack technology in my language classrooms.	5	10.0	35	70.0	7	14.0	3	6.0	0	.0
13. I do not use CALL because I lack training with technology.	8	16.0	35	70.0	7	14.0	0	.0	0	.0
14. I do not use CALL because I lack technical support for the use of technology.	7	14.0	37	74.0	5	10.0	1	2.0	0	.0
15. I do not use CALL because my students lack previous exposure to technology.	8	16.0	37	74.0	3	6.0	2	4.0	0	.0

The descriptive statistics of the teachers' responses to the perceptions questionnaire were assessed and set forth in Table 2. It should be noted that we assigned 0 point for "Strongly Disagree", 1 point for "Disagree", 2 points for "Undecided", 3 points for "Agree", and 4 points for "Strongly Agree" choices in the questionnaire. The average of the teachers' answers to the 15 items of the questionnaire was computed for more analysis. The table reveals that 50 teachers responded to the questionnaire. The mean turned out to be 3.79, which is above the median (3), with the standard deviation of .41.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Perceptions of Factors Affecting Their CALL Integration

N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
50	1.93	2.53	4.47	3.79	.415

The results of interview

The results of interview showed that teachers used CALL since they believed that it is the most powerful way to improve students' pronunciation, listening and speaking skills. The teachers agreed that computer is useful for improving language skills. It seemed that CALL has great impact on developing listening and speaking skills. The EFL teachers pointed out that CALL has effect on students' accent and also provide native situation and students will be more familiar with native like. Below are some examples of what they have said:

Sara

It is important for student to hear native speakers so, I use audio via computer.

Vahid

One of the useful ways to improve accent and pronunciation in the classroom is throw CALL. I and my students can improve our pronunciation by listening to native speakers throw CDs or DVDs. Also, I have too much information about using computer so it makes me to use computer much more in my classrooms.

Investigating the second Research Question

The second research question of the current study asked what are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of the integration of CALL in their classrooms.

The frequency and percentage of the teachers' responses to all 15 items of the perception questionnaire are provided in Table 3 below. According to the table, the item that received the most positive responses (Strongly disagree= 100.0%) of the participants was *Item 25: "CALL is beneficial in improving listening skills"* And *Item 27: "CALL is beneficial in improving speaking skills"* with (Strongly disagree= 100.0%); on the other hand, the table indicates that the item that got the least positive responses (Agree =24.0%) and (Strongly agree = 6.0%) from the participants was *Item 22: "I am frustrated because I am not trained to integrate CALL into my class"*, and *Item 23: "I am overwhelmed because there are numerous CALL resources to select from"* with (Strongly disagree= 100.0%).

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Responses to All Items about the Integration of CALL

Item	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
16. CALL makes my language lessons more interesting and enjoyable.	2	4.0	2	4.0	3	6.0	30	60.0	13	26.0
17. Integrating CALL into my English teaching is a motivational experience.	0	.0	5	10.0	8	16.0	29	58.0	8	16.0
18. I am clear about the purpose of the integrating of CALL in my English teaching.	3	6.0	2	4.0	5	10.0	33	66.0	7	14.0
19. I feel ready to integrate CALL in to my English teaching.	0	.0	1	2.0	12	24.0	29	58.0	8	16.0
20. Through the integration of CALL my students can increase their English learning.	0	.0	0	.0	11	22.0	30	60.0	9	18.0
21. I think that I have time to integrate CALL into my English teaching.	0	.0	2	4.0	11	22.0	31	62.0	6	12.0
22. I am frustrated because I am not trained to integrate CALL into my class.	1	2.0	17	34.0	17	34.0	12	24.0	3	6.0
23. I am overwhelmed because there are numerous CALL resources to select from.	1	2.0	20	40.0	14	28.0	11	22.0	4	8.0
24. CALL is beneficial in improving reading skills.	0	.0	0	.0	4	8.0	30	60.0	16	32.0
25. CALL is beneficial in improving listening skills.	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0	50	100.0
26. CALL is beneficial in improving writing skills.	0	.0	0	.0	29	58.0	21	42.0	0	.0
27. CALL is beneficial in improving speaking skills.	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0	50	100.0

The descriptive statistics in Table 4 shows that the mean was 3.90, which is more than the median (3), with the standard deviation of .37.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Perceptions of the Integration of CALL in Classrooms

N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
50	1.75	3.00	4.75	3.9017	.37521

The results of interviews

All of the fifteen teachers considered using the computer as essential and necessary in an era of modern technology. It appeared that they naturally accepted the use of technology as an undeniable part of instruction. Some teachers asserted that CALL has made many more materials available to students and teachers need to be much more prepared to know what is available to students online and make resources available on the Learning platform.

Changing all of the previous and traditional systems with CALL is better, because this kind of learning is completely different with traditional system and it is much better for learning and teaching too. Also, teachers should be familiar with new technology and methodology using CALL applications and also should involve in use of computer materials. Teachers also need training by improving the technology.

Investigating the Third Research Question

The third research question of the current study asked what are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of their roles in CALL integrated classrooms.

The frequency and percentage of the teachers' responses to all 6 items of the perception questionnaire are displayed in Table 5 below. A quick look at the table hands on that the item that received the most positive responses (Agree =60.0%) and (Strongly disagree= 22.0.0%) and of the participants was *Item 30: "I encourage my students to play an active role in their English learning."* ; conversely, the table indicates that the item that got the least positive responses (Agree =28.0%) and (Strongly agree = 2.0%) from the participants was *Item 28: "I demonstrate how to use technology in support of English learning."*, and *Item 23: "I am overwhelmed because there are numerous CALL resources to select from"* with (Strongly disagree= 100.0%);

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage of Teachers' Responses to All Items about their Roles in CALL integrated Classrooms

Item	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
28. I demonstrate how to use technology in support of English learning.	3	6.0	14	28.0	18	36.0	14	28.0	1	2.0
29. I prepare my students to become more skilled at using technology.	1	2.0	4	8.0	13	26.0	28	56.0	4	8.0
30. I encourage my students to play an active role in their English learning.	0	.0	1	2.0	8	16.0	30	60.0	11	22.0
31. I provide extra support to my students to improve their English learning.	0	.0	3	6.0	8	16.0	28	56.0	11	22.0
32. I select technology tools and applications I need in classrooms.	0	.0	3	6.0	7	14.0	29	58.0	11	22.0
33. I troubleshoot technological problems.	3	6.0	8	16.0	21	42.0	15	30.0	3	6.0

The results of interviews

The results also indicated that the teachers go beyond traditional teaching and they are close to the new technology and new teaching style. It also appeared that CALL motivates students in learning and teachers in teaching language. A large proportion of language teachers mentioned their role as a facilitator, manager, observer, designer and helper. The finding showed that the teachers in this study had positive perceptions of their role in CALL integrated classrooms. Aram and Azim for example said:

Aram

Teachers guide the students and organize their activities. Teachers play a main role to do the task and reduce students stress. Teachers are computer specialist. I think teachers are a CALL observer, designer, implementer and manager.

Azim

Teachers should be familiar with new technology and methodology using CALL applications and also should involve in use of computer materials. In my idea, teachers are facilitator helper guide and have responsibility of student's learning. Teachers are scaffold.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that the teachers' perceptions of CALL are generally positive. As evidenced by the teachers' responses to the questionnaire and interview, all teachers believed that the use of computers adds value to their teaching and CALL is an effective way for improving the quality of their teaching because CALL can provide both teachers and students with useful information and resources, various modes and authentic contexts. It seemed that CALL is accepted among the teachers because they were aware of the benefits of using computers in foreign language learning and teaching. This is supported by findings put forth in the literature (e.g., Beatty, 2003; Healey, 1999) which indicated that CALL application may be helpful for developing learners' skills and also for teachers in improving their teaching skills. The teachers agreed that the quality of education relies on exclusively on the quality of teachers. This confirms that the roles of teachers are important in organizing the activities and structuring the learning process. Also they thought that their perceptions can introduce new technology and brings effective learning and teaching in to the classrooms as emphasized by many researchers (e.g., Pennington, Lam & Lawrence, 2002).

It appeared that teachers agreed that CALL could improve their language skills as well as their students. Also, the expectation that teachers should be experts in the use of computers is not fully supported by the teachers since just one of the teachers mentioned that teachers should solve the computer problem as experts. This does not support the finding of Soo and Ngeow, (1997) indicating that teachers are computer exports in the CALL classrooms. Although they seem to be convinced that CALL makes language learning interesting. Also, the teachers emphasized that they are facilitators, guide, engineer and manager in classrooms integrated with CALL. This is consistent with finding of (Davies & Cronther, 1995; Kurnum, 1992; Beret, 1993). Teachers accepted that computer technologies are helpful for enhancing students' language learning. They

also agreed that teachers and students can communicate with native speakers of English with computer due to the fact that all institution instruction is to help students to have native accent. The results of these studies also indicated this finding (Park and Son, 2009; Al-Mekhlafy, 2010; Kessler and Plakans, 2008). Although, this study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions of factors affecting their CALL integration in their classrooms. The results of the study confirmed that factors such as teachers' computer skills, computer facilities, knowledge about CALL students' perceptions and teachers perceptions of CALL are factors affect the implementation of CALL significantly. This is consistent with Ertmer et. al. (1999) who suggested that internal and external factors influence teachers' perceptions of the technology integration. On the other hand, it seemed that the factor such as experience was important for teachers who use technology in the classrooms. The study showed that more experience teachers have positive perceptions of the use of technology in the classrooms. This may also be supported by findings in the literature (Atkins & Vasu, 2000).

CONCLUSION

This study examined teachers' perceptions of their integration of CALL in language teaching by investigating the perceptions of teachers towards the use of CALL and computers in general, the teachers' roles, and factors that affect teachers' use of CALL. The finding of this study suggested that teacher's perceptions made the huge improvement in teaching. As a result of examining the perceptions received from the teachers to this study, the researcher had identified the widespread use of CALL by the EFL teachers.

This study showed the important role of technological support in the classrooms .Also, the study found that the teachers' personal perceptions had influence on their use of CALL. This might be because of teachers' knowledge of CALL programs and development of technology. Besides, the results indicated that computer use for general purposes among teachers was very common. Most teachers used computers for listening and speaking curse. They also asserted that they used computer to show video to their students. However, using computers made them more efficient in their lives and that they have positive perceptions of using computers in language instruction. Such responses were to be expected considered this fact that computer technology is fast identified in the field of learning and teaching a foreign language (Gruich, 2002). On the other hand, no any report of online use of computer in their classrooms, might come from their lack of much more time, weak internet and no any internet support.

The results of the investigating factors that affect EFL teachers' perceptions of using of CALL in language instruction showed that teacher's lack of training in using CALL affected their teaching with computers. Moreover, teachers also reported that the perceptions of their students affect their teaching with computers. Thus, students' lack of motivation in computer sessions may have an effect on teachers' motivation while teaching with computers. Finally, the finding indicated that, having enjoyable classrooms and funny time with student are also the important factors that teachers use CALL in the classrooms.

The findings of the study indicated that teachers demonstrated positive perceptions of the use of computers in language instruction. In addition, the findings showed that teachers believed that

training was required and they believed that they needed training to learn and teach with computers. The qualitative data also indicated that the teachers were affected by the student's needs and ability in CALL classrooms. So teachers were more convenient to use CALL. Briefly, all these findings might show that teachers had positive perceptions of technology integration in general.

As a further study the impact of training on teachers may be analyzed as an experimental study. Moreover, this study added a contextualized description of the Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of integration of CALL in their classrooms. There is much more context that can be gathered about teachers' perceptions of the integration of technology in the classrooms. The limitation of this study was that there was only one specific group of EFL teachers were selected to participate in the study. They thought elementary level of students. Other groups of EFL teachers, including university teachers and school teachers, could have provided useful data for the purposes. This study also provided some implications that would improve the success of integration of CALL for teachers, students, institutions and policy makers. Teachers are a key factor in whether students have a positive perception of this technology, which leads to better achievement in learning. Therefore, teachers should have a positive perception of this technology to help their students. The institutions must ensure that teachers develop positive perceptions of use of CALL. They should be decreased any fears and qualms that teachers may have to use technology. Since positive perceptions of CALL usually foretell future computer use, policy makers can make use of educators' positive perceptions of CALL to prepare them better for incorporating CALL in to their teaching practices.

REFERENCES

- Albion, P., & Ertmer, P. A. (2002). Beyond foundations: The role of vision and belief in teachers' preparation for integration of technology. *TechTrends*, 46 (5), 34–38.
- Albirirni, A. (2004). Teachers' attitudes toward information and communication technologies: the case of Syrian EFL teachers. *Computers & Education* 47, 373–398.
- Alshumameri (2008). perceptions & attitudes toward using CALL in English classrooms among Saudi secondary EFL teachers. *The JALT CALL Journal*, 2008, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 29–46.
- Almekhlafi, A. G., & Almeqdadi, F. A. (2010). Teachers' perceptions of technology integration in the United Arab Emirates school classrooms. *Educational Technology & Society*, 13(1), 165-175.
- Askar, P., & Umay, A. (2001). Pre-service elementary mathematics teachers' computer self-efficacy, attitudes towards computers, and their perceptions of computer enriched learning environments. In *Proceedings of Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference 2001* (eds C. Crawford, D.A. Willis, R. Carlsen, I. Gibson, K. McFerrin, J. Price & R. Weber), pp. 2262–2263. AACE, Chesapeake, VA. At: <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet.html>
- Atkins, N. E., & Vasu, E. S. (2000). Measuring knowledge of technology usage and stages of concern about computing: A study of middle school teachers. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 8(4). 279-302.

- Becker, H, Ravitz, J., & Wong, Y. (1998). Teacher and teacher-directed student use of computers and software. *Teaching, Learning, and Computing: 1998 National Survey*. Report 3.
- Burett, J. (1998). Language alternation in a computer-equipped foreign language classroom: the intersection of teacher beliefs, language, and technology.
- Glesne, C. (1998). *Becoming qualitative researchers: an introduction*. Longman.
- Gerosa, M., & Giuliani, D, Neri, A., Mich, O. (2008). The effectiveness of computer assisted pronunciation training for foreign language learning by children. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 21(5), 393-408.
- Kessler, G., & Plakans, L. (2008). Does teachers' confidence with CALL equal innovative and integrated use? *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 21(3), 269-282.
- Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teacher's beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62, 307-322.
- Royer, (2002). Supporting technology integration through action research. *Clearing House*, 75, 233. Available from EBSCOhost .
- Salkind, N. J. (2008). *Statistics for people who hate statistics*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Schwandt, T. (2000). "Three epistemological stances from qualitative inquiry: interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructivism". In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd Ed). Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Wang, Y. (2002). When technology meets beliefs: Preservice teachers' perception of the teacher's role in the classroom with computers. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 35 (1), 150-161.
- Wiebe, G., & Kabata, K. (2010). Students' and instructors' attitudes toward the use of CALL in foreign language teaching and learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 23(3), 221-234.
- Woodrow, J. (1991). A comparison of four computer attitude scales. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 7, 165-187.

THE EFFECT OF USING SONGS ON IRANIAN YOUNG EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY PERFORMANCE

Masoud Zoghi (PhD)

Department of ELT, College of Humanities, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
m-zoghi@iau-ahar.ac.ir

Elnaz Shoari (PhD Candidate, the Corresponding Author)

Department of ELT, College of Humanities, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
elnaz.shoari@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The current study aimed at investigating the effect of using songs on Iranian young English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' vocabulary performance. This quasi-experimental research was based on a pretest-posttest control group design. For the purposes of this study, 60 young EFL learners were divided into two groups. Before the treatment, both groups were administered a vocabulary pretest. The experimental group (n=30) was taught the new words through songs. However, the control group (n=30) received the traditional vocabulary instruction. The treatment lasted for an academic semester. After the treatment, the same vocabulary post-test was administered to the groups. The data analysis through the statistical test of t-test indicated that the use of songs in class had a significantly positive effect on vocabulary performance of young EFL learners. The positive effects of songs are result of their role in making a very relaxed atmosphere and decreasing anxiety. Through making use of songs learner feel free and since songs are enjoyable there is no such a burden on memory in the process of learning that is ,it might be concluded that cognitive load is significantly low.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary knowledge, Song, Traditional instruction

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that vocabulary is essential in learning a language in general. It can be said that vocabulary learning is even more challenging for foreign language learners given the limited exposure to language and insufficient opportunities to make use of the learnt items in real-life situations. Vocabulary is more than single words; it means the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words which convey a particular meaning. In 1930s, it was found that there is a close relationship between word knowledge and achievement in life (Celik & Toptas). Success in earning and management was correlated with vocabulary scores. When vocabulary knowledge is not enough, people have difficulty in expressing their thoughts and ideas, and this usually results in physical aggressiveness. (Shoari, 2013). It can be said that limited vocabulary is a kind of imperfection. For understanding what someone hears and reads and also to communicate effectively with others, vocabulary size is so crucial (Shoebottom, 2013). Wilkins on the importance vocabulary knowledge in communication stated that "Without grammar very little can be conveyed but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". (as cited

in Schmitt, 2010, p.3). According to Schmitt (2010), a large vocabulary is required for someone to use language in a desired manner. In English, vocabulary size results in limiting the type of texts someone can read; in other words, there is a close relationship between number of words someone knows and how well s/he performs in terms of different language skills. (Nation and Meara, 2002, p.46). Krashen on the importance of vocabulary stated that “a large vocabulary is of course essential for mastery language” (Shoari, 2013). Alderson on the role of vocabulary knowledge in language use states: “what would appear to show is that the size of one’s vocabulary is relevant to one’s performance on any language tests, in other words, that language ability is not quite a large extent a function of vocabulary size” (as cited in Schmitt, 2010, p.5). According to Carlo & August (2005), English language learners who are slow in vocabulary learning could not comprehend the texts of advance levels. They believe those students “are of poor performance and are at the risk of being diagnosed as learning disabled students” (August, 2005). Consequently in teaching vocabulary the type of the instruction is of great importance. For many years so many studies have been done for finding the most effective vocabulary learning strategy (Yong Gu, 2003).

Statement of the problem

Undoubtedly vocabulary is central of English language teaching, since without acceptable word knowledge students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. Every one surely experiences the situations in which s/he without grammar, with some useful words and expressions, was able to manage communication. When speakers don have a rich word repertoire they cannot express their ideas. In most of the cases this results in physical aggressiveness. Generally speaking the lack of word knowledge is a kind of imperfection. When students cannot find the relevant words from their mental dictionaries while listening or reading have serious problems in understanding new concepts and also in connecting them to what they already know and in using them. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who doesn’t have similar problems. Mostly these students are at risk of being recognized as disable learners.. It seems the learnt items don’t move into long-term memory, maybe because they are not learnt in effective and meaningful manner. As a result there is strong need for more effective strategies in teaching/learning process.

Main Objectives of the study

In order to try to fill the gaps of which discussed above this study was performed. Because of the nature of songs they can be used for a large range of purposes in EFL situations. Songs result in deeper engagement in vocabulary learning. Through making use of songs learners besides learning new words in more relaxed conditions would also be familiar with dialect, culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Songs are parts of life from the early days. According to Gugliemino(1986), adults sing for various purposes for example at religious services, bars, in the shower so on. Songs are one of the integral parts of our language experience. Songs would be of great value if used in coordination with a language lesson they. There is no doubt that technology facilitate having access to different songs. Teachers can take songs into classrooms for educational purposes.

There is a large amount of literature which points to the role of using songs in ESL/EFL classrooms but not empirically. The first theoretical rationale for using songs in the classroom, goes back to the types of listening processes. Two processes involved in listening, and both can be used when songs are applied in the classroom. The activity of which is selected for a particular song determines which of these processes is active. Cullen (1999) states that:

The first is bottom-up processing where the listener builds up the sounds into words, sentences and meaning. The second is top-down processing where the listener uses background knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. Practicing both of these processes is essential for developing listening comprehension.

Music and, Song, and vocabulary learning

There are studies on the effects of using authentic materials, such as instructional games, songs and stories, on improving students' progress but empirical supports are also required (Razmjoo, et.al, 2012). Because of the melody of the songs, they facilitate learning and, music helps learners in developing the cognitive skills and in improving language skills. Through singing songs, children learn rhyme and vocabulary (Yuliana, 2003). Music is universal factor in all cultures. Language and communication are also universal (Salcedo, 2002). According to Richman (1993) there are three types of human vocalization. Expressive sounds (e.g., sighing crying, laughing), speech and singing (which is in between of two first types) (as cited in Salcedo, 2002, p 2).

Plato believed that "musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten... making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful" (as cited in Stansell, 2005). According to Yuliana (2003) singing a song is enjoyable for learners and, because words are repeated several times, learners are able to memorize them easily. Another feature of songs is that they are learnt by heart and as a result lead to learners 'development.

Making use of the music in the ELT is not new task. Bartle (1962) and Richards (1969) or Jolly (1975), and other scholars have been studying the effect of music in language learning because of its linguistic, and motivational advantages (as cited in Engh, 2013). There are number of studies of which prove strongly the positive effectiveness of the music on various language fields. In Audio Lingual method of the language teaching music was used in order to reduce the negative effects of repetitiveness of the practices of the 1950s to 1970s (Bartle, 1962, Kanel, 2000). It was believed that making use of music resulted in a relax state for mind, and as a result improve learning. (Lozanov, 1978).

Most of the students listen to music when they study may be because they believe that music helps them to concentrate on tasks, but some people believe that music is a kind of distracter, and stops learning. Martin (1988) worked on the effect of the music and found that through listening to the background music students' scores increased significantly. Kiger (1989) shows that, students' scores in comprehension tests increased through using soft music and repetitive rhythm. Li (2008) is one of the researchers who worked on the importance of the music on vocabulary. In

his experimental study he found that China's learners' scores increased significantly under the effect of the using songs (both lyrics and music). Huy LE (2007) found that music is very effective in improving all language skills.

There are also other supports for positive role of music on language learning by (Katchen, 1988 & Puhl, 1989; Baez, 1993). Brand (2007) found theoretical and psychological reasons for the use of music in language teaching. He believes that the ultimate aim in English learning is not only speaking English, but interacting with people from other cultures (Brand, 2002). It was found that music processing and language processing are placed in the same area of the brain (Maess & Koeleish, 2001).

According to Ayotte (2004); "music and language share the same auditory, perceptive, and cognitive mechanisms that impose a structure on auditory information received by the senses" (p.10). Music is a type of language package that connects the cultures, but there is an important point here, that pop songs are more effective in ESL environments, because, for example: first of all these songs are at 11-year-old native speakers' level and, as a result simple vocabularies will be more appropriate for ESL learners, the lyrics are repetitive within each song, and because the words mostly are short, as a result vocabulary learning would be facilitated. These songs are conversational and are sung at approximately slow rate with frequent pauses, and give more chance to understanding (Murpley, 1992).

Gorjian et.al (2012) also studied the role of the songs on vocabulary learning. In that study they aimed at finding the effect of songs on upper-level learners. The results of the research strongly support the successful role of songs on teaching vocabulary. Kahraman (2008) studied the effect of songs on listening comprehension, and found that regardless the origin of the singer, songs improved listening comprehension. Making use of songs, lower the cognitive load during learning. Cognitive load means: The total cognitive activity imposed by task/ problem on working memory. Gerven states, the base of cognitive load theory is that our working memory is limited with respect to the amount of information that it can store (Ayres, 2006). Cognitive load theory was originated in 1980. This theory results in framework for cognitive processes and instructional design (pas, 2003). The term cognitive load is used in psychology for illustrating the related load to the control of working memory.

According to Sweller (1988) "Cognitive load has been designed to provide guidelines intended to assist in the presentation of information in a manner that encourages learners' activities that optimize intellectual performance". In this theory aspects of information processing theory are employed for emphasizing the inherent of concurrent working memory load on learning during teaching and schemas are used as unit of analysis for designing the materials (Sweller, 1988). Principles of Cognitive Load Theory:

1. Working memory is extremely limited.
2. Long term memory is essentially unlimited.
3. The process of learning requires working memory to be actively engaged in the comprehension (and processing) of instructional material to encode to-be-learned information into long term memory.

4. If the resources of working memory are exceeded then learning will be ineffective (Cooper, 1998). As it is evident there should be an instruction tool that helps learners to learn successfully. The instructional tools should result in low cognitive load, and since songs result in relaxed and enjoyable environment and as a result facilitate learning are strongly supported by this theory.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Does using songs in class have any effect on Iranian young EFL learners' vocabulary performance?

Does using songs in class result in improving Iranian young EFL learners' vocabulary performance?

METHODOLOGY

Based on a pretest-posttest design, this study tried to investigate the role of using songs as instructional tool for teaching vocabulary items. This is quasi-experimental, that is without random assignment.

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Intervention Group	O	X	O
Control Group	O		O

X = intervention is administered

O = measurement is taken

Context

This was conducted in one of the institutions in Tabriz. Iran. In this institute a course consists of 15 sessions which meet three times a week. The course books are based on interactions in different contexts. The course includes teaching new topics, vocabulary, function and grammar. Communication is one of the most important points of L2 teaching in this institute. Materials are used to activate new vocabulary learning and activate using in real situation.

Participants

A total number of 60 language learners all female with an age range of 11-14 participated in this research. The learners were from Turkish background. They were selected from 5 classes of the one of the institutes of Tabriz. The subjects have been assigned to classes based on their scores on their proficiency levels.

Instruments & Materials

Pre-test and post-test of which, have been conducted, included the words which learners were supposed to learn through relevant songs. There were 40 questions in each with reliability of .85.

Target words were selected from the source book of the institute which was *New Parade*. The researchers made use of songs of which include those target words. During practicing the new words light music was used in order to provide more positive and relaxed atmosphere.

Procedures

At the beginning of the program language proficiency test was administered to both groups, in order to assure their proficiency levels. After that one pre-test on vocabulary knowledge was conducted. Then the researchers started the program. The target words were from various songs of which were suitable for the level of the learners. The words are those that are included in the course book, and as a result were suitable for learners' levels. In experimental group learners listened to the words in songs, in each session after listening to songs, learners were asked to practice the new words for the next sessions through listening to the same songs. But in control group the same words were taught through traditional instruction. That is new words and their meanings in learners' first language were given in each session, and they were asked to memorize them. The students made use of dictionaries on their own way that is without any instruction. At the end of the study one post-test was conducted for measuring the effectiveness of the treatment. The collected data was analyzed by means of SPSS. Because there were two groups in this study the researchers used t-test for comparing the results, and measuring the effectiveness of the treatment

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis

After gathering the data through pretest and posttest, it was analyzed by means of SPSS. Firstly the scores are shown in Excel sheets of which the answer of the first question is given by:

The first question was loaded one. In fact there is only one question to be scientifically answered in this study. Two groups were approximately at same level on vocabulary knowledge at the beginning of the program; it can be showed by comparing the means of them on pre-test. The mean of experimental group in pre-test was 12.9, and the mean of control group was 12.8. Before describing the tables, it is clearly shown in figures. In figure 1 it is there is a comparison of the pre-test and post-test of the control group. There is no growth in groups' scores on post-test.

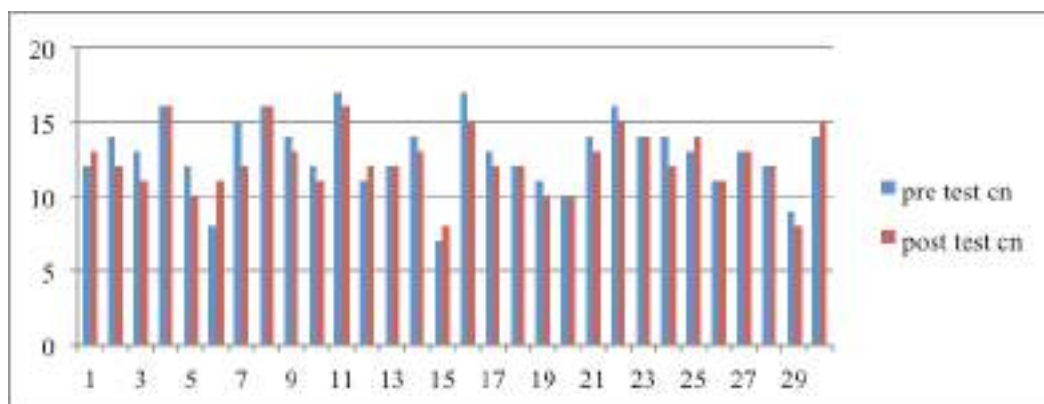


Figure 1: Pre test control & Post test control

In figure 2 which is the comparison of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group, there are apparent differences in scores of the two tests.

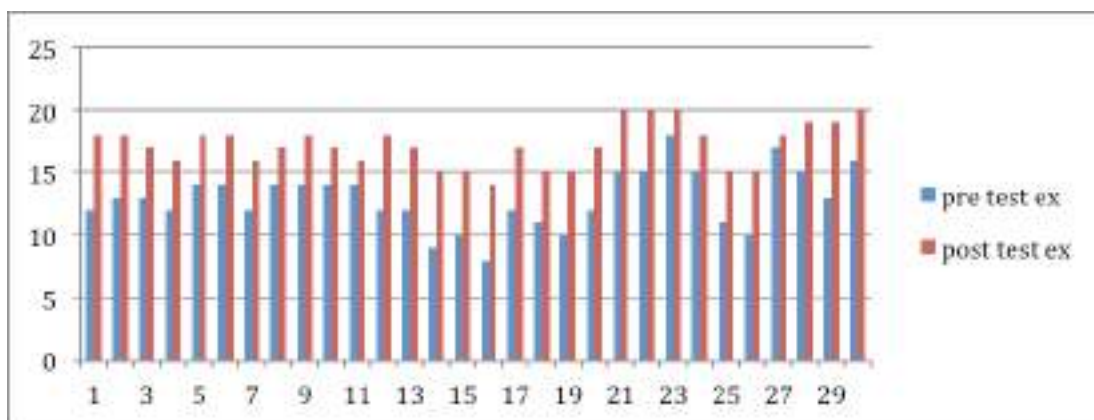


Figure 2: Pre test Experimental & Post test experimental

It can also be proved while comparing the means of both groups in post test. Mean of post-test for control group was 12.4, while for experimental group was 17.2.

The research hypothesis was:

Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning will be improved through using Songs.

The null hypothesis was:

There would no significant differences on the effect of Songs on vocabulary learning.

The statistical task is to reject the null hypothesis, and to show that there is a difference on the effect of songs. Table 1 is t-test of the control group:

Table 1: (t-test control)

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	12.80600607	12.4
Variance	5.981609195	4.524137931
Observations	30	30
Pooled Variance	5.252873563	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	58	
t Stat	0.78859485	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.216780196	
t Critical one-tail	1.671552763	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.433560392	
t Critical two-tail	2.001717468	

As it is evident from the table 1 P(T<t) two-tail is greater than 0.01, as a result there is no significant difference in results, so traditional instruction was not successful in teaching vocabulary. Table 2 shows the results of the experimental group. P(T<t) two-tail is smaller than

0.01, it proves that there is significant difference on the effect of songs, consequently the null hypothesis has been rejected. The researcher hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2: (t-test experimental)

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	12.9	17.2
Variance	5.334482759	2.993103448
Observations	30	30
Pooled Variance	4.163793103	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	58	
t Stat	-8.161491156	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.64293E-11	
t Critical one-tail	1.671552763	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.28586E-11	
t Critical two-tail	2.001717468	

Through using an experimental approach, this study examined the effects of applying songs on Iranian young EFL learners 'vocabulary learning. There are conflicting results gained from studies on the effects of songs on ESL vocabulary learning. But it is worth to say that in EFL classrooms songs yield in positive effectiveness. The results of this study support the study conducted by Schunk. He has found that music benefits vocabulary acquisition. Lozanov also applied music and songs as a learning tool and emphasizes the relaxed state of mine and increased retention as a result of inherent nature of songs and music. He claimed that atmosphere created by music enhanced the ability of the students to remember vocabulary words and shortened the study period of the foreign language. Lowe also studied the impact of songs second grade French immersion students in New Brunswick.

CONCLUSION

In this study the experimental group outperformed in posttest. Songs result in very relaxed atmosphere for learners. Stress stops learning, when it is eliminated learning takes place in effective manner. Songs lower the cognitive load on learners' brains and as a result, facilitate learning. Consequently the positive role of applying songs as instructional tools has been supported.

Limitations of the study

It is worth to say that just like most of the studies; this study also suffers from some limitations. It is believed that maybe the main limitation was the effect of cross cultural differences on the selection of song types. The second one is that this study was conducted for female learners, and also the number of participants also is another limitation that limits the generalizability of the research. The researcher also believes that delayed post-tests are to be conducted in order to measure the long-term effects of the songs on vocabulary learning.

REFERENCES

- Alipour, M et al.(2012). The effects of songs on EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention: The case of gender. *Advances in Digital Multimedia*, 1, 140-143
- Ayotte, S. (2004). *The acquisition of verb forms through song*. (Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, Dissertation Abstracts International, 65, 3356A.
- Ayres, P. (2006). *UNSW*. Cognitive load theory at UNSW, Australia: University of New South Wales (UNSW). <http://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/research/>.
- Baez, R. (1993). Reinforcing E.S.L. with Los Cumbancheros Choral performance group: Final evaluation report. *Journal of Evaluation, and Assessment*, 12, 45-58
- Celik, S., & Toptas, V. (2010). Vocabulary learning strategy use of Turkish EFL learners. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences (ScienceDirect)*, 3, 62-71.
- Cooper, G. (1988). *Research into Cognitive Load Theory and Instructional Design at UNSW*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales (UNSW).<http://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/staff/sweller/clt/inde.html>
- Engh, D. (2013). Why Use Music in English Language Learning? A Survey of the Literature. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 6, 12-25
- Gardiner, MF. (2000). MUSIC, LEARNING, AND BEHAVIOR:A CASE FOR MENTAL STRETCHING. *Journal for Learning Through Music/Summer*, 7, 1-22
- Gugliemino, L. M. (1986). *The affective edge: Using songs and music in ESL instruction*.
- Huy Le, M. (2007). The role of music in second language learning: A Vietnamese perspective. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences (ScienceDirect)*, 45, 34-47
- Kahraman, V. (2008). *The use of songs in improving listening comprehension in English*. *Dil Dergisi*, 140, 43-51
- Katchen, J. E. (1988). *Mastering English pronunciation through literature*. Kobe, Japan: 14th Annual International Conference of the Japan Association of Language Teachers.
- Kiger, DM. (1989). Effects of Music Information Load on a Reading Comprehension Task. *Journal of Ammons Scientific*, 69, 531-534
- Li, X., & Brand, M. (2008). Effectiveness of Music on Vocabulary Acquisition, Language Usage, and Meaning for Mainland Chinese ESL Learners. *Journal of Contributions to Music Education*, 36, 73-84
- Lozanov, G. (1978). *Suggestology and outlines of suggestopedy*. New York: Gordonand Beach Publishing.
- Maess, B., & Koelsch, S. (2001). Musical syntax is processed in Broca's area: An MEG study. *Nature Neuroscience*, 4, 540-545
- Murphey, T. (1990). The song stuck in my head phenomenon: A melodic din in the LAD? *System*, 18(1), 53-64.
- Paas, F., Renkl, A., & Sweller, J.(2003). Cognitive Load Theory and Instructional Design: Recent Developments. *Educational Psychologist*, 38(1), 1-4.
- Puhl, C. A. (1989). *Up from under: English training on the mines* (Report on 1988 research project conducted at Gold Field Training Services). Stellenbosch, South Africa:
- Razmjoo, SA et al. (2012). *On the Effect of Using Games,Songs, and Stories on Young Iranian EFL Learners' Achievement*. *Journal of English Language Teaching and learning*.

- Salcedo, CS. (2002). *The effects of songs in a foreign Language Classroom on Text recall and involuntary mental rehearsal*. PHD Thesis. 170
- Schmitt, N.(2010). *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual*. University of Nottingham, UK. pp1-386.
- Shoari, E. (2013). *The Effect of Graphic Organizer Strategy on Improving Iranian EFL learners' Vocabulary Learning*. MA Thesis. Pp: 156
- Shoebottom,P.(2013).*Theimportance of vocabulary*.<http://esl.fis.edu/parent/advice/vocab.htm>
- Stansell, JW. (2005). The Use of Music for Learning Languages: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Music and Language*, 6, 45-59
- Sweller, J. (1988). Cognitive Load During Problem Solving: Effects on Learning. *Cognitive Science*, 12, 257-285
- Yongqi Gu, P.(2003). Vocabulary Learning in a Second Language: Person, Task, Context and Strategies. *TESL / EJ*, 7 (2), 1-26
- Yuliana, Y. (2003). Teaching English to Young Learners through Songs retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb>

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' TEACHING STYLES AND THEIR AUTONOMY

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran

*Head of the English Department for MA Students, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran
Branch, Tehran, Iran
Baradaranabdollah@yahoo.com*

Ehsan Hosseinzadeh

*English Language Faculty, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
Corresponding Author: Eh.English@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between English Language Teachers' Teaching Styles and Autonomy. To this end, a group of 200 experienced English language teachers at various language schools in Tehran were given two questionnaires namely Grasha's Teaching Style Inventory (1994); and Teaching Autonomy Scale (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005) among which 162 instruments were returned. After being verified, 129 questionnaires were selected. Since the teaching styles are categorized into low, moderate, and high levels, each teaching style - Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Delegator and Facilitator, is considered as a nominal variable. Moreover, as the autonomy is on an interval scale, the choice of statistic to measure the relationship between one nominal variable and one interval variable is eta. However, since the frequencies of some of the styles' levels were very low, it was decided to choose non-parametric Kruskal Wallis and Mann Whitney tests to compare the levels of each style in terms of autonomy scores. As a result of data analysis, a significant relationship was found between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy. Furthermore, the findings of this study could be utilized in the field of teacher education, particularly, by language school directors and owners.

KEYWORDS: Teachers' teaching styles, teachers' curriculum and general autonomy

INTRODUCTION

With the spread of globalization, language learning and teaching, as many other skills, are gaining more and more prominence every day. This phenomenon, language learning and teaching, has two sides: teacher and learner who influence the process in different ways. Menken (2000) believes that half of all teachers may anticipate educating an English language learner during their career. Along the same lines, according to Vieira and Gaspar (2013), with regard to impact on education effectiveness, teachers arise as a significant factor, accounting for about 30% of the variance on pupils' achievement.

Students have different learning styles and familiarity with learning style differences will, to a large extent, help instructors; so teachers apply different teaching styles that suit their setting and their students' needs. To overcome mismatches between learning styles of learners and the teaching styles of the instructors, teachers should tailor their approach to meet students' learning needs meaning that they can combine teaching styles for different types of content and diversity of student needs. According to Purkey and Novak (1984, p. 13), "Good teaching is the process of inviting students to see themselves as able, valuable, and self-directing and of encouraging them to act in accordance with these self-perceptions".

To this end, institutions initially need to prepare the ground through empowering their teachers. Multiple intellectuals involved in the field of educational reform assert that empowering teachers is where we can commence solving the schools' problems (Melenyzer, 1990; Short, 1994). . Pearson and Moomaw (2006) stated that:

if teachers are to be empowered and regarded as professionals, then like other professionals, they must have the freedom to prescribe the best treatment for their students as doctors or lawyers do for their clients. This freedom is *teacher autonomy*. (p.44).

In line with that, according to Masouleh and Jooneghani (2011), the term autonomy has sparked considerable controversy, inasmuch as linguists and educationalists have failed to reach a consensus as to what autonomy really is. In fact, autonomy in language learning is a desirable goal for philosophical, pedagogical, and practical reasons. Street (1988) believes teacher autonomy is "the independence teachers maintain in exercising discretion within their classrooms to make instructional decisions". (p. 4).

The purpose of the present study was to inspect if there was any significant relationship between teachers' teaching styles and their autonomy – curriculum and general.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Teachers' Teaching Styles

Different educationists have different perspectives on teaching and learning a language through which the teaching styles that a teacher chooses play an important part. In accordance with Richards and Rogers (1986), the teacher's role is to facilitate communication among the learners during the set activities, to provide learners with insight on how to become a successful language learner by sharing his/her own personal experiences of language learning and to organize resources.

Grasha (1996) defines the teaching styles as the pattern of belief, knowledge, performance and behaviour of teachers when they are teaching. He divided the teaching styles into five dimensions which are the expert style, formal authority style, personal model style, delegator style and facilitator style. Peacock (2001), on the other hand asserted that the teaching style is the manner a person teaches by nature, habitual, inclination or even a custom that s/he uses to convey information and skills in the classroom.

Along with the same line, Stein and Miller (1980) grouped teaching styles into two types: expressive teaching styles (the emotional relationship created by the teacher to the student or the class as a whole) and instrumental teaching style (the way teachers carry out the task to assist students, planning the lesson, setting up the classroom standard and ensure that students achieve the standards set).

Autonomy

In the last few decades, the diversity of ideas in the field of teaching and learning has been obvious and could have been the reason to many of the current developments in these fields. One of the subjects yet to be debated has been autonomy, inter alia, teachers' autonomy. Hill (1991) asserts that "little progress can be made in debates about autonomy until these different ideas are sorted" (p. 44). In the same line, Barfield et al (2002) stated that although researchers have clearly defined many aspects of learner autonomy, teacher autonomy requires a more focused and contextually sensitive definition. Furthermore, it could be said that autonomy is not a solid concept that has only one face but a complex one that is multi-faces; Hill and Holmbeck (1986) declared that 2 conceptualizations of autonomy "detachment from parents" and "freedom from social (largely parental) influence" have dominated recent research. Little (1991) held that autonomy is not a synonym for self-instruction; it means, autonomy is not limited to learning without a teacher; it does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher; autonomy is not another teaching method; and it is not a single, easily described behavior.

Arguing that 'autonomy, in the perspective of complexity, encompasses properties and conditions for complex emergence, Paiva and Braga (2008) contended it is inextricably linked to its environment'. (cited in Paiva, 2011, p.63) Likewise, Masouleh & Jooneghani (2012) claimed that its dynamic structure governs the nature of its interactions with the environment in which it is nested. Reviewing the literature on language teaching and learning, we face the fact that there is multiple basic ideas of autonomy. Some research, such as Smith (2000), identified four aspects of teacher autonomy: a capacity for self-directed teaching, freedom from control over teaching, a capacity for self-directed teacher learning and a responsibility to take actions and bear consequences.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' teaching styles and their autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this research were comprised of 129 teachers in the 22-45 age range who were yet teaching English at different language institutes of Tehran, Iran, inter alia, Asre Zaban Language Academy. The selection was based on willingness to participate and teachers were selected non-randomly based on convenient non-random sampling. A supervisor from each

institute was also involved in the study.

Instrumentation

Grasha Teaching Style Inventory Questionnaire

A 40-item what named Grasha's Teaching Style Inventory:Version 3.0 (1994), was used in this study. Teachers were asked to complete the scale about themselves and their teaching preferences. The questionnaire itself starts with an unfinished sentence: "When teaching my class, I would most be likely to:". Each item is scored using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Responses are scored for each teaching method on this 5-point scale. The five teaching styles (Grasha, 1994) considered in this questionnaire are Expert (Qs: 1,6,11,16,21,26,31,36), Formal Authority(Qs: 2,7,12,17,22,27,32,37), Personal Model (Qs: 3,8,13,18,23,28,33,38), Delegator(Qs: 5,10,15,20,25,30,35,40) and Facilitator (4,9,14,19,24,29,34,39).

Teacher Autonomy Survey (TAS)

Pearson and Moomaw's Teacher Autonomy Survey (2005), is comprised of 18 questions originally designed so as to elicit the extent to which teachers perceive themselves autonomous in the following areas: (1) instructional planning and sequencing, (2) personal on-the-job decision making, (3) selection of activities and materials, and (4) classroom standards of conduct. The options vary from "Definitely True" to "Definitely False" and "More or Less True" and "More or Less False" comes in between. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9,10,11, 13, 15, 16, 17 were utilized to form the general autonomy scale. On the other hand, the curriculum autonomy scale was constructed by adding items 5, 6, 8, 12, 14 and 18. Moreover, items 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 were recoded so that the high score denoted increased autonomy.

Procedure

In a descriptive study, the procedures should be described as accurately and completely as possible so that the replication of research by other researchers would become possible (Best & Kahn, 2006).At the outset of this study, in order to collect data, researcher distributed two questionnaires namely Grasha's Teaching Style Inventory: Version 3.0 (1994), and Teaching Autonomy Scale (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005) among 200 teachers in various English language schools inter alia Asre-Zaban Language Academy. The teachers were requested to complete the survey during non-instructional times at their convenience, enclose and return them to the researcher within 1 week of receipt. The participants responded anonymously to the questionnaires. Out of 200 questionnaires, 162 instruments were returned. After being verified, 129 questionnaires, which were thoroughly done, were selected. The responses of all participants were carefully examined and scored. Afterwards, the correlation between the variables underwent statistical analyses..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing the Null Hypothesis:

There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' teaching styles and their autonomy.

In order to test the above null hypothesis, the frequencies of five aforementioned teaching styles in the sample were calculated, which are provided in tables 1 to 5.

Table 1: Expert Frequency Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	14	10.9	10.9	10.9
	Moderate	113	87.6	87.6	98.4
	High	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Formal Authority Frequency Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	96	74.4	74.4	74.4
	Moderate	33	25.6	25.6	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Personal Model Frequency Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	104	80.6	80.6	80.6
	Moderate	25	19.4	19.4	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Facilitator Frequency Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	48	37.2	37.2	37.2
	Moderate	81	62.8	62.8	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Delegator Frequency Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	9	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Moderate	120	93.0	93.0	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Tables 1 to 5 show that 113, 33, 25, 81, 120 participants in Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator and Delegator teaching styles, respectively, had the moderate level of the styles. Moreover, Personal Model had the highest number of low category with 104 by contrast to delegator style with 9. In addition, two teachers had a high level of Expert teaching style which

was, in effect, the only style with a high level. Tables 6 to 10 also present the descriptive statistics on curriculum and general autonomy scores alone and in terms of different levels of each teaching style separately.

Table 6: Curriculum and General Autonomy Descriptives

		Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Mean	35.8605	.32382
	Variance	13.527	
	Std. Deviation	3.67794	
	Skewness	.249	.213
	Kurtosis	-.645	.423
	Mean	16.8915	.26304
Curriculum Autonomy	Variance	8.926	
	Std. Deviation	2.98758	
	Skewness	-.356	.213
	Kurtosis	.545	.423

As table 6 demonstrates, general autonomy with 35.8605 owns a higher mean in comparison to curriculum autonomy with 16.8915. In addition, skewness for general autonomy is .249 which is quite different from that of curriculum autonomy (-.356).

Table 7: Curriculum and General Autonomy Descriptives for Different Levels of Expert Teaching Style

	Expert		Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Low	Mean	35.4286	1.26541
		Variance	22.418	
		Std. Deviation	4.73472	
		Skewness	.580	.597
		Kurtosis	-1.563	1.154
	Moderate	Mean	35.8584	.33469
		Variance	12.658	
		Std. Deviation	3.55786	
		Skewness	.242	.227
		Kurtosis	-.404	.451
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	Mean	18.0714	.85462
		Variance	10.225	
		Std. Deviation	3.19770	
		Skewness	-.322	.597
		Kurtosis	-1.249	1.154
	Moderate	Mean	16.9027	.25639
		Variance	7.428	
		Std. Deviation	2.72542	
		Skewness	-.087	.227
		Kurtosis	.315	.451

a. General Autonomy is constant when Expert = High. It has been omitted.

b. Curriculum Autonomy is constant when Expert = High. It has been omitted.

Table 8: Autonomy Descriptives for Different Levels of Formal Authority Teaching Style

	Formal authority	Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Mean	35.5104	.36274
	Variance	12.631	
	Low Std. Deviation	3.55408	
	Skewness	.153	.246
	Kurtosis	-.760	.488
	Mean	36.8788	.67806
	Variance	15.172	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	3.89517	
	Skewness	.374	.409
	Kurtosis	-.808	.798
	Mean	17.0625	.29536
	Variance	8.375	
Curriculum Autonomy	Low Std. Deviation	2.89396	
	Skewness	-.303	.246
	Kurtosis	-.018	.488
	Mean	16.3939	.56397
	Variance	10.496	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	3.23979	
	Skewness	-.407	.409
	Kurtosis	1.805	.798

Table 9: Curriculum and General Autonomy Descriptives for Different Levels of Personal Model Teaching Style

	Personal model	Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Mean	35.6827	.34817
	Variance	12.607	
	Low Std. Deviation	3.55064	
	Skewness	.106	.237
	Kurtosis	-.802	.469
	Mean	36.6000	.83267
	Variance	17.333	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	4.16333	
	Skewness	.526	.464
	Kurtosis	-.714	.902
	Mean	17.1346	.27771
	Variance	8.021	
Curriculum Autonomy	Low Std. Deviation	2.83206	
	Skewness	-.322	.237
	Kurtosis	.099	.469
	Mean	15.8800	.68877
	Variance	11.860	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	3.44384	
	Skewness	-.189	.464
	Kurtosis	1.616	.902

Table 10: Curriculum and General Autonomy Descriptives for Different Levels of Facilitator Teaching Style

	Facilitator	Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Mean	35.0625	.48048
	Variance	11.081	
	Low Std. Deviation	3.32883	
	Skewness	.539	.343
	Kurtosis	-.176	.674
	Mean	36.3333	.42346
	Variance	14.525	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	3.81117	
	Skewness	.064	.267
	Kurtosis	-.713	.529
Curriculum Autonomy	Mean	17.0417	.47542
	Variance	10.849	
	Low Std. Deviation	3.29383	
	Skewness	-.296	.343
	Kurtosis	-.230	.674
	Mean	16.8025	.31201
	Variance	7.885	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	2.80811	
	Skewness	-.452	.267
	Kurtosis	1.354	.529

Table 11: Curriculum and General Autonomy Descriptives for Different Levels of Delegator Teaching Style

	Delegator	Statistic	Std. Error
General Autonomy	Mean	35.2222	1.32054
	Variance	15.694	
	Low Std. Deviation	3.96162	
	Skewness	1.370	.717
	Kurtosis	.311	1.400
	Mean	35.9083	.33494
	Variance	13.462	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	3.66908	
	Skewness	.180	.221
	Kurtosis	-.611	.438
Curriculum Autonomy	Mean	20.2222	.49379
	Variance	2.194	
	Low Std. Deviation	1.48137	
	Skewness	-.485	.717
	Kurtosis	-.706	1.400
	Mean	16.6417	.26695
	Variance	8.551	
	Moderate Std. Deviation	2.92424	
	Skewness	-.318	.221
	Kurtosis	.750	.438

As can be seen from tables 7 to 11, Facilitator with 17.0417 has the lowest mean by contrast, Personal Model teaching style possesses the highest mean with 35.6827 regarding the low level. On the other side, in terms of the moderate level, Personal Model teaching style with 15.8800 has the lowest mean while Formal Authority teaching style with 36.8788 owns the highest.

Since the teaching styles are categorized into low, moderate, and high levels, each teaching style is considered as a nominal variable. Moreover, as the autonomy is also on an interval scale, the choice of statistic to measure the relationship between one nominal variable and one interval variable is eta. However, since the frequencies of some of the styles' levels are very low, it was decided to choose non-parametric Kruskal Wallis and Mann Whitney tests to compare the levels of each style in terms of autonomy scores. The reason for choosing non-parametric tests was that the test of normality results in tables 12 to 16 indicated non-normality of the data ($p < .05$).

Table 12: Tests of Normality Regarding Expert

	Expert	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
General Autonomy	Low	.267	14	.008	.782	14	.003
	Moderate	.109	113	.002	.969	113	.010
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	.177	14	.200*	.908	14	.146
	Moderate	.131	113	.000	.967	113	.007

This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

b. General Autonomy is constant when Expert = High. It has been omitted.

c. Curriculum Autonomy is constant when Expert = High. It has been omitted.

Table 13: Tests of Normality Regarding Formal Authority

	Formal authority	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
General Autonomy	Low	.112	96	.004	.971	96	.034
	Moderate	.174	33	.013	.919	33	.018
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	.113	96	.004	.965	96	.011
	Moderate	.209	33	.001	.885	33	.002

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 14: Tests of Normality Regarding Personal Model

	Personal model	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
General Autonomy	Low	.105	104	.007	.972	104	.026
	Moderate	.246	25	.000	.890	25	.011
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	.125	104	.000	.962	104	.004
	Moderate	.246	25	.000	.865	25	.003

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 15: Tests of Normality Regarding Facilitator

	Facilitator	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
General Autonomy	Low	.132	48	.034	.948	48	.034
	Moderate	.125	81	.003	.965	81	.025
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	.128	48	.048	.948	48	.035
	Moderate	.165	81	.000	.943	81	.001

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 16: Tests of Normality Regarding Delegator

	Delegator	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
General Autonomy	Low	.300	9	.019	.737	9	.004
	Moderate	.111	120	.001	.973	120	.017
Curriculum Autonomy	Low	.218	9	.200*	.887	9	.184
	Moderate	.130	120	.000	.959	120	.001

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Tables 17 to 21 present the results on the comparison of general Autonomy and curriculum Autonomy scores across the categories of teaching styles. Evidently, the categories of Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles in terms of curriculum autonomy are significantly different from one another. In other words, there is a significant relationship between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy. A closer look at the descriptive statistics of these teaching styles reveals that the low category of the above teaching styles is of higher curriculum autonomy. This indicates that there is a negative relationship between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy while in terms of general autonomy, the hypothesis was retained.

Table 17: Comparing Autonomy across Categories of Expert

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of General Autonomy is the same across categories of Expert.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.300	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Curriculum Autonomy is the same across categories of Expert.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.022	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 18: Comparing Autonomy across Categories of Formal Authority

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of General Autonomy is the same across categories of Formal authority.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.116	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Curriculum Autonomy is the same across categories of Formal authority.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.187	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 19: Comparing Autonomy across Categories of Personal Model

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of General Autonomy is the same across categories of Personal model.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.506	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Curriculum Autonomy is the same across categories of Personal model.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.035	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 20: Comparing Autonomy across Categories of Facilitator

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of General Autonomy is the same across categories of Facilitator.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.064	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Curriculum Autonomy is the same across categories of Facilitator.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.846	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 21: Comparing Autonomy across Categories of Delegator

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of General Autonomy is the same across categories of Delegator.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.432	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Curriculum Autonomy is the same across categories of Delegator.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Discussion

In its broadest term, this study was an attempt to broaden the scope of research on EFL teacher education. Among multiple variables related to English language teachers, researcher chose to remain focused to inspect whether or not there was any significant relationship between teachers' teaching styles and their autonomy (general and curriculum). To this end, after examining 129 questionnaires which were thoroughly filled out, data analysis was run. After this stage, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis; that is to say, the categories of Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles in terms of curriculum autonomy are significantly different from one another. In other words, there is a significant relationship between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy. A closer look at the descriptive statistics of these teaching styles reveals that the low category of the above teaching styles is of higher curriculum autonomy. This indicates that there is a negative relationship between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy while in terms of general autonomy, the hypothesis was retained.

The findings of this study regarding teachers' autonomy are to some extent in line with the results of the study done by L Carolyn Pearson and William Moomaw (2005) in which teachers' autonomy was found correlated with on-the-job stress, professionalism and empowerment; in that as the curriculum autonomy increased, on-the-job stress decreased, but only little correlation was found between job satisfaction and curriculum autonomy; the study, as well, released that as general autonomy increased, so did empowerment and professionalism, but no relationship was detected between autonomy and teaching level (elementary, middle and high school).

Moreover, in terms of the second variable of this study, i.e, teachers' teaching styles, pursuant to Hossein Nowrouzi (2012), it was proved that teachers' teaching styles and self efficacy were significantly related; on the one hand, high self-efficacy was found to be related to particular teaching styles including Delegator and Personal Model, on the other hand, low self-efficacy was correlated to Expert and Formal Authority teaching styles.

CONCLUSION

The present study was an effort to contribute towards the betterment of the field of teacher education. The findings of this survey revealed that the categories of Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles in terms of curriculum autonomy are significantly different from one another. Simply put, there is a significant relationship between teachers' Expert, Personal Model, and Delegator styles and curriculum autonomy. A closer look at the descriptive statistics of these teaching styles proves that the low category of the above teaching styles is of higher curriculum autonomy.

The current study sustained the following limitations which are expected to be removed in the future studies.

First, the researcher based his selection of the participants on available sampling. The replication of the study is recommended in case procedures that allow a higher degree of randomization and ultimately more generalizability are employed.

Second, on account of the corresponding nationality of all the participants – Iranian — the results cannot be generalized to teachers of other countries.

Pedagogical implications

This study was particularly performed so as to lay the major emphasis on teachers and their main attributes, the dearth of which has always been distinct throughout the academic research. By considering the main variables of this study, English language instruction could be facilitated and done more fruitfully. Teachers, by selecting an appropriate teaching style can make a great contribution towards the amelioration of students' learning.

Pursuant to ETUCE (2008), it is the teacher who knows the classroom reality best and is able to make the best and most sound decisions with respect to the pupils. Accordingly, English language owners and directors ought to allow teachers more autonomy which may consequently enhance the quality of instruction.

REFERENCES

- Barfield, A., et al. (2002). Exploring and defining teacher autonomy: A collaborative discussion. In A. S. Mackenzie & E. McCafferty (Eds.) *Developing Autonomy* (pp. 217-222). Tokyo: JALT CUE SIG.
- Barton, J., & Collins, A. (1993). Portfolios in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 44(3), 200-210..
- Grasha, A. F. (1996). Teaching with style: A practical guide to enhance learning by understanding learning and teaching style. *College Teaching*, 48, 1-12
- Hill, J. P., & Holmbeck, G. N. (1986). Attachment and autonomy during adolescence. *Ann. Child Dev*, 3, 145-189.
- Hill, T.E. (1991). *Autonomy and self-respect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Khojastemehr, R., & Takrimi. A. (2009). Characteristics of effective teachers: Perceptions of the English teachers. *Journal of Education and Psychology*, 3(2), 53-66.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy: definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentic.
- Melenyzer, B. J. (1990, November). *Teacher empowerment: The discourse, meaning, and social actions of teaches*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on States on Inservice Education, Orlando, Florida
- Menken, K., & Look, K. (2000, February). *Meeting the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Schools in the Middle*. Washington, DC: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- On Stein, A.C., & Miller, H. C. (1980). *Looking into teaching: an introduction to American education*. Boston: Houghton.
- Paiva, V.L. M. O. (2011). Identity, motivation and autonomy in second language acquisition from the perspective of complex adaptive systems. In G. Murray, X. Gao, & L. Lamb, *Identity, motivation and autonomy in second language* (pp. 57-75). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Peacock, M. (2001). Match or mismatch? Learning style and teaching style in EFL. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. Retrieved from <http://searchglobal.epnet.com>.
- Pearson, LC., & Moomaw, W. (2005). *Continuing Validation of the Teaching Autonomy Scale*. Manuscript submitted fjr publication
- Purkey, W., & Novak, J. (1996). *Inviting school success: A selfconcept approach to teaching and learning (3rd ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press..
- Shakouri Masouleh, N., & Bahraminezhad Jooneghani, R. (2012). *Autonomous learning: A teacher-less learning! Elsevier Ltd. Selection and/or peer-review under responsibility of The Association of Science, Education and Technology* doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.570.
- Short, P. M. (1994). Defining teacher empowerment. *Education*, 114 (4), 488-493
- Smith, R.C. (2000). Starting with ourselves: Teacher-learner autonomy in language learning. In B. Sinclair, I. McGrath and T. Lamb (Eds.), *Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy: Future directions* (.pp89-99). London: Longman.
- Street, M. S. (1988). *An investigation of the relationships among supervisory expertise of the principal, teacher autonomy, and environmental robustness of the school*. (Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1988). Dissertations Abstracts International, 50

Vye, S., et al. (2002). *Teaching autonomy: Exploring the paradox*.

William, E. M. (2005). *Teacher-perceived autonomy: a construct validation of the teacher autonomy scale* b.s., southern Illinois university, 1985

Wilson, M. (2011). *Students' learning style preferences and teachers' instructional strategies: Correlations between matched styles and academic achievement*

The Authors:

Dr Abdollah Baradaran is the Assistant Professor of TEFL and the chairman of the foreign languages faculty at Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. As for his professional background, he has taught many different courses in teaching English language to graduate students. He has published several papers in national and international journals and presented in numerous seminars.

Ehsan Hosseinzadeh (Corresponding Author) graduated with Masters degree in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. Regarding his professional background, in addition to being the entrepreneur and principal manager of an English language centre in Tehran, Iran, he has designed, developed and taught wide-ranging courses to a multitude of candidates for several years. His main research interests have been instructional management, cooperative supervision, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, teacher training, teachers' various teaching styles and their autonomy.

INCIDENTAL L2 VOCABULARY LEARNING AND RETENTION; TYPES OF GLOSSING: MARGINAL GLOSSES VS. ENDNOTES

Mohammad Hossein Yousefi (mhh.yousefi@gmail.com)

Reza Biria (r_biria@yahoo.com)

Department of English, Khorasgan (Isfahan) branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

A surge of research interest has been targeted as to find the most effective types of glossing in second language (L2) incidental reading and L2 vocabulary learning. Capitalizing on Involvement Load Hypothesis (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001), the present study aims to compare the efficacy of two different types of glosses; marginal vs. endnotes in L2 vocabulary learning and retention. For the purpose of the data collection, two intact groups at Azad University of Bonab, Iran were randomly assigned to two groups. These two groups had more or less similar English proficiency knowledge. The participants (total=63) have been studying English at school and university for six years and all of them were majoring in accounting, genetics, electrical engineering, and microbiology. Students in first class were provided with marginal glosses and the latter group received glosses as endnotes. A pre-test was conducted to ensure that the target words were unfamiliar to the students. Both groups performed the given reading tasks under the similar conditions and allotted time. Finally, immediate posttest, embedding the same target words in it, was conducted. Two weeks a delayed posttest was conducted to investigate the retention of L2 vocabulary items. The results highlighted the beneficial effects for endnote glossing in both immediate and delayed posttest. It is argued that students in endnote group outperformed those in marginal gloss group (both in immediate and delayed posttest) highlight the fact that participants in endnote group involved in a wide range of mental tasks, e.g, making inferences, selective attention, establishing links between the meaning of the target words in the text and examples provided at the end of the reading comprehension task.

KEYWORDS: L2 vocabulary acquisition; L2 vocabulary retention; glossing

INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that lexical development is an essential step in second language acquisition (Tight, 2010). Moreover, learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second language, and the first or initial step in the process of acquiring vocabulary is to establish a form-meaning link (Schmitt, 2008). A number of studies (e.g., Schmidt, 2001; Watanabe, 1997) suggest that attention is crucial to learning. In all gloss conditions, the gloss drew attention to the word and encouraged learners to view the word as something to be learned and not just as part of the text (Watanabe, 1997). Gloss in L2 reading refers to providing a short definition or explanation of

important words in a text (Bowles, 2004; Nation, 2001). Traditionally, a 'gloss' refers to short definitions or explanations of the meanings of words at the bottom or sides of a text in order to support learners' reading comprehension (Pak, 1986; Lomicka, 1998). Roby (1999) pointed out that "glosses are many kinds of attempts to supply what is perceived to be deficient in a reader's procedural or declarative knowledge." (p, 96). As an aid to learning new L2 vocabulary items and reading comprehension, 'glossing' has been the focus of much research interest in the field. Investigating the efficacy of different glossing types can have pedagogical implications for SLA theory and language teachers. The present study is an attempt to compare the effectiveness of two different glossing types on L2 vocabulary learning and retention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It has been argued that glossing help vocabulary learning and assist reading comprehension (Ko, 2012). A number of studies have provided evidence that glosses are effective in helping learners learn new lexical items in a second language (Bowles, 2004; Cheng & Good, 2009).

Zhang (2007) showed that in terms of vocabulary gains, the provision of marginal glosses was the more beneficial than the availability of dictionary and non-dictionary use. By providing additional information such as definitions or synonyms, glossing helps students cope with insufficient contextual cues in learning new words while reading (Ko, 2012). Hulstijn, Hollander, and Greidanus (1996) examined Incidental vocabulary learning using marginal glosses and dictionaries. They also tested the effects of word frequency, either once or three times in the text. Researchers (Hulstijn, 1992; Hulstijn et al., 1996; Watanabe, 1997) have also found that glosses facilitate second-language learners' vocabulary growth. Research has further indicated that language learners with access to marginal vocabulary glosses demonstrate greater vocabulary growth than those without glosses (Hulstijn, 1992; Hulstijn, et al., 1996; Watanabe, 1997). Additionally, Huang and Lin (2014) believe that glossing can increase the possibility of learning correct word meanings in context, but leaving words unglossed for learners to infer or retrieve their word meanings may increase the involvement load and mental effort, thus contributing to better retention (p.128).

Nation (2001) enumerated four advantages for glossing: First, learners can read difficult texts without simplification or adaptation. Second, providing accurate meanings prevents learners from guessing incorrectly, which should facilitate vocabulary learning and comprehension. Third, glossing does not seriously interrupt the reading process and it is less time-consuming than dictionary use. Fourth, learners may focus on glossed words, which may encourage learning. For example, the results of (Ko, 2012) indicated that glossing had a positive effect on L2 vocabulary learning.

More recently, (Ko, 2012) conducted a study to investigate the effect of different types of glosses as well as no- gloss and glossed texts on L2 vocabulary learning. The participants were randomly assigned to three groups: no gloss, L1 gloss, and L2 gloss. The participants were asked to read a text and after reading the materials, an unexpected vocabulary test was administered and a delayed vocabulary test was administered four weeks later. The findings showed that, on the

immediate vocabulary test, there was a significant difference between no-gloss and glossed conditions. However, participants showed no significant differences between texts with L1 glosses and L2 glosses.

Turk and Ercetin (2014) investigated the effects of interactive versus simultaneous display of visual and verbal multimedia information on incidental vocabulary learning and reading comprehension of learners of English with lower proficiency levels. The study involved two conditions: interactive display condition and the simultaneous display condition. In the former condition, learners were permitted to choose the type of multimedia information while the simultaneous display condition presented the verbal (definitions) and visual (associated pictures) information in a single gloss. The results of (Turk & Ercetin, 2014) indicated that the participants utilized glosses less frequently when they were given the control over access to the type of multimedia information. Furthermore, simultaneous display of multimedia information led to better performance on reading and vocabulary tests.

Moreover, Nation (2001) is of the belief that unsimplified and unadapted texts can be used with L2 learners if glosses are incorporated. He adds that glossing leads to minimal interruption of the reading process by providing accurate meanings for words that might not be guessed correctly by learners. The results of (Ko, 2012) demonstrated that there would be a significant difference between gloss and no-gloss groups with respect to gaining word meaning. Huang's meta-analysis on the effects of glosses on L2 incidental vocabulary learning (2010) revealed that language learners who were provided with textual glosses gained more vocabulary than those who had no access to glosses.

According to Nation (2001), textual glosses help language learners consolidate knowledge of unknown words. Hulstijn (1992) proposed the use of multiple-choice glosses, which combine the advantages of inference with single glosses because they reduce the challenges imposed by insufficient context and the possibility of inaccurate inferences.

In addition, Hulstijn (1992) found that language learners who have to infer the meaning of unknown words in text by themselves (high mental effort) are more likely to remember the form and meaning of an unfamiliar word compared to those who are given the meaning of unknown words. In another study, Yanguas (2009) examined the effect of multimedia glosses on L2 incidental vocabulary learning. Two weeks prior to the research, a vocabulary pre-test administered to the participants. They were randomly assigned to one of four groups: control, textual, pictorial, and textual+ pictorial glosses. Results indicated that all groups exposed to glosses outperformed the control group in the immediate vocabulary recognition posttest. Furthermore, participants who were provided with textual +pictorial glosses performed the best, followed by the pictorial glosses, textual glosses, and control groups.

In an experiment, Yoshii (2006) found a significant difference between the L1 and L2 textual gloss groups and between the picture and no-picture groups. Among these four groups, the L1-plus-picture group performed the best. However, no significant difference was found on the

recognition vocabulary test between the L1 and L2 textual groups and between the picture and no-picture groups.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following research questions :

1. Do glossing provided through marginal ones and glossing provided as endnotes affect L2 vocabulary learning differently?
2. Do glossing provided through marginal ones and glossing provided as endnotes affect L2 vocabulary retention differently

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present study were 74 intermediate learners studying (EFL). They were 73 learners (male = 41, female= 32). But 9 of them were eliminated from the statistical analyses. Because 4 of them had the knowledge of some target words and five of them did not take delayed posttest. Two intact groups (group one = 31, group two = 32) at Azad University of Bonab, Iran were randomly assigned to two groups. These two groups had more or less similar English proficiency knowledge. The participants (total=63) have been studying English at school and university for six years and all of them were majoring in accounting, genetics, electrical engineering, and microbiology. The participants age ranged between 19 to 39 (mean=27).

Target words and materials

A reading text, a passage on philosophy, was adapted to the participants' level. Effort was made to ensure that participants were not familiar with the topic and therefore not have prior knowledge about it. We chose 12 target words and all of these lexical were bolded and appeared once in the text. Target words included: **inquiry, privileged, legitimacy, revelation, speculative, epistemology, rational, extraction, insight, aesthetics, tacit, and obscurity**. The text was adopted into two formats; one had marginal glosses and the latter had glosses appeared at the end of the reading task (as endnotes, as well as other information to trigger more mental processing). The reading task had 800 words and its reading difficulty index was determined through pilot study. Moreover, pilot study was conducted to determine the allotted time for task performance and ensure that the target words were unfamiliar to the participants. In this study, learning L2 vocabulary was operationalized as the ability to recognize vocabulary (receptive knowledge); because participants would be learning vocabulary as a result of reading.

Procedures

A total number of 63 students participated in this study. Prior to the main experiment, a cloze test was given to the students to check the equivalence of the two groups. The results of the independent T-test revealed that there were no significant differences between the two groups. Students in first class were provided with glosses in the form of marginal glosses and the latter group received glosses as endnotes. The participants in the marginal group received only English definitions of the target words on the margins of each page. Whereas, the participants in the

endnote group were provided with the definitions of the target words as well as examples to clarify their style, formal features, collocations, and other parts of speech of the target words in an attempt to trigger deeper processing level compared with the first group. A pre-test (recognition multiple-choice test) was conducted to ensure that the target words were unfamiliar to the students. Both groups performed the given reading tasks under the similar conditions and allotted time (40 minutes). The participants read the text and returned their materials. After finishing the reading comprehension test, they were given vocabulary test (11 minutes to take the L2 vocabulary test). Immediate posttest also had the format of recognition multiple-choice test. Two weeks later, the participants were given an unexpected delayed vocabulary posttest so that to investigate their retention of L2 vocabulary items. All tests were developed by the first researcher and through pilot study on a group of five students at the same level of L2 proficiency; some changes were made in their items and sequences. Both immediate and delayed posttest had the similar format and included 12 items. Following Ko (2012), every correct response on the part of the participants assigned 2 score. Hence the maximum score every participant could gain was 24.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 18 and assuming the independence of the two groups, the independent samples t-test was used. Table1 provides the standard deviations, means, and for both marginal glosses and endnote groups (immediate and delayed posttest). The mean of marginal gloss group in immediate posttest was 9.29 and the mean of endnote group was 15.40. The mean of marginal gloss group in delayed posttest was 6.70, while the mean of endnote group was 11.31.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Immediate and Delayed Posttest

group1		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
delayed	marginal	31	6.7097	2.06871
	endnote	32	11.3125	3.33542
immediate	Marginal	31	9.2903	2.43849
	endnote	32	15.4063	2.94968

According to the Table 2 t-observed of immediate posttest is 8.94 at ($P < .05$) and greater than t critical (1.67). Happily, the null hypothesis (H_0) stating that "there is no significant difference between the two groups in L2 vocabulary learning" is rejected. And the alternative hypothesis (H_1) stating that "participants receiving glosses at the end of the reading comprehension text with extra information about the target words outperformed those students that received the definitions of the target words as marginal glosses.

As far as delayed posttest is concerned, t observed for delayed posttest is 6.55 at ($P < .05$) and greater than t critical (1.67). The results verified the fact that retention rate of L2 vocabulary items is significantly different.

Table 2: Independent Samples T-Test for Comparing Uptake in Simple vs. Complex Task Group

	t-test for Equality of Means		Sig. (2-tailed)
	t	df	
Delayed Posttest	-6.557	61	.000
Immediate Posttest	-8.954	61	.000

The findings of this study are in line with the predictions of Involvement Load Hypothesis (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001) in that learning new vocabulary items is contingent on the degree of processing them. The results also gave support to (Ko, 2012; Roby, 1999) in that “glosses are many kinds of attempts to supply what is perceived to be deficient in a reader’s procedural or declarative knowledge.

It has been argued that glossing help vocabulary learning and assist reading comprehension (Ko, 2012). However, a number of studies have found beneficial effects for marginal glosses (Hulstijn, Hollander, Greidanus, 1996; Zhang, 2007). Some of them examined Incidental vocabulary learning using marginal glosses and dictionaries. The results of the study also support Zhang (2007) that in terms of vocabulary gains, the provision of marginal glosses was the more beneficial than the availability of dictionary and non-dictionary use.

The results of the present study are in line with the (Hulstijn, 1992; Hulstijn et al., 1996; Watanabe, 1997) in that glosses facilitate second-language learners’ vocabulary growth. A number of studies, however, highlighted the role of glosses in L2 vocabulary learning (Hulstijn, 1992; Hulstijn, et al., 1996; Watanabe, 1997). Those language learners with access to marginal vocabulary glosses demonstrate greater vocabulary growth than those without glosses. The present study, nonetheless, did not include control group to account for the differences between gloss and non-gloss groups.

The results of the present study also sit well with the argument of Huang and Lin (2014) in that leaving words unglossed for learners to infer or retrieve their word meanings may increase the involvement load and mental effort, thus contributing to better retention. We hypothesize that the more mental effort is consumed learning L2 vocabulary items, the longer and more stable would be the learning and retention of the target words. We also believe that providing L2 learners with different types of glosses should not be interpreted as not allowing them to involve in the task of L2 vocabulary learning and process incoming information. Rather, providing language learners with different types of glosses can be assumed as aiding reading task and proceed in it.

The fact that students in endnote group outperformed those in marginal gloss group (both in immediate and delayed posttest) highlight the fact that participants in endnote group involved in a wide range of mental tasks, e.g. making inferences, comparing and contrasting words, selective attention, returning back to the target sentences in the text, establishing links between the

meaning of the target words in the text and examples provided at the end of the reading comprehension task. All in all, these mental tasks and deeper levels of involvement in learning L2 vocabulary, we believe that, enhance the likelihood of coming L2 vocabulary items into memory.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, this study indicates that the more involvement triggered by the reading task, the better and higher the rate of L2 vocabulary learning and retention. We also call for modification of glosses in a way that trigger mental processing as well as aiding reading task. The results of this study should be taken as tentative and suggestive for future studies; different genre types, L2 reading proficiency, types of L2 words (emotion words, abstract words, and concrete words), L1 and L2 distance, age of the participants might have some moderating effects on the findings. Other studies should look at different types and times of delivery of the glosses. The timing of glosses may be a much more important factor in enhancing mental processing and deeper level of involvement in L2 vocabulary learning. This study has a number of pedagogical implications for syllabus designers, and language teachers as to involve students more deeply in the process of L2 vocabulary learning tasks. Language teachers should design classroom tasks in a way that trigger independent learning and allow mental processing. Language teachers should train students in a way that they would be able to employ different reading strategies as well as vocabulary learning techniques. Syllabus designers and curriculum planners should select and sequence learning tasks in a way moving from less mental demanding tasks towards the classroom tasks that require deeper mental processing on the part of the language learners. Other lines of inquiry can compare the sequencing of different glossing types in more longitudinal studies. Since L2 vocabulary and reading comprehension are regarded as incremental and long-term task. This study has a number of limitations; first, the duration of the treatment sessions was not long enough to generalize the findings to other contexts. Second, Iranian EFL learners' repertoire of L2 reading would not allow them to be good readers. They rarely taught reading strategies at schools and universities as well. Third, the reading task type and format and testing types might have confounding effects on the L2 vocabulary learning and retention. Fourth, all the target words in this study were "abstract words". Word type such as this may affect the findings.

REFERENCES

- Bowles, M.A. (2004). L2 glossing: To CALL or not to CALL. *Hispania*, 87, 541–552.
- Cheng, Y., & Good, R.L. (2009). L1 glosses: Effects on EFL learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary retention. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 21, 119–142.
- Huang, S.F. (2010). Effects of tasks and glosses on L2 incidental vocabulary learning: meta-analysis. . Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Texas A&M University.
- Huang, I., & Lin, C.C. (2014). Three approaches to glossing and their effects on vocabulary Learning. *System*, 44, 127-136.
- Hulstijn, J. (1992). Retention of inferred and given word meanings: Experiments in incidental vocabulary learning. In P.J.L. Arnaud & H. Bejoing (Eds.) . *Vocabulary and applied linguistics* (pp.113-125). London: Macmillan.

- Hulstijn, J. H., Hollander, M., & Greidanus, T. (1996). Incidental vocabulary learning by advanced foreign language students: The influence of marginal glosses, dictionary use, and reoccurrence of unknown words. *The Modern Language Journal*, 80, 327–339.
- Ko, H.M. (2012). Glossing and second language vocabulary learning. *TESOL QUARTERLY*. 46 (1), 56-79.
- Laufer, B., & Hulstijn, J. H. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: The construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 1–26.
- Lomicka, L. (1998). “To gloss or not to gloss”: An investigation of reading comprehension online. *Language Learning & Technology*, 1(2), 41-50.
- Nation, J.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Pak, J. (1986). The effect of vocabulary glossing on ESL reading comprehension. Unpublished manuscript, University of Hawaii at Manoa. (Reprinted from “To gloss or not to gloss”: An investigation of reading comprehension online, pp. 41, by Lomicka, L. *Language Learning & Technology*, 1(2).
- Roby, W. (1999). “What Is in A Gloss?” *Language Learning & Technology*, 2(2), 94-101.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp.3-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12 (3), 329-363.
- Tight, D.G. (2012). Perceptual learning style matching and L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*. 60 (4), 792-833.
- Türk, E., & Erçetin, G. (2014) Effects of interactive versus simultaneous display of multimedia glosses on L2 reading comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 27 (1), 1-25,
- Watanabe, Y. (1997). Input, intake, and retention: Effects of increased processing on incidental learning of foreign language vocabulary, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 287-307.
- Yanguas, I. (2009). Multimedia glosses and their effect on L2 text comprehension and vocabulary learning. *Language Learning and Technology*, 13 (2), 48-67.
- Yoshii, M. (2006). L1 and L2 glosses: Their effects on incidental vocabulary learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10(3), 85-101.
- Zhang, L. (2007). *Study of Incidental Vocabulary Learning of Chinese Intermediate English Learners*. MA Dissertation: Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai.

INVESTIGATING LEARNERS' GRAMMATICAL ENGLISH RELATIVE PRONOUNS THROUGH THE INTERACTIONIST MODEL OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT BASED ON A SANDWICH FORMAT

Morteza Majdedin

*Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, Shiraz University, Iran
E-mail: nmajdedin@gmail.com*

Ali Nabizadeh

*Department General of Fars Province Education, Iran
E-mail: alinabizadeh1391@gmail.com*

Ali Taghinezhad

*Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, Shiraz University, Iran
E-mail: taghinezhad1@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to investigate the effect of the interactionist model of dynamic assessment on the learners' grammatical knowledge of English relative pronouns through a sandwich format. To this end, 60 learners from Navid Language Institute in Shiraz, Iran were randomly selected; and also were assigned into two homogeneous groups. In this study, 30 learners were from the teenager department and the rest were from the adult department. Then, the three aspects of a sandwich format through the interactionist model of dynamic assessment (DA) were conducted in both departments. The independent sample t-test was used to analyze the results obtained from both the teenagers and adults' groups. The findings of this study illustrated a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the grammatical English relative pronouns tests in both groups which shows the improvement of scores after mediation. Consequently, it is shown that the teenagers would benefit from the interactionist DA based on a sandwich format more than the adult learners. The results obtained from this study can have useful implications for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners and teachers. To this end, the results can be of crucial significance for EFL students in order to diagnose their weaknesses and strengths; and also mitigate their weaknesses in subsequent evaluations. In classroom setting, teachers can also make use of DA as a kind of strategic assessment which provides them useful information so that they can evaluate their students precisely.

KEYWORDS: Dynamic Assessment, Interactionist DA, Sandwich Format, Relative Pronouns

INTRODUCTION

The first decade of the twenty first century is marked with the changes in educational settings including language assessment and instruction. One of the most important reconsiderations came about in reaction to traditional psychometric views which support a disintegrated view of instruction and assessment. The novel approach known as dynamic assessment (DA) has established a profound integration between language testing and language instruction. Poehner (2008, p.2) posits that "active collaboration with individuals simultaneously reveals the full range of their abilities and promotes their development. In educational contexts, this means that assessment – understanding learners' abilities – and instruction – supporting learner development – are a dialectically integrated activity". This approach has come to be known as dynamic assessment. Dynamic assessment is primarily rooted in Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978, p.86) clearly defines ZPD as " the distance between the actual development level as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". As such, learners with a large ZPD are more responsive to the assistance, while the learners with a small ZPD are less responsive (Poehner, 2008). Dynamic assessment suggests a wealth of development in educational settings. It contends that mental abilities are socially mediated through interaction with others (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004).

While several studies have been devised (eg, Ableeva, 2008; Lantolf & Poehner; 2004; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002) to evaluate dynamic assessment in foreign language learning, no study has been carried out thus far to examine the effect of DA on learners' grammatical knowledge of English relative pronouns. However, the main objective of this study was to investigate the effects of the interactionist model of DA on the learners' grammatical English relative pronouns through a sandwich format.

Dynamic Assessment vs. Non-dynamic Assessment

According to Poehner (2008) dynamic testing and non-dynamic testing are not referred to as assessment instruments but to administration procedures. In dynamic assessment the learners are taught on how to perform certain tasks through mediated assistance (Kirschenbaum, 1998). Also, in dynamic assessment procedures, the emphasis is on the process rather than the products of learning. In other words, the dynamic nature of this theory is highly and primarily rooted in Vygotsky's observation that a body can envisage what it is only in movement (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). According to Lidz (1987, p. 4) DA is "an interaction between an examiner-as-intervener and a learner-as-active participant, which seeks to estimate the degree of modifiability of the learner and the means by which positive changes in cognitive functioning can be induced and maintained".

Non dynamic assessment is to make decision on static, one time scores exclusively (Wiedl, Guthke & Wingefeld, 1995). According to Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002), in non-dynamic testing the questions are administered to test takers who are supposed to answer successively, without taking any kind of assistance. In contrast, dynamic assessment intends to provide learners with sufficient support in order to make amend their learning deficits and also assist them to reach their potential development.

Interactionist vs. Interventionist Dynamic Assessment

In this section attempt has been made to elaborate on the differences between the two significant approaches to DA – interventionist and interactionist. In the interventionist model, different types of mediations are systematized and standardized, thereby underscoring the psychometric and statistical properties of the assessment procedure (Poehner, 2008). In the interactionist model, "assistance emerges from the interaction between the examiner and the learner, and is therefore highly sensitive to the learner's ZPD" (Lantolf, 2007, p. 54). Interventionist DA "is concerned with quantifying, as an index of speed of learning" (Brown & Ferrara, 1985, p.300). In other words, Interventionist DA emphasizes on the amount of assistance or mediation indispensable for a learner to quickly reach a pre-determined end point. Interactionist DA, on the other hand, focuses on the development of an individual learner or even a group of learners, irrespective of the effort required and without concern for a pre-specified end point (Lantolf, 2007). Antón (2003) and Gibbons (2003) conducted empirical studies with respect to the interactionist model of DA. Antón (2003) supports an interactionist DA procedure used for placement purposes in a university advanced L2 Spanish program and demonstrates that the interactionist DA procedure indicated significant differences among candidates that may have otherwise remained hidden. Gibbons (2003) also demonstrates the importance of interactionist DA in an L2 content-based school setting.

Sandwich and Cake Formats of DA

DA procedures can be designed in accordance with what Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) have described as sandwich and cake formats. The sandwich format is much more consistent with traditional experimental research designs in which mediation is administered following a pretest and a post-test (used to investigate the effectiveness of the mediation) (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). In the sandwich format to DA, "a mediation phase is similarly sandwiched between pretest and posttest that are administered in a non-dynamic manner (Poehner, 2008, p.19)". The performance on the posttest can then be compared to that of pretest so as to determine how much promotion an individual made as a result of assistance (Poehner, 2008). Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) also posit that these procedures can be administered in either an individual or group setting, and that in individualized procedures the assistance may also be individualized, while in group procedures the assistance tends to be equal for everyone. In the latter format namely the cake format assistance or mediation is offered during the administration of the assessment, whenever problems emerge. According to Poehner (2008) in interventionist approaches to DA, the assistance offered might be in the form of a set of graded standardized hints ranging from implicit to explicit. Then the mediator calculates the number of hints indispensable for the learner in order to respond appropriately to the particular item. Also, in an interactionist approaches to DA, any evaluation of variation in learners over time would have to include both the quality and quantity of assistance (Poehner, 2008). In the present study attempt was made to investigate the effect of the interactionist model of DA on the learners' grammatical English relative pronouns through a sandwich format.

Mediated Learning Experience (MLE)

Feuerstein et al. (1988) describe the mediated learning experience (MLE) as a procedure through which external stimuli do not influence directly on the organism but are adjusted through usually

an adult mediator, who frames order on the stimuli to make assure that the relations between specific stimuli will be experienced in a specific way. Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) express that the mediator not only refines the stimuli or task but also influences the learner by provoking him or her to a higher level of curiosity and to a level at which structural cognitive changes can occur. While differences are apparent between Vygotsky's and Feuerstein's theories both researchers understand mediation and assistance as the psychological part of cultural transmission (Poehner, 2008). As Lantolf (2007) posit, the MLE comprises from several significant components, including feelings of competence, ability to self-regulate, and the internalization of general learning principles that guide the individual in 'learning how to learn. Furthermore, the mediator must carefully select culturally determined stimuli for presentation to the individual. This enables the learner to easily inculcate the cultural practice one is taking part in with the mediator. In order to further extend current abilities to prospective performances, the individual must extend what has been internalized by expecting outcomes which are probable to result from certain actions (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002).

Empirical Studies in Dynamic Assessment on the EFL Context

On the EFL context in Iran the following researchers have conducted their studies to assess the effect of DA on the Iranian EFL learners. Jafary et al. (2012) investigated the effect of dynamic assessment on learners' syntactic knowledge. The results showed that at a 0.05 level of significance the mean of experimental group was more than the mean of control group for different scores. Also, Pishghadam et al. (2011) investigated the effectiveness of using a computerized dynamic reading comprehension test (CDRT) on the Iranian EFL students. The results illustrated that providing mediation in the form of hints contributed significantly to the increase of students' scores, and consequently to the improvement of text comprehension. In another study conducted by Zoghi and Malmeer (2013) attempt was made to explore the effect of an interactionist model of DA on the Iranian EFL adult learners' intrinsic motivation. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups namely experimental and control group in terms of their amount of intrinsic motivation. The experimental group showed a high intrinsic motivation due to the interactionist model of DA.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was designed to investigate the possible effect of interactionist dynamic assessment on students' grammatical English relative pronouns and the degree of the effect that DA can have with respect to the learners' age. Thus, the following research questions were proposed:

Q1: Is there any significant difference between teenagers and adults performance in grammatical English relative pronouns when a DA procedure is used?

Q2: Does the interactionist dynamic assessment based on a sandwich format promote the learners' grammatical English relative pronouns?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In this study the three aspects of the sandwich format of dynamic assessment were used with 60 EFL students in Navid Language Institute in Shiraz, Iran. To this end, 30 learners were randomly selected from the adult department and the rest were from the teenager department. All the participants were basically studying the Top Notch series books for the purpose of learning English better and achieving higher degrees in their education.

Design of the Study

The design of the study was based on an experimental design accompanied with pre-test and post-test comparison groups. Also the three aspects of a sandwich format namely, pre-test, mediation, and post-test were used. As poehner (2008) clearly states, in sandwich format a mediation phase is sandwiched between pre-testing and post-testing. As such, in this study the researchers attempted to help the students in order to see the effect of the interactionist model of dynamic assessment. Also, attempt was made not to disclose the answers explicitly but to provide them with hints implicitly. Consequently, the performance on the post-test was compared to that of pre-test so as to see how much improvement in English relative pronouns emerged.

Corpus

For the purpose of data collection on the students' ability in relative pronouns the researchers used the exercises in Navid Language Institute students' books.

Instruments

In this study, 40 multiple choice items of relative pronouns were extracted from the standardized TOEFL® test to be implemented as the questions of the study. The researchers administered two different but equivalent grammatical English relative pronouns tests in the pre-testing and post-testing stage. To this end, 20 items were administered in the pre-testing stage and the rest were administered in the post-testing stage.

Procedures

Six classes in Navid Language Institute in Shiraz, Iran (three from the teenager's department and three from the adult's department) were randomly selected and attempt was made to equate the number of students in each class for the purpose of having an equal sample size in each department in order to be able to compare the mean scores of the groups. To this end, in each department 30 students were randomly selected as participants of the study. The researchers scheduled to implement the three stages of sandwich format through the interactionist DA. To this end, two tests on grammatical English relative pronouns were prepared to be implemented in pre-test and post-test stage. The three stages are as follow.

In the pre-test stage as the first stage the students in both groups were given some question in terms of grammatical English relative pronouns and were asked to answer them. The questions were all in multiple choice formats. Then the researchers carefully corrected learners' papers obtained from the students and tried to provide individual comments and explanations to the students for their errors of grammatical English relative pronouns.

In the second stage, the researchers, who adopt a mediator role gave feedback, explanation through interaction and provided hints to them from implicit to explicit.

Finally in the last stage a post-test was administered. In this stage the questions were equivalent but different to that of the pre-test stage so as to compare the learners' improvement in grammatical English relative pronouns in both teenagers and adults' group. Then, the data were submitted to Spss for two independent samples of t-test between the groups.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

In order to delve into the research questions the three aspects of the sandwich format through interactionist DA was administered to the students in both groups. Then the descriptive statistic was used on both groups. The results of descriptive analysis are illustrated in Table 1. As can be seen from the result, in the pre-testing stage both groups were nearly homogeneous with respect to their knowledge of grammatical English relative pronouns. In addition, there was no significant difference between teenagers and adults in the pre-testing stage with regard to their mean scores. Moreover, as can be seen from Table 1, in the post-test stage the teenagers showed improvement in their grammatical knowledge of English relative pronouns in comparison to adults.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics: Results of pre-test post-test scores in both groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test Teens	30	14.317	2.78456	.45432
Pre- Test Adults	30	14.325	3.42567	.32156
Post-Test Teens	30	17.750	2.65461	.45432
Post-Test Adults	30	16.525	3.31165	.37654

Table 2 illustrates the result of the pre-testing stage. Regarding the pre-testing stage the independent t-test between teenagers and adults was conducted. As can be seen from the results, both groups are nearly equal before mediation. Then, another t-test was conducted on both groups in the post-test stage in order to reveal the amount of improvement in learners' grammatical English relative pronouns. To this end, Table 3 indicates the results of independent sample t-test pertained to the post-test scores in both groups. Independent sample t-test illustrates a significant difference of .108, $t(60) = 1.575$, $p > .05$. Also, the eta square is .02 which is small.

Table 2: Inferential statistics (Results of independent-sample t-test for pre-test)

	Levene's Test For Equality of Variances								
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.423	.506	.000	60	1.000	.0006	.7776	- .12306	1.2306
Equal variances not assumed			.000	66.875	1.000	.0006	.7770	- .12339	1.2339

Table 3: Inferential statistics (Results of independent-sample t-test for post-test)

	Levene's Test For Equality of Variances								
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.423	.108	1.575	60	.107	1.024	.630567	- .23065	2.23065
Equal variances not assumed			1.575	54.575	.108	1.024	.630567	- .23239	2.23239

The findings of this study would be discussed with respect to two main objectives of the study that the researchers intended to investigate. At first, the effect of DA on learners' grammatical knowledge of English relative pronouns then the effect of DA on learners' age would be discussed. The results obtained from the comparison of the pre-testing and post-testing stage in terms of their mean scores revealed that both adults and teenagers improved their performances through the use of an interactionist model of DA based on a sandwich format. The results obtained from the present study are consistent with the other studies indicating the positive effect of DA on the EFL learners (eg. Ableeva, 2008; Jafary et al., 2012; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Pishghadam et al., 2011; Zoghi & Malmeer, 2013).

The current study also illustrated that learners in different age groups were not influenced by DA to the same degree. In this study, it was obvious that the teenagers would benefit more than the

adults when an interactionist model of dynamic assessment based on a sandwich format was conducted in order to evaluate learners' grammatical English relative pronouns. A very lucrative interaction which happened between the teenagers and the researchers led the teens to gain more from this procedure. One possible explanation might be regarded as the behavior that the teens have in the process of interacting with the examiners because they are more lenient in accepting their mistakes in comparison to the adults. In contrast, adults seem to benefit from the controlled standardized teaching hints and techniques. Furthermore, the findings could be explained from Piaget's view of intellectual learning. For Piaget, language development is the result of gradual promotion of general intellectual skills. As adults have more developed intellectual system it is probable that they would benefit cognitive processes including standardized strategies more when they are learning a language than teenagers that their intellectual capacity is not as developed as adults and are more susceptible to interact with others.

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to investigate the effect of an interactionist model of dynamic assessment on the EFL learners' grammatical English tenses. The study revealed that an interactionist dynamic assessment based on a sandwich format plays a major role on the improvement of learners' grammatical knowledge of English relative pronouns. In other words the findings of this study propose practical usages for classroom learning. The learners in the current study had positive attitudes toward learning English relative pronouns through the interactionist model of dynamic assessment as was clearly shown in their posttest scores. To this end, the use of dynamic assessment in classrooms can set the ground for better instruction and assessment which consequently promotes the quality of education. The current study is also implicated that through the incessant interaction of teachers and students, students can be informed of their own weaknesses and their strengths. Teachers can also help them for their breakdowns in the course of teaching. The results also revealed that the adult learners will not benefit DA to the extent that the teens do. The results gained from this study can be of paramount importance for both EFL teachers and students. EFL teachers should have access to the finding of this study to provide an appropriate and useful way of integrating teaching and testing; and also EFL learners required to be informed that instruction through assessment help them to become aware of their weaknesses and strengths. As such, learners have this opportunity to mitigate their weaknesses in subsequent evaluations.

Not surprisingly, DA even with all its practical restrictions has been regarded as relative solution to the drawbacks of traditional static tests. The results of this study suggest that further research on the effects of mediations in dynamic assessment whether interactionist or interventionist are warranted.

Conducting needs analysis during a course and having classes with a few number of learners help teachers implement the features of dynamic assessment and reach the potential development of their students as much as possible.

Limitations of the study

Although this study informed EFL teachers regarding the integration of instruction and assessment in the course of education, it suffers from some limitations. First, variables such as gender and personal variables were not taken into account so as to have a good picture of the obtained results. Second, the number of the participants in this study was comparatively small for the results to be generalized to the population of EFL learners in Iran. Third, this study was mainly focused on the interactionist model of DA and the interventionist model was not emphasized. Therefore, other researchers interested in DA can benefit from these issues to fill the gap emerged in the literature.

REFERENCES

- Ableeva, R. (2008). The effects of dynamic assessment on L2 listening comprehension In: *Sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages* J. P. Lantolf and M. E. Poehner (Eds.). London: Equinox.
- Anton, M. (2003). *Dynamic assessment of advanced foreign language learners*. Paper presented at the American Association of Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C., March.
- Feuerstein, R., Rand, Y. and Rynders, J.E. (1988). *Don't accept me as I am. Helping retarded performers excel*. New York: Plenum.
- Jafary, M. R., Nordin, N., & Mohajeri, R. (2012). The Effect of Dynamic versus Static Assessment on Syntactic Development of Iranian College Preparatory EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 5 (7), 149-157.
- Kirschenbaum, R. J. (1998). Dynamic assessment and its use with underserved gifted and talented populations. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 42(3), 140-7.
- Lantolf, J.P. and Poehner, M.E (2004). Dynamic assessment of L2 development: bringing the past into the future. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1, 49-72.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Poehner, M. (2011). Dynamic assessment in the classroom: Vygotskian praxis for L2 development. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(11), 11-33.
- Lidz, C. S. (Ed.). (1987). *Dynamic assessment: An interactional approach to evaluating learning potential*. NY: Guilford Press.
- Lidz, C. S., & Gindis, B. (2003). Dynamic assessment of the evolving cognitive functions in children. In A. Kozulin, B. Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller (Eds.), *Vygotsky's Educational Theory in Cultural Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pishghadam, R., Barabadi, E., & MehriKamrood, A. (2011) the differing effects of computerized dynamic assessment of L2 reading comprehension on high and low achievers, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2 (6), 1353-1358.
- Poehner, M.E. (2008). *Dynamic assessment: A Vygotskian approach to understanding and promoting second language development*. Berlin: Springer Publishing.
- Sternberg, R.J. and Grigorenko, E.L. (2002). *Dynamic testing: The nature and measurement of learning potential*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society. The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wiedl, K. H., Guthke, J., & Wingenfeld, S. (1995). Dynamic assessment in Europe: Historical perspectives. In J. S. Carlson (Ed.), *Advances in cognition and educational practice (Vol. 3) European contributions to dynamic assessment* (pp. 185-208). London: JAI Press.

Zoghi, M., & Malmeer E. (2013). The Effect of Dynamic Assessment on EFL Learners' Intrinsic Motivation, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4 (3), 584-591.

COMPARING TWO DIFFERENT VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES IN AN IRANIAN EFL CONTEXT

Masoud Zoghi (PhD)

*Department of Foreign Language Education, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
dr.m.zoghi@gmail.com*

Nafiseh Asadzadeh Maleki (PhD candidate)

*Department of Foreign Language Education, Malekan Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Malekan, Iran
nafiseh.asadzadeh@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study was designated to investigate the effects of two mnemonic non-verbal vocabulary learning strategies (Key Word Method and Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction) to learning new lexical items. 63 students majoring English as a foreign language at Islamic Azad University in Maragheh, Iran, were participated in this study. According to Nelson proficiency test scores, the subjects were divided into three groups. One control group who learnt the target words in a conventional way, and two experimental groups with two vocabulary leaning approaches, KWM and SMSI. Before treatment, the subjects participated in pretest to assess their levels of vocabulary knowledge, then they took a posttest to measure the amount of vocabulary learning and retention. The obtained data were analyzed through SPSS software for windows. The results revealed that the subjects in KWM performed better than the other two groups and those who were in SMSI group outperformed than those in control group. The outcomes of the present study would open a new way for presenting different vocabulary learning strategies and improving EFL learners' better understanding and retaining of new presented target words.

KEYWORDS: vocabulary learning, Key Word Method, Semantic Mapping Instruction, vocabulary retention, mnemonics, non-verbal strategies

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, vocabulary is considered as an essential segment o second language learning and acquisition. It provides many advantage second language learners (Hippner-Page, 2000). Lynch (1996) believed that acquiring vocabulary is assumed as a vital process in learning a second of foreign language because it enhances learners' comprehension and serves as an influential step in making progress in language learning. Regarding the importance of vocabulary learning, a great number of different approaches to language learning, each with a different outlook on vocabulary, was proposed (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Jesa, 2008). On vocabulary (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Jesa, 2008). Once in a while, language teaching methodologies have received great weight to vocabulary learning, and sometimes it has been neglected (Schmitt, 2000). In practice, grammar and pronunciation are at the core of language learning, while vocabulary is neglected in most foreign language classes (Fernández, Prahlad, Rubtsova, &

Sabitov, 2009; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995). Nowadays it's widely accepted that vocabulary learning is one of the essential elements both of acquisition of one's native language and of learning a foreign language (Morra & Camba, 2009). Learning vocabulary is seen as a key element to achieve a high level of proficiency in the target language by a large number of theoreticians (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). Also researchers, teachers and others involved in foreign language learning are paying special attention to foreign language vocabulary acquisition (Zu, 2009). It is believed that having a large and varied vocabulary is the indicator of communicative competence and it is one of the important aspects of language learning (McCrostie, 2007).

Insights gained from the vocabulary learning processes have now highlighted the fact that second and foreign language learners should concentrate their efforts on developing vocabulary learning strategies. Regardless of this importance, for many years, there was little or no emphasis on vocabulary teaching. It was proposed that students should be able to learn the new target words they need without the aid of their teachers. Recently, researchers paid more attention to a number of strategies and techniques for teaching vocabulary (e.g. Rott, Williams & Cameron, 2002; Boers, PiquerPiriz, Free, & Eyckmans, 2009; Mizumoto, & Kansai, 2009; Shen, 2010). Research findings suggested that lexical problems frequently interfere with communication; communication breaks down when people do not use the right words in expressing intended meaning (Allen, 1983). Studies in vocabulary learning are considered as a "promising area of inquiry" (Ellis, 1990: 214).

Now that there is general agreement among vocabulary specialists on the point that lexical competence is at the very heart of communicative competence, there is a need for expanding the body of experimental studies to address several key questions about the effectiveness of different strategies and techniques of L2 vocabulary instruction on learning and retention. Considering the significance of vocabulary in language learning domain and to address the above problems, the current study was designed to determine the effectiveness of two mnemonic non-verbal approaches, Keyword Word Method (KWM) and Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction (SMSI) in enhancing learning and retention of vocabulary items.

Theoretical Background

The first years of first language (L1) acquisition are often characterized as focusing on language at the lexical level (Piennemann, Johnston, & Brindley, 1988). Likewise, many second language acquisition (SLA) researchers believe that sufficient lexical knowledge is the essential component in developing second language proficiency (Grabe & Stoller, 1997; Kim, 2011). Researchers of SLA (Gass, 1989; Olshtain, 1987; Richards, 1976; Tekmen & Daloglu, 2006) have identified lexical knowledge as including seven major components: (1) knowing various denotations of a word, (2) knowing appropriate uses of a word, (3) knowing its syntactic properties, (4) knowing its underlying forms and derivations, (5) knowing the associations the word has with other words (collocations), (6) knowing the connotations of a word and (7) knowing its frequency of occurrence.

Accordingly, language teachers and researchers have recently been cognizant of the fact that vocabulary is a vital aspect of language, which is worth investigating. However, learners usually confess that they experience substantial complexity with learning new words and many of them spot the acquisition of vocabulary as their utmost foundation of problems. The problem is to discover which ways or skills will best help learners better learn, retain and retrieve vocabulary. Consequently, it is essential for language teachers to be aware of the effectiveness of different methods of vocabulary teaching to choose the ones that are the most effective to their students; this is what we follow in this experimental study. A number of researchers have recently examined the fruitfulness of different techniques of vocabulary instruction (Rott, Williams, & Cameron, 2002; Singleton, 2008; Min, 2008; Mizumoto, & Kansai, 2009; File & Adams, 2010). Among these techniques are two non-verbal strategies, as mentioned before KWM and SMSI.

Key Word Method

Numerous attempts have been made in the last few decades to optimize the teaching of foreign language vocabulary. Some researchers claim that optimization allows for far more effective vocabulary learning than having learners resort to his own instructional decisions. It was claimed that learners need to be given explicit instruction of vocabulary strategy in order to facilitate their awareness of vocabulary learning strategies that they can use to learn their own outside the classroom (Atay & Ozbulgan, 2007). Among the vocabulary learning methods, vocabulary memorization strategies involving deeper processing may result in better retention of words than strategies for shallow processing (Sagarra & Alba, 2006). Thus, one of the most popular and the most extensively researched foreign language vocabulary teaching methods has been the keyword method (Rodriguez & Sadoski, 2000; Pressley, Levin and Delaney, 1982) for that the theoretical framework for the encouragement of using keyword method (KWM) in vocabulary learning lies in its strength of verbal linkage and visual imagery in the memory process.

Djignovic (2000) illustrates that the KWM represents one attempt to optimize learning foreign language vocabulary. The idea emerged in an experimental psychologist's laboratory and divides vocabulary learning into two stages. First, the learner associates the spoken foreign language word with the keyword, which is an L1 word that sounds like some part of the foreign word, that is, it is similar in sound but has no other relationship to the foreign word. In the second stage, the learner forms a mental image of the keyword interacting with the L1 translation. Thus, the keyword method consists in forming a chain of two links connecting a foreign word to its translation.

The KWM may trace back to the empirical support of Paivio's (1997) Dual-Coding Theory (Rodriguez & Sadoski, 2000; Shapiro & Waters, 2005). As Shapiro and Waters (2005) pointed out, memories are stored in two different coding systems in Dual-Coding Theory with different levels of processing ranging from shallow to deep. Shallow processing emphasizes surface features of words to be remembered such as sounds, orthography, or physical features such as the number of vertical lines in a word, while deep processing focuses on meaning. The richer the meaning of an item to be remembered, the deeper the processing and the more it will be recalled (Craik & Lockhart, 1972, as cited in Shapiro & Waters, 2005). Such strategy associates the

meaning, sound, and image of the L1 and L2 has been found to improve retention (Hulstijn, 1997; Pressley, Level, & Miller, 1982, as cited in Fan, 2003).

Different definitions in the literature (Holden, 1999; Hustiljn, 1997; Paivio, 1983; Thompson, 1987) have been proposed for this mnemonic technique. The most comprehensive of which is the definition provided by Hulstijn (1997) who characterizes the KWM in terms of three categories : 1) an L1 or L2 word which refers to a concrete entity and is selected according to acoustic or orthographic similarity with the L2 target word; 2) a strong association between the target word and the keyword must be constructed, so that the learner, when seeing or hearing the word is immediately reminded of the keyword; 3) a visual image must be constructed combining the referents of the keyword and the target word, preferably in a salient, odd, or bizarre fashion in order to increase its memorability. (P. 204)

Recent studies examined the facilitation of the keyword strategy on foreign language learning and enhancement of vocabulary recall. Rodriguez and Sadoski (2000) conducted a study to explore the effectiveness of training in the use of the keyword method for vocabulary acquisition by students who are experienced in learning a foreign language. It was found that the keyword-trained students maintained a significant and substantial advantage in recall of word definitions over control students. Similarly, Shapiro and Waters (2005) indicated that the keyword method of vocabulary learning is a mnemonic method to help students learn foreign vocabulary. The keyword method was effective for that it provided a meaningful visual image upon which to base memory for a new word's meaning. In Taiwan, researchers also found positive effect of the keyword method on elementary school and senior high school students' vocabulary retention (Chen, 2006; Hsu, 2007; Lin, 2004) and on elementary school students' learning of word meaning (Lin, 2009) as well.

McDaniel and Pressley (1989) compared the keyword technique, in which students learn words through the combination of an auditory and imagery link, with the context method and found the former to be significantly more facilitative to learning than the latter. However, for longer term retention, findings related to the effect of use of the keyword method are more mixed, with some research demonstrating growth in recall after an immediate decline (Lawson & Hogben, 1998) and other research showing decline in levels of recall (e.g., Avila & Sadowski, 1996; Wang & Thomas, 1995). To our knowledge and experience, we suppose that the mixed results seem to be associated with use of different experimental procedures and testing protocols applied in these studies. Another study by Pressley, Levin, and Miller (1981) carried out an experiment with elementary school students in which keyword training facilitated the recall of Spanish words with both concrete and abstract referents. For materializing the keyword method, Olshtain and Barzilay (1991) used English-language vocabulary items of a rare and rather technical kind. They found keyword superiority for concrete but not for abstract words on immediate post-testing.

Wyra, Lawson, and Hungi (2007) examined the effects on recall of word-meaning pairs of the training in the use of keyword procedure. The researchers used six Spanish words as instruction and 22 Spanish-English pairs used as target words in the learning and testing part and found that

the training was a significant predictor of both backward and forward recall performance. Chen (2006) investigated the effect of the keyword method on elementary school students' long-term vocabulary learning in EFL setting in Taiwan and found that the elementary school students in the keyword-given and keyword-generated groups indicated that the keyword method was not only an interesting tool for learning English vocabulary, but also a skill helping them in acquiring the English words in a faster and easier way which can also increase the level of retention. The lack of the research on the keyword strategy training effect in learners' vocabulary learning process motivated the researchers to conduct further study.

Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction

In spite of the importance of direct vocabulary instruction and vocabulary acquisition strategies, little research has been carried out with special attention to the teaching of specific vocabulary strategy (Brown & Perry, 1991). Johnson and Gu (1996) proposed different vocabulary learning strategies in general and paid special attention to Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction (SMSI). SMSI involves drawing a diagram of the relationship between words according to their use in a particular text and is defined as a collaborative effort between the teacher and the class (Stahl & Vancil, 1986). Other memory strategies such as elaborating, associating and using imagery are contributed in this strategy (Oxford, 1990).

In SMSI, usually, the teacher presents a particular topic or situation to the students (e.g., food, professions, vacations, and so on) and the students are presented with a list of words and pictures that are most commonly related to the particular topic or situation. The vocabulary is then semantically related. This method of presentation is also viewed as an effective tool for vocabulary acquisition and retention by researchers such as Gairns and Redman (1986), Nattinger (1988), Stahl and Nagy (2006), and Graves (2006), who believe that presenting two words that are semantically related not only helps a learner to become aware of the similarities in meaning but also to determine and remember the differences between them.

Semantic mapping has been utilized in a wide variety of ways, including the following: as a means of enhancing the teaching of study skills (Hanf, 1971; Heimlich & Pittleman, 1986), as a framework for identifying the structural organization of texts (Clewett & Haidemos, 1986), as a strategy for promoting disabled students' reading comprehension skill (Sinatra et al., 1948), as an assessment technique (Fleener & Marek, 1992), etc. this strategy is as well effective for enhancing vocabulary knowledge of the learners' instructional level (Huynh et al., 2002).

A number of studies have been carried out regarding the effect of semantic mapping strategy (Bos & Andres, 1990; Brown & Perry, 1991; Zaid, 1995; Morin & Goebel, 2001). Crow and Quigley (1985) investigated the semantic field approach that there was a formal association between five related words and a keyword that could be mentally substituted in context. In a study with 61 high school students as subjects, Bos and Andres (1990) compared the effect of three knowledge-based interactive vocabulary instruction techniques, in which students were assigned to one of the three groups with three different treatments: semantic mapping group, semantic feature analysis group, and concepts' relations analysis. According to their research

outcomes, students who received treatment with knowledge-based interactive vocabulary technique scored higher than other students.

Nilforoushan (2012) examined the effect of teaching vocabulary through semantic mapping on the awareness of two affective dimensions, evaluation and potency dimensions of deep vocabulary knowledge as well as the general vocabulary knowledge of EFL students. Sixty intermediate EFL female adult learners participated in this study; they were chosen among 90 students through Preliminary English test and a general vocabulary knowledge test. They were thus randomly divided into two groups, experimental and control, each consisting of 30 students. At the end, students took a vocabulary achievement test and a test of awareness of evaluation and potency dimensions of deep vocabulary knowledge. Results showed that teaching vocabularies through semantic mapping significantly improved learners' awareness of the two dimensions.

Abdollahzadeh and Amiri (2009) investigated the effectiveness of vocabulary instruction via semantic mapping against the established traditional vocabulary teaching techniques in Iran. The sample of the study consisted of two hundred and sixty four intermediate adult Iranian EFL learners from different language institutes in Orumieh took part in the study. They were divided into two equal groups consisting of 9 classes in the control group, and 8 classes in the experimental group. They found out that the experimental group demonstrated significant superiority over the control group with regard to the scores obtained in the post-test. In other words, employing semantic maps to teach vocabulary items was demonstrated to have a positive effect on the vocabulary learning of adult Iranian EFL learners.

Simpson (1994) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of semantic mapping as an independent note-taking skill especially in the content area of 11th grade English. The subjects consisted of 49 students. Results did not indicate a significant difference resulting from the use of semantic mapping although students' attitude and assessment indicated an interest in and a willingness to use the method. The researcher recommended considering semantic mapping as an alternative to traditional linear note-taking because it is equally useful to promote achievement and may be more appealing to students.

Tinkham (1993) determined that L2 learners were able to learn words that were not semantically related faster than those that were. In his study, 20 English speakers were asked to learn and orally recall sets of three semantically related and unrelated non-words (paired with their English counterparts) and two sets of six semantically related and unrelated non-words (also accompanied by an English translation). In both experiments, the participants were able to learn and recall the semantically unrelated set faster than the semantically related set, and they also reported having greatest difficulty remembering the related words. The results of this study were replicated by Waring (1997), but with 20 Japanese speakers. The conditions and materials for the study were the same as Tinkham's (except that the non-words were phonologically adapted to reflect Japanese phonology and their translations were words in that language). The results of this study mirrored those reported by Tinkham, as the Japanese speakers had less difficulty learning

the unrelated non-words than the related ones. In addition, they also described the semantically related sets as being the most difficult to learn.

The review of related literature on two non-verbal mnemonic strategies, key word method and semantic mapping strategy, has been conducted on different samples whereas the current study has been conducted on college EFL students. Moreover, there seems to be no experimental studies at all (to the best knowledge of the researcher) on the usage and comparing these two vocabulary learning strategies together as tools conducted among EFL classrooms in Iran. Therefore, this study aimed at filling this gap.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

One of the most formidable tasks that face EFL teachers is teaching lexical items. Most Iranian EFL learners usually learn and retain the new target words in a conventional way, that is learning and memorizing a long list of the new words with their equivalences in their mother tongue. Hence, there appears a need for students to be presented with some non-verbal techniques for effective teaching vocabulary. Regarding the importance of vocabulary in language learning and in communicating with others and different effective vocabulary learning strategies, the present study aimed to investigate the effect of two mnemonic methods of teaching vocabulary, namely KWM and SMSI, and compare them with the conventional verbal method. Accordingly, the following research questions were proposed in this study:

1. Does Key Word Method as a non-verbal vocabulary learning strategy affect Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary development?
2. Does Semantic Mapping Strategy Instruction as a non-verbal vocabulary learning strategy affect Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary development?
3. Do the two non-verbal techniques of vocabulary teaching differ significantly in terms of permanency of the acquired items?

METHODOLOGY

With the aim of investigating the effect of two non-verbal vocabulary learning strategies, a quasi experimental design study was conducted. The subjects in the current study were assigned into one control group and two experimental groups according to their homogeneity level. The dependent variable of this study is learners' achievement of new target vocabularies. The independent variables are two experimental groups who study using KWM and SMSI, and one control group who learn target words in a conventional way.

Subjects

The sample of this study comprised 63 male and female subjects selected from among 85 students according to their scores (one standard deviation above and below the mean of the test) in Nelson proficiency test. They were pre-intermediate university students who were studying English as a foreign language at Islamic Azad University in Maragheh. Based on their proficiency test scores, the students were assigned into three groups, one control group and two experimental groups. The age range of the subjects was 18-25.

Instruments

For the purpose of data collection, the following instruments were prepared:

1. The Nelson test (adopted from Nelson English Tests, by Fowler and Coe (1976), series 200 B) was employed to ascertain the homogeneity of the subjects in terms of language proficiency.
2. In order to measure that whether students are familiar with the new target words or not, they were supposed to take a vocabulary test used prior to the experiment. In this test, the 80 new words were presented in a table with three columns. The students were asked to write “yes” in the first column if they have seen the words before, “no” in the second column if they have not seen, and the meaning of the target word in the third column if they know. From among these 80 target words, 38 words were selected to study during treatment sessions.
3. A pre-test with 38 items in the multiple-choice question type to measure the vocabulary knowledge of the students. The results of pre-test were submitted to Pearson correlation to measure the reliability of the test. The results confirmed that the test was reliable ($r=0.78$).
4. Twelve reading comprehension passages presenting the new target words that were chosen from some reading comprehension books.
5. As like as the pretest, a vocabulary posttest was designated in the multiple-choice question type to assess the amount of students learning and retention of new target words.

Procedure

First, a forty-five Nelson test of language proficiency was presented to 85 students to estimate their homogeneity level. The results of this test were used to select those students who were supposed to be the final participants of the study. As a result, 63 students whose scores occur one standard deviation above and below the mean of test score were selected as the final participants of the study. Then, the subjects were given 80 new target words in a table with three columns and were required to write “yes” in the first column if they have seen the words before, “no” in the second column if they have not seen the words and in the third column they were asked to write the meaning of the words if they know. Thirty-eight items were selected from among those eighty words to be studied during treatment. Before treatment, the students were supposed to take a pretest to evaluate their knowledge of vocabulary. This test comprised of 38 multiple-choice items in which the students were asked to choose the correct answer among four given choices. Next, the students were assigned into three groups: one control group who learnt the new target words in a conventional way (learning and memorizing a long list of words with their translations in their mother tongue), two experimental groups with two different vocabulary learning strategies. In experimental group 1, the students were supposed to make use of Key Word Method to learn the new words. That is, students were first taught keywords for the two practice examples from the preselected passages, then shown the new vocabulary word first, followed by a mnemonic picture and keyword linkage for this new word. Then, the Persian meaning of this new word was demonstrated). The semantic mapping, which was used for the treatment in the experimental group 2, were thematic maps, spider maps, problem and solution maps, and fishbone maps. The maps for the two first reading passages were filled by the learners with the teachers’ assistance. For the remaining passages, however, they were assigned to the learners

to fill in groups of four or five people. The teachers only observed and provided help if needed in this phase. The resulting maps which were checked to ascertain whether they had accommodated all the target lexical items were finally approved by the teachers. In the final step, the students were required to take a vocabulary posttest to measure whether the students have learned the new target words or not. In this test, like the pretest, the students were asked to choose the correct answer out of given choices. The data from both the pretest and the posttest were collected and submitted to SPSS for windows to be analyzed.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this study, data collected through pretest and posttest was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences 17.0 version for windows. After administrating the Nelson test, the subjects were divided into three groups (one control and two experimental groups). Then, the students' performances in each group were analyzed and compared with each other. In order to discover the homogeneity of the three groups, descriptive statistical analysis was done on the collected data and a one-way ANOVA was run. The results are shown in table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Proficiency Test

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
1	28	23.87	4.2859	43	86
2	29	24.57	4.465	41	83
3	28	23.68	3.3302	41	85
Total	85	24.08	4.0233	41	86

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA for the Proficiency Test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean squares	F	Sig
Between groups	6.083	3	2.028	0.130	2.70
Within groups	1807.917	116	15.585		
Total	1814.000	119			

As demonstrated in table one, in Nelson proficiency test, the mean scores of the three groups are approximately at the same level. Therefore, the students in proficiency test were homogenous ($G1= 23.87$; $G2= 24.57$; $G3=23.68$). The results of table 2, as well, confirm the consequences of table 1. Since the Sig. value is 2.70 which is much higher than the criterion Sig. ratio ($p= 2.70>.05$). In order to investigate the first research question which is an attempt to survey the effectiveness of KWM in improving EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge, the obtained data from both pre and post tests of the experimental group 1 who were supposed to study the new

target words through KWM were analyzed via utilizing paired-sample T-Test . The outcomes are presented in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Paired Sample Statistics of pre test and post test in KWM group

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 KWM. Pretest	18.2600	21	3.41862	.67608
KWM posttest	23.9850	21	3.86450	.69031

Table 4: Paired Samples Test for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of KWM Experimental Group

	Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig.
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the			
				Lower	Upper			
Pair1 KWM pre KWM post	-4.4978	2.34279	.43784	-5.98540	- 4.16537	-10.983	24	.000

The results of table 3 demonstrate a significant difference between the mean scores of the subjects in KWM experimental group in pre test and posttest. As it is shown the posttest's mean score is 23.98 which is higher than the pretest's mean score which equals to 18.26. Hence, it would be possible to come to conclusion that the participants in KWM experimental group performed better in posttest than in the pretest. This conclusion has been authenticated in table 4, that explains the effectiveness of KWM on improving learners' vocabulary learning and retention ($p = .000$). The second research question addressed the value of teaching new target words via SMSI. To do so, the obtained data from both pretest and posttest of the subjects in SMSI experimental group were submitted to paired sample t-test to be discussed. Tables 5 and 6 are developed to illustrate the outcomes.

Table 5: Paired Sample Statistics of pre test and post test in SMSI group

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 SMSI. Pretest	19.6832	21	3.57116	.68426
SMSI. posttest	21.9830	21	3.60345	.70468

Table 6: Paired Samples Test for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of SMSI Experimental Group

	Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig.
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the			
				Lower	Upper			
Pair1 SMSI pre SMSI post	-3.00031	2.17942	.39053	-3.84307	- 2.71586	-5.996	24	.003

As like as the subjects in KWM, those who learnt the new target words through SMSI outperformed in posttest comparing to pretest, since the mean scores differ with each other ($21.98 > 19.68$). To determine whether this difference is significant, the collected scores run on paired sample t-test. The results showed that there is a significant difference between the performance of the subjects in SMSI experimental group in posttest than in pretest ($p = .003 < .05$). Finally to answer the third research question which aimed to compare the effect of these two non-verbal vocabulary learning strategies, the scores were analyzed through ANOVA test analysis. The following tables show the results:

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for each Group's Performance on the Posttest

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	21	23	34	19.05	3.13452
KWM	21	25	39	23.98	3.86450
SMSI	21	23	39	21.98	3.60345

As is clearly depicted in table 7, the mean scores show the KWM experimental group did much better than the other two on the posttest. In addition, the second experimental group (SMSI) performed better on the test than the control group, which scored the lowest on the test ($KWM = 23.98 > SMSI = 21.98 > control = 19.05$). In order to make these descriptive findings more meaningful, inferential statistics like ANOVA was required. Therefore, a one-way analysis of variance was run regarding the results of posttests, and the groups were compared so as to locate the point of significance between and among the groups in study. Table 8 presents the results.

Table 8: One-Way Analysis of Variance on the Posttest Scores of the Three Groups

	Sum Squares	Df	Mean squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	3175.482	2	1573.397	6.893	.002
Within groups	11937.83	57	217.930		
Total	15114.58	59			

This table gives both between-groups and within-groups sums of squares, degrees of freedom, F value etc. The sig value is .002. Since .002 is smaller than .05, (.002<.05), there is a significant difference somewhere among the mean squares on the independent variable (posttest scores) for the three groups. As is observed in Table 8, these results coincide with what is illustrated in the means table further above (Table 7), where the mean tended to change with each group in the case of the posttest.

Discussion

This study was an attempt to investigate the effect of two non-verbal vocabulary learning strategies, the KWM and the SMSI, on learning and retaining of vocabulary items among freshman pre-intermediate university students of English as a foreign language. To this end, the collected data were analyzed through two different statistical methods, one-way ANOVA and paired-sample t-test analysis, and the results demonstrated that the students in both experimental groups outperformed than those in the control group. But, the subjects in KWM experimental group showed higher improvement in learning and retaining the new target words than those in SMSI experimental group. For investigating the first research question regarding the efficiency of KWM, the paired-sample t-test analysis method was used and the t-test table showed great significant results for the first experimental group. Yet, according to the results of paired-sample t-test analysis for the second research question, the second experimental group, who received SMSI, showed little significant advantage over the control group in vocabulary development. The results of ANOVA test analysis, which compared these two non-verbal methods, validated the success of KWM over SMSI.

The outcomes of this study strongly corresponds to Hatch and Brown's point of view (1995) that mnemonics, or memory-aiding techniques, are basic kinds of associations used by learners to increase recall and these techniques are used for consolidation of form-meaning connections in memory. The results are also in line with Riazi and Alvari (2004) who concluded that students who use more vocabulary strategies learn better and have longer retention compared to those who just memorize the words.

The positive attitudes toward the keyword method in the present study echoes the findings of Chen's (2006) assertions that such method is an interesting tool for acquiring English vocabulary and most of the students believed that such skill can help them acquiring English words in a faster and easier way, and thus increase the level of retention. Nevertheless, the limitations of the keyword method which were reported by some the students in the present study corroborates the

assertions that the keyword method is most helpful for the beginners (Atkinson & Raugh, 1975) and was designed for use with concrete words (Rodriguez & Sadoski, 2000). Such limitations may be one of the factors interfering students with the application of the keyword method in new vocabulary learning tasks, and thus need to be taken into further consideration.

Keywords help individuals learn faster and recall better because they aid the integration of new material into existing cognitive units and because they provide retrieval cues (Thompson, 1987). Thompson's findings actually provide empirical evidence in support of what we found in this study. The studies conducted by Atkinson and Raugh (1975), Levin and Pressley (1985), Shapiro and Waters (2005), Sagarra and Alba (2006), and Atay and Ozbulgan (2007) to name a few, further support the outcome of this study as in their studies the keyword method has been shown to be an effective procedure for the acquisition and retention of vocabulary in foreign language learning. This method is one of a number of procedures that have proved useful for the task of acquiring definitions of new foreign-language words (Ellis & Beaton, 1993; Mc Daniel & Pressley, 1989), particularly for immediate recall. The findings obtained in this study is also in line with the results Carlson, Kincaid, Lance and Hodgson (1976) achieved, since they found a better recall in subjects who received a mnemonic device compared to a control group.

Furthermore, a second key finding of this study, which can make it different from similar ones, is that results of analysis made clear that the difference between the second experimental group (using SMSI) and the control group (using conventional way) in terms of vocabulary development was not more significant than the first experimental group. This is against Gains and Redman's (1986) assertion that non-verbal techniques, of any kind, lead to a better retention than verbal methods and that "there is little doubt that objects and semantic maps can facilitate memory" (p. 92), since EG2 did not perform better than CG in this study. Maybe because semantic maps just have a facilitating effect and are not sufficient for learning if they are used alone.

This positive impact of semantic mapping strategy can be attributed to the fact that in semantic mapping the relationships between words are explored, and thus, more ties among them are made in the lexical knowledge network of the learner. Establishing such a semantic network in the cognitive repertoire of the learner can lead to stronger comprehension of texts that use the target words (Bravo & Cervetti, 2008).

CONCLUSION

As mentioned before, this study aimed to investigate the efficiency of two non-verbal vocabulary learning instructions over conventional verbal strategy. Along with the acquired research outcomes and previous related literature, it can be stated that mnemonic devices used in this study were demonstrated to be more effective in L2 vocabulary instruction than verbal strategies. However, among these non-verbal mnemonic strategies, the KWM was corroborated to be more influential than SMSI in improving vocabulary knowledge of the learners. Consequently,

vocabulary instruction should be given higher priority in teaching English as a foreign language since it is the cornerstone of communication.

Vocabulary instruction is a complicated process which requires careful planning by teachers and active participation by students. Thornbury (2002) asserts, “learners need tasks and strategies to help them organize their mental lexicon by building networks of associations-the more the better” (p. 30). The findings obtained in this study may lead to a number of implications which could possibly be beneficial for language practitioners, teachers and students in an EFL context. First, this research is probably a call for language teachers, practitioners and researchers in language teaching and learning to pay more attention to L2 vocabulary teaching techniques. The findings may encourage teachers who still use the traditional verbal method of translation in their teaching to change their viewpoint in favor of a nonverbal method of teaching vocabulary. The result may especially be of great value to high-school teachers in an EFL context who are usually faced with the students’ request for information about effective techniques of vocabulary learning.

Second, the findings of this study are also useful for teacher trainers to incorporate appropriate and practical techniques for instruction of vocabulary in their existing training courses. This way, teachers themselves would be informed of different vocabulary teaching techniques and will develop positive attitudes toward the incorporation of the best techniques into their conventional teaching programs. In the long run, syllabus designers and textbook writers will also benefit from the results of this study; different mnemonics can be introduced within the graded vocabulary books and other materials in accordance to the level of the students for whom the material is designed. The major limitations of the present study was the number of the students. Since this study was carried out at the university context, due to administrative limitations, limited number of the students were participated in this study, therefore, generalizing of the results of the study to a large number of the students would not be reliable.

REFERENCES

- Abdollahzadeh, M., & Amiri, A. (2009). The effect of semantic mapping as a vocabulary instruction technique on EFL learners with different perceptual learning styles. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2(1), 1 28.
- Allen, F.V. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Atay, D., & Ozbulgan, C. (2007). *Memory strategy instruction, contextual learning and ESP vocabulary recall*. Retrieved March 29, 20013. From <http://sciencedirect.com/science>
- Atkinson, R.C., & Raugh, M.R. (1975). An application of the mnemonic keyword method to the acquisition of a Russian vocabulary. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 104, 126–133.
- Avila, E., & Sadoski, M. (1996). Exploring new applications of the keyword method to acquire English vocabulary. *Language Learning*, 46 (3), 379-395.
- Boers, F., & Lindstromberg, S. (2008). How cognitive linguistics can foster effective vocabulary teaching In F. Boers & S. Lindstromberg (Eds.), *Applications of cognitive linguistics:*

- Cognitive linguistic Approaches to teaching vocabulary and phraseology* (pp.1-61). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Boers, F., PiquerPiriz, A. M., Free, H. S., & Eyckmans, J. (2009). Does pictorial elucidation foster recollection of idioms? *Language Teaching Research*, 13 (4), 367-382.
- Bos, D. S., & Anders, P. L. (1990). Effects of interactive vocabulary instruction on vocabulary learning and reading comprehension of junior-high learning disable students. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 13 (1), 31-42
- Bravo, M. A., & Cervetti, G. N. (2008). Teaching vocabulary through text and experience in content areas. In A. E. Farstrup, & S. J. Samuels (Eds.) *What research has to say about vocabulary instruction* (pp. 130-149). New York: International Reading Association.
- Brown, T. S., & Perry, F. L. (1991). A Comparison of three learning strategies for ESL vocabulary acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25 (4), 655-670
- Carlson, R.F., Kincaid, J.P., Lance S., & Hodgson T. (1976). Spontaneous use of mnemonics and grade point average. *Journal of Psychology*, 92 (1), 117-122.
- Chen, Y. M. (2006). *The effect of keyword method on English vocabulary long-term retention of elementary school students in Taiwan*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Department of Applied English, Southern Taiwan University.
- Clewell, S., & Haidemos, J. (1986). Organization strategies to increase comprehension. *Reading World* 22 (4), 314-321
- Crow, J. T., & Quigley, J. R. (1985). A semantic field approach to passive vocabulary acquisition for reading comprehension, *TESOL Quarterly*, 19 (3), 497-513
- Djigunovic, J. M. (2000). *Learning foreign language vocabulary: the keyword method revisited*. Psycholinguistics on the Threshold. University of Zagreb, Croatia.
- Ellis, R. (1990). *Instructed second language acquisition: learning in the classroom*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Farghal, M., & Obiedat, H. (1995). *Collocations: a neglected variable in EFL*. International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 33(4), 315-331. doi:10.1515/iral.1995.33.4.315 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/iral.1995.33.4.315>
- Fernández, R. F., Prahlad, S. R. R., Rubtsova, E., & Sabitov, O. (2009). Collocations in the vocabulary english teaching as a foreign language. *Acimed*, 19(6), 1-5.
- File, K. A., & Adams, R. (2010). Should vocabulary instruction be integrated or isolated? *TESOL Quarterly*, 44 (2), 222-249.
- Fleener, M., & Marek, E. (1992) Teasting in the learning cycle. *Science Scope*, 15 (6), 48-49
- Gass, S. (1989). Second language vocabulary acquisition. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 9, 198-217
- Gains, R., & Redman, S. (1986). *Working with words: A guide to teaching and learning vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. (1997). Reading and vocabulary development in a second language. In *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*, ed. J. Coady and T. Huckin, 99-122. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Graves, M. (2006). *The vocabulary book: Learning and instruction*. NewYork: Teachers College Press.

- Hanf, M. (1971). Mapping: technique for translating reading into thinking. *Journal of Reading*, 14 (2), 225-230
- Hatch, E., & Brown, C. (1995). *Vocabulary, semantics, language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Hemlich, J., & Pittelman, S., (1986). *Semantic mapping*. Newark: International Reading Association
- Hippner-Page, T. (2000). "Semantic clustering versus thematic clustering of English vocabulary words for second language instruction: Which method Is more effective?" Accessed May 13, 2011. EBSCOhost.
- Holden, W. R. (1999). Learning to learn: 15 vocabulary acquisition activities. *Modern English Teacher*, 8 (1), 42-47.
- Hsu, C. T. (2007). *Effects of the keyword method on vocabulary learning of elementary school EFL children*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Department of English Instruction, Taipei Municipal University of Education.
- Hulstijn, J.H. (1997). Mnemonic methods in foreign language vocabulary learning. In Coady & Huckin (eds.), *Second language vocabulary acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huynh, U., Lizarraga, L., & Wilkerson, B. (2002). How do semantic maps build vocabulary? *Internet Journal of Reading and Language Arts Strategies 1* (1), available at <http://T3.preservice.org/to300110/semantic-maps.doc>
- Jesa, M. (2008). *Efficient English teaching*. New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation.
- Johnson, R., & Gu, Y. (1996). Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Language Learning Outcomes. *Language Learning*, 46 (4), 643-679
- Kim, Y.J. (2011). The role of task-induced involvement and learner proficiency in L2 vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning*, 61 (1), 100-40.
- Lawson, M. J., & Hogben, D. (1998). Learning and recall of foreign-language vocabulary: Effects of a keyword strategy for immediate and delayed recall. *Learning and Instruction*, 8 (2), 179-194.
- Levin, J.R., & Pressley, M. (1985). Mnemonic vocabulary instruction: What is fact, what is fiction? In Dillon (eds.), *Individual differences in cognition*, 2, 145-172.
- Lin, C. N. (2004). *The effects of the keyword method on vocabulary learning of senior high EFL students in Taiwan*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Department of English, National Kaohsiung Normal University.
- Lin, F. Y. (2009). *The combined effects of keyword method and phonics instruction on 5th graders' English vocabulary learning in Taiwan*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Department of English Instruction, Taipei Municipal University of Education.
- Lynch, T. (1996). *Communication in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCrostie, J. (2007). Examining learner vocabulary notebooks. *ELT Journal: English Language Teachers Journal*, 61(3), 246-255.
- McDaniel, M. A., & Pressley, M. (1989). Keyword and context instruction of new vocabulary meanings: Effects on text comprehension and memory. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81 (2), 204-213.
- Min H-T. (2008). EFL Vocabulary Acquisition and Retention: Reading Plus Vocabulary Enhancement Activities and Narrow Reading. *Language Learning*, 58 (1), 73-115.

- Mizumoto, A., & Kansai, O. T. (2009). Examining the effectiveness of explicit instruction of vocabulary learning strategies with Japanese EFL university students. *Language Teaching Research*, 13 (4), 425—149.
- Morin, R., & Goebel, J. (2001). Basic vocabulary instruction: teaching strategies or words? *Foreign Language Annals*, 34 (1), 8-16
- Morra, S., & Camba, R. (2009). Vocabulary learning in primary school children: Working memory and long-term memory components. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 104, 156-178. doi:10.1016/j.jecp.2009.03.007
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2009.03.007>
- Nattinger, J. (1988). Some current trends in vocabulary teaching. In R. Carter & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary and language teaching* (pp. 62–82). London: Longman.
- Nilforoushan, S. (2012). The effect of teaching vocabulary through semantic mapping on EFL learners' awareness of the affective dimensions of deep vocabulary knowledge. *English Language Teaching*, 5(10), 164-172.
- Olshtain, E. (1987). The acquisition of new word formation processes in second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 9, 221–32.
- Olshtain, E., & Barzilay, M. (1991). Lexical retrieval difficulties in adult language attrition. In H. W. Seliger, & R. M. Vago (eds.), *First Language Attrition* (pp. 139-150). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Boston: Newbury House
- Paivio, A. (1983). Strategies in language learning. In M. Pressley and J. R. Levin (eds.), *Cognitive strategy research: educational applications* (pp. 189-207). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Pienemann, M., M. Johnston and G. Brindley. 1988. Constructing an acquisition-based procedure for assessing second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 10: 217–43.
- Pressley, M., Levin, J. R., & Delaney, H. D. (1982). The mnemonic keyword method. *Review of Educational Research*, 52 (1), 61-91.
- Pressley, M., Levin, J. R., & Miller, S. (1981). *Cognitive strategy research: educational application*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Riazi, A.M., & Alvari, A. (2004). Strategy activation in learning English words. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 6 (2), 199-203.
- Richards, J.C. (1976). The role of vocabulary teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10, 77–89.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667305>
- Rodriguez, M., & Sadoski, M. (2000) Effects of rote, context, keyword, and context/keyword methods on retention of vocabulary in EFL classrooms. *Language Learning*, 50(2), 385-412.
- Rott, S., Williams J., & Cameron, R. (2002). The effect of multiple-choice L1 glosses and input-output cycles on lexical acquisition and retention. *Language Teaching Research*, 6 (3), 183-222

- Sagarra, N., & Alba, M. (2006). The key is in the keyword: L2 learning vocabulary learning methods with beginning learners of Spanish. *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, 228–243.
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching (1st ed.)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Shapiro, A. M., & Waters, D. L. (2005). An investigation of the cognitive processes underlying the keyword method of foreign vocabulary learning. *Language Learning*, 9 (2), 129-146.
- Shen, H. H. (2010). Imagery and verbal coding approaches in Chinese vocabulary instruction. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(4), 485-499.
- Simpson, D. (1994). *Semantic Mapping: An Alternative to Traditional Note-taking Methods in the Eleventh-Grade English Class*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, the University of Memphis.
- Sinatra, R., Stahl, J., & Berg, N. (1984). Improving reading comprehension of disable readers through semantic mapping. *The Reading Teacher*, 33 (1), 22-29
- Singleton, D. (2008). *Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Foreign Language Acquisition. Multilingual Matters*, Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Stahl, S. A., & Nagy, W. E. (2006). *Teaching word meanings*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum
- Stahl, S. A., & Vancil, S. J. (1986) discussion is What Makes Semantic Maps Work in Vocabulary Instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 35 (1), 62-67
- Tekmen, E.A.F. and A. Daloglu. 2006. An investigation of incidental vocabulary acquisition in relation to learner proficiency level and word frequency. *Foreign Language Annals*, 39 (2), 220–43.
- Thompson, I. (1987). Memory in language learning. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp.15-30). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. London: Longman.
- Tinkham, T. (1993). The effect of semantic clustering on the learning of second language vocabulary. *System*, 21, 371–380.
- Wang, A.Y., & Thomas, M.H. (1995). Effect of keywords on long-term retention: help or hindrance? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 87, 468–475.
- Waring, R. (1997). The negative effects of learning words in semantic sets: A replication. *System*, 25, 261–274.
- Wyra, M., Lawson, M. J., & Hungi, N. (2007). The mnemonic keyword method: The effects of bidirectional retrieval training and of ability to image on foreign language vocabulary and recall. *Learning and Instruction*, 17, 360-371.
- Zaid, A., (1995). Semantic mapping in communicative language teaching. *Forum*, 33 (3), 6-11
- Zu, F. (2009). Using lexical approach to teach vocabulary. *US-China Foreign Language*, 7(8), 44-47.

THE IRANIAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEXTBOOK “PROSPECT 2” FROM THE TEACHERS’ POINT OF VIEW

Parisa Arabloo

M.A. in TEFL

Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch
parisa.arabloo@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to evaluate and analyze the teachers’ points of view toward the newly developed Iranian junior high school English textbook “Prospect 2”. For this purpose, eighteen male and female teachers teaching junior high school (grade eight) from some cities in Iran, namely, Tehran, Urmia, Chaldoran, Khoy, Sanandaj and Tabriz were asked one interview question. The researcher recorded their voices while talking by a voice recorder and then listened and summarized the answers and perceptions toward the book. The teachers mentioned both positive and negative points about the book, but finally the findings of the study revealed that most teachers have positive attitudes toward Prospect 2. Some practical implications are presented which are on the basis of the results of this study and might be of use to the teachers, teacher trainers and materials developers. For example, teachers should incorporate appropriate and practical techniques for the instruction of CLT which the book is based this method.

KEYWORDS: Textbook Evaluation; Teacher's points of view; Prospect2

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are of great value and effect in the process of teaching and learning. As stated by Zohrabi, Sabouri, and Kheradmand (2014), "textbooks are one of the elements that may promote or discourage learners depending on their materials. They are a kind of support for both teachers and learners. Textbooks provide students a kind of consistency"(p.95). They have an important influence in the instructional process. ELT textbooks have major function in the current discussion. Sheldon (1988, p. 237) states that “textbooks represent the visible heart of any ELT program”. Textbooks are an almost universal component of English language teaching.

According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), ELT (English Language Teaching) textbooks play the role of a teacher, a map, a resource, a restrictor, and as an ideology. Further, as Cunningsworth (1995) contends, a textbook can be a source of activities, a syllabus for pushing the teaching/learning process toward systematization, and as a scaffold for novice teachers. Still others refer to textbooks in tandem with innovation, students’ needs, issues related to money and time (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; O’Niel, 1982).

Textbooks hold a paramount status as an indispensable ingredient of language teaching profession; therefore, appraising and evaluating them seems to be imperative to assure their efficiency and consistency with the objectives defined and expected of the course. Constant evaluation of textbooks to see if they are appropriate is of great importance. This process enables us to make informed decisions through which student achievement will increase and educational programs will be more successful (Zohrabi, Sabouri & Behroozian, 2012)

It is good to mention here that Prospect 2 is the newly developed junior high school English textbook which is taught in schools now. It is based on the communicative language teaching approach (CLT). School teachers from all over the country have different perceptions and viewpoints toward its content. But there is no research to analyze and discuss it. The current study was an attempt to evaluate the strength and weaknesses of the junior high school English textbook "Prospect 2" from the teachers' point of view.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As Zohrabi (2011, p. 216) argues, "Materials, especially coursebooks, need to be evaluated at every stage of the course in order to find their weaknesses and improve them." As Tomlinson (2006) states, no textbook is perfect, since it can be used by different students in different circumstances. In evaluating a textbook, we need to know how it meets learners' needs. Evaluation might vary from one context to another based on the aims, wants, and abilities of the evaluators. Assessment of textbooks is a profitable way of teacher development and gives beneficial perception to the teachers. Teachers' perceptions and experiences play indispensable roles in the process of book evaluation. (Ahmadi & Derakhshan, 2014)

There is conclusive body of researches in the field of book evaluation. The next paragraphs report some of the works done in Iran and other countries. The study by Zohrabi, et al (2012) evaluated the merits and demerits of English for high school freshmen in Iran from the viewpoints of teachers and students. They focused on seven sections of layout, vocabulary, topics and content, exercises, skills, pronunciation, function, and social and cultural activities. The results of the investigation pointed out that the book was grammar-oriented and more emphasis was placed on reading more than three other skills; insufficient practice was provided for pronunciation; with respect to target culture, no social and cultural activities were included; and the layout of the book was believed to lack beauty (Jamalvandi, 2014)

In other studies, Yarmohammadi (2002) and Abdollahi- Guilani, et al (2011) concluded that there is not authenticity in Iranian ELT books. They also added that there is not correspondence between the students' needs and the content of the materials. In a study done by Litz (1997) , ELT textbooks in South Korea were proved to be successful in reaching their desired goal. In his case study on ELT textbooks not only did he take into account skills, content, tasks, but he appraised cost, availability, authors and publisher' credentials, layout and design and packages and websites related to the book evaluated. The textbook was shown to enjoy far more positive characteristics and it was able to suit the needs of the Korean learners. Multi-skills syllabus, clear

and logical organization of the book, inclusion of teaching strategies, and vocabulary skills were among the positive traits of the book.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the strengths and weaknesses of newly developed book “Prospect2” From the Teachers’ Point of View?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 18 male and female teachers teaching junior high school (grade eight) which were supposed to answer the research question (interviewees). The teachers were from different cities of Iran, namely Tehran, Urmia, Chaldoran, Khoy, Sanandaj and Tabriz. Their teaching experience was from 6 to 30 28 years. Some of them which were the researcher’s colleague in school discussed the subject face to face and the others responded by telephone or Email. They were free to speak in Farsi or English. The teachers were selected according to their accessibility by the researcher.

Instrumentation and Material

The material for this study is the English language textbook taught in Iranian junior high school (grade eight). "Prospect2"(Alavi, ForozandehShahraki, Nikoopoor, KhadirSharabian & Kheirabadi, 2014) includes work book, student book, audio CD and teacher's guide. The instrument used in this study was an open-ended interview question which the teachers were supposed to talk or write about it about 15-20 minutes. A voice recorder was used to record the teachers’ voices while interviewing in order to be able to listen later and take notes.

Procedure

This study began with an interview question. The researcher interviewed 18 teachers teaching junior high school (grade eight). Eight of the teachers expressed their ideas face to face with the researcher. Three of them talked on the phone and seven send their ideas by Email. The teachers expressed their ideas about the textbooks in accordance with the objectives of the textbook. The interviews lasted between 15to 20 minutes. The researcher recorded their voices via a voice recorder and then listened again and took notes to be able to summarize them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Eighteen teachers were interviewed and their opinions were asked about “Prospect 2” book. They talked about the virtues and weaknesses of the book. The researcher took notes and she tried to summarize the gathered data.

The teachers had both positive and negative perceptions toward “Prospect 2” but the positive attitudes were stronger than the negative ones. They all were agreed that the new book is according to communicative language teaching method (CLT) and satisfies the students’ needs.

They believed that the book is developed after a deep needs analysis and is exactly what students and teachers and the educational system in Iran needed from many years ago.

The researcher summarized and categorized all the advantages and disadvantages mentioned by the participants. The positive points are as follows:

1. The book is according to CLT which is one of the latest methods and focuses on interaction and communication.
2. The book is finely continuing the goals of “Prospect 1” which was developed the year before “Prospect 2” for the seventh grade students.
3. The vocabularies of the book are the necessary words which are needed in a daily conversation.
4. The book uses the vocabularies of the “Prospect 1”.
5. The activities are group or pair instead of individual ones.
6. The activities are higher order and there is no drill and memorization and they allow students to use their own features, favorites and information in responding the questions.
7. The book creates a friendly atmosphere in class.
8. The book (like Prospect 1) concentrates on speaking and listening and prepares students for communications in the society.
9. Topics are update and attractive and related to the everydaylife(like health, abilities,hobbies,...)
10. The lessons are from easy to hard.
11. To have a photo dictionary at the end of the book was a great idea.
12. Work book is a good practice. It’s questions are not limited to one-answer questions. There are lots of questions that demand student thinking and wants student’s own idea.
13. Teachers’ guide is good for teachers to be familiar with the right ways of teaching the book and knowing the goal of the book.
14. It is a finely-developed book for strengthening students in oral abilities.
15. Like Prospect 1, new words are taught in context not isolated.
16. The CD which distributed with the book helps students in listening which the previous series of the English books lack.
17. The book and its activities in it, creates a challenging atmosphere in class and make the students to participate. For example, the cards at the end of the book, the tables in the book like page 46, 52, 57 and etc. so, students are motivated to response the questions like what the city they live in it is like. Or what are their own hobbies and etc.
18. The teachers are satisfied and glad to teach the new book and they contend that they get energy from teaching it and it is not boring.

The negative points are listed below:

1. The time allocated to the book is limited and not enough to practice perfectly.
2. There is absolutely no grammar in it. It is better to put some grammar points, not complicated ones, to make them aware of the structures. When the students

- memorize the sentences, they learn in Audio-lingual method, but the aim of the book is to teach in CLT. Some grammar can help solve this problem.
3. There is more than one subject (material) in one lesson. For example, lesson 5 introduces several structures like “ where is it_ what’s Isfahan like/famous for_Are there/Is there”
 4. The accompanying CD is audio cd instead of video one. In this stage of life, students need video graphics and listening to audio CDs get them bored.
 5. The earlier studied vocabularies are not repeated in the later lessons.
 6. The teacher has to speak in Persian; otherwise, students will not understand the content well.
 7. There are too much new words in some lessons like lesson 6 and 7 and few ones in lesson 1.
 8. The same as Prospect 1, Reading and writing is somehow neglected and the focus is on speaking and listening.
 9. There should be some activities for teaching prepositions (to-on-in-at ...) in either student or workbook.
 10. The teachers who did not take the classes and enough trainings to teach in CLT, have problems teaching this book. They must take the required classes to be familiar with the goals of the book.
 11. Review parts in the student book are confusing and students cannot do them without the help of the teacher.
 12. The book puts a great pressure on teachers’ shoulders and teaching it, needs knowledgeable and experienced teachers.
 13. Teaching this book needs help and collaboration from school, because the projector, computer, audio system are required and there are some cities and villages in Iran without any facilities.

According to the teachers’ points of view about Prospect 2, it seems that the book is finely accepted and proved by them. They mentioned some positive and some negative points about the book but the positive ones exceeded and they mentioned at the end that the new book is much better than the previous book and they are glad to teach this book. They asserted that the book is successful in teaching communicative aspect of the language. According to Alemi and Hesami (2013), the previous junior high school textbooks were not on the basis of students’ needs and expectations. The new book is developed to solve students’ problems in oral skills and communicative needs. Ghorbani (2011), in his study, analyzed and evaluated the previous textbook being taught in Iranian senior high schools. Findings of the study showed that the book is not successful in teaching four skills. It is structural-based and does not pay attention to communicative skills. There are no CDs and teacher guides or workbooks.

Previous textbooks being taught in junior high schools of Iran entailed teachers to teach in grammar-translation method and also entailed the students not to be active in communicative skills. There were just transferring data not negotiating or other higher order activities. the newly

developed series of Prospect, (in this study, Prospect 2), covered all the deficiencies of the previous books. According to the teachers' points of view, Prospect 2 paid attention to students' needs in its content and tried to teach four skills, especially oral skills which are very important in society and modern era. Prospect 2 demanded experience teachers and active students.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined and analyzed the Iranian junior high school English textbook "Prospect 2" from the teachers' point of view. It was on the basis of an interview question which was asked from 18 teachers in some cities of Iran. The results of the interview showed that the book is successful in teaching communicative skills and the teachers are satisfied with it and have positive perceptions toward the book. In other words, the newly developed book had tried to cover all the deficiencies of the last series of junior high school books. Prospect series pay attention to all four skills specially listening and speaking skill. The method of teaching is CLT which is suits the content and also demands experienced teachers. Teachers' book, workbook and accompanying CD are all the merits of Prospect 2 and help students to learn communicative skills in much better ways. Activities are higher order and requires students to think critically. The teachers said they are eager to teach such books because these kinds of books are motivating, fresh, update and gives energy to them. The findings of this study are useful for teacher trainers and teachers to incorporate appropriate and practical techniques for the instruction of CLT. Teachers should be trained in an appropriate way. Materials developers also can use the results of the present study to recover the deficiencies in the introduced book or the later books.

This study was done with some limitations. The number of the interviewees were eighteen which is not that much enough for a research study. Another limitation was the interviewees' cities. The researcher had access to the mentioned cities and not other areas of the country. The third limitation was experiences of teaching. the researcher tried to interview the teachers with different years of experience but as a limitation, the teacher did not have access to such teachers. Some other limitations also exist. These limitations might affect the results of the study.

REFERENCES

- Alavi,B., Forozandeh Shahraki,E., KhadirSharabian,S., Kheirabadi, R., & Nikoopoor,J.(2014). *English for school "Prospect 2": Student book. Junior secondary program*. Tehran ,Iran: Ministry of Education.
- Alemi, M., & Hesami,Z.(2013) .Textbook evaluation: Teachers' perspectives. *Roshd FLT*, 28(1) ,42-49.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Jamalvandi,B.(2014). ELT Textbook Evaluation in Iran, New Insights. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*,3(4), 1068-1078.
- Litz, D. R. A. (2000). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A South Korean case study. *Asian EFL Journal*.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT coursebooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(2), 237-246. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/42.4.237>

- Tomlinson, B., Dat, B., Masuhara, H., & Rubdy, R. (2001). ELT courses for adults. *ELT Journal*, 55(1), 80-101.
- Yarmohammadi, L. (2002). The evaluation of pre-university textbooks. *The Newsletter of the Iranian Academy of Science*, 18, 70-87.
- Zohrabi, M., Sabouri, H., & Kheradmand, M. (2014). Comparative study of Interchange 1 and English book 1 of Iranian high schools. *Education International Journal of English*, 3(2), 95-104.
- Zohrabi, M., Sabouri, H., & Behroozian, R. (2012). An Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses of Iranian First Year High School English Coursebook Using Evaluation Checklist. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 2(2), 89-99.
- Zohrabi, M. (2011). Coursebook development and evaluation for English for general purposes course. *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 213-222.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n2p213>

INVESTIGATING PRAGMATIC TRANSFER IN PERSUASION STRATEGIES USED BY NATIVE AND NONNATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH

Masoumeh Fazeli

Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza, Iran
E-Mail: masoumeh.fazeli2014@gmail.com

Sajad Shafiee (Corresponding author)

Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran
Email: shafiee_sajad@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at identifying native English speakers', native Persian speakers', and Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' persuasion strategies and any possible pragmatic transfer from the EFL learners' mother tongue (Persian) to their L2. The participants of the study included 10 native English speakers, 30 learners of English, and 30 native Persian speakers, all of whom were university students. The classification of persuasion strategies utilized in this study was based on Hardin's classification of lexical and pragmatic realization of persuading speech act. The data were collected by means of a discourse completion task. The Chi-square test was used to compare frequencies of use of persuasion strategies by all the participants. Results indicated that although all the three groups used recommendation strategy most frequently and consolation and condolence strategies least frequently, the learners of English group and native Persian group made use of opinion-proving, request, advice, and suggestion strategies more frequently than the native English group. Iranian EFL learners were apt to express persuasion with care and/or caution represented by the mentioned strategies. Additionally, they were reluctant to use direct speech act, and they avoided imposition on the hearer. Avoidance and substitution strategies were among the more frequent pragmatic strategies which were transferred from Persian to English. The findings could be of importance for material developers and teachers in their development of instructional strategies as they interact with students during teaching English as a foreign language.

KEYWORDS: Interlanguage pragmatics, Pragmatic transfer, Persuasion strategies, EFL learners

INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics can be defined as the study of the relationship between language, its communication, and its contextualized use (Koike, 1996). Interlanguage is referred to as the learners' language system that is not consistent with the native speakers' language system (Selinker, 1972). Kasper (1998) combines the study of the two areas of pragmatics and interlanguage, and defines interlanguage pragmatics as the study of nonnative speaker's comprehension, production, and

acquisition of linguistic action when they do things with words. Pragmatic transfer is a research branch of interlanguage pragmatics. Pragmatic transfer refers to the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than second language on their comprehension, production and learning of second language pragmatic knowledge (Kasper, 1992). Here pragmatic knowledge can be understood as a particular component of language users' general communicative knowledge, that is, the knowledge of how verbal acts are understood and performed in accordance with a speaker's intention under contextual and discoursal constraints (Faerch & Kasper, 1984). When people from different cultures communicate with each other without perceiving their different pragmatic knowledge, miscommunication may happen. Such phenomenon is due to transfer of native pragmatic knowledge in situations of intercultural communication (Zegarac & Pennington, 2000).

As noted by Leech (1983), there are two perspectives on pragmatic transfer. One is sociopragmatic transfer, and the other is pragmalinguistic transfer. According to Kasper (1992), sociopragmatic transfer operates when the social perceptions underlying language users' interpretation and performance of linguistic action in a second language are influenced by their assessment of their subjectively equivalent first language context. On the other hand, pragmalinguistic transfer designates the process whereby illocutionary force or politeness value assigned to particular linguistic materials in first language influences learners' perception and performance of form-function mappings in second language (Kasper, 1992).

For language use, pragmatic rules, as a matter of fact, are mostly subconscious and are not noticed by L2 learners until they are broken, i.e. feelings get hurt and offence takes place (Hanlig & Taylor, 2003). Accordingly L2 learners must realize that what is accepted in their NL at a given context may not necessarily be the case in another language when they contact with its native speakers (NSs). One area of pragmatic transfer which can possibly occur in Iranian learners of English language production is the speech act of persuasion. Persuasion is defined by Lakoff (1982) as the nonreciprocal attempt or intention of one party to change the behavior, feelings, intentions, or viewpoint of another by communicative means. Advertising, propaganda, political rhetoric, court language and religious sermons are obvious examples of persuasive discourse; however, persuasion may also occur in conversation. Persuasion is recognized as a directive speech act which, according to Searle (1969, as cited in Pishghadam & Rasouli, 2011) is that in which the speaker's purpose is to get the hearer to commit him/herself to some course of action. In other words, persuasion is an attempt to make the world match the words.

Despite large number of research done in pragmatic issues in general and speech acts in particular, they are still among the most popular topics that researchers try to investigate because of their dynamic features especially in the realm of teaching. The concept of this issue is reported by Delen (2010): "speech acts are not a new topic for researchers; on the contrary, they have been very popular since their emergence in the late 1960s" (p. 692). Finally, although a relatively large number of studies done on issues related to different types of speech acts and based on the fact that "research concerning L2 pragmatic competence often focuses on learners' speech act behavior, primarily by contrasting nonnative with native performance" (Yu, 2011, p. 1128), little research has been done especially in the context of Iran to investigate the speech act of

persuasion among non-native speakers, and more importantly to find any sign of pragmatic transfer.

Since Persian and English speakers have different perceptions of how persuading speech act should be conducted, it is more likely that pragmatic transfer of Persian will occur in intercultural communication between Persian nonnative speakers of English and native English speakers. Utilizing a prior study by Bu (2010) as the framework, the present study aimed to compare similarities and differences in the production of speech act of persuasion in English and Persian languages. The focus, moreover, was on determining any signs of pragmatic transfer from the first language to the second language. To this end, the researcher attempted to analyze the types of persuasive strategies used in English and Persian. As the next step, it was tried to locate any possible pragmatic transfers in persuasion strategies by Iranian learners of English.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As Hymes (1971) pointed out, communicative competence must include not only the linguistic forms of the language but also knowledge of when, how, and to whom it is appropriate to use these forms. Speech act has been one of the main aspects of pragmatic for a long time. Speech act theory refers to functions and uses of the language or in other words. It includes all the acts we do while as invitations, refusal, apologies, congratulation, persuasion and so on. According to Halliday (1972) such activities do not only by themselves give us enough information while the reveal much about social purposes in which people use language for (as cited in Schmidt & Richards, 1980).

In this regard, pragmatic competence helps students to come up with the problems of miscommunication in different cultures, and for effective communication in second language it is necessary to make students familiar with the appropriate selection and production of different speech acts in different contexts. Usually language teachers take communicative competence the same as the knowledge of linguistic forms or the ability to carry out the linguistic interaction in the target language, but efficient communication is beyond that. Therefore, a great deal of studies have been conducted across different languages and cultures to address universalities and variations in regard to speech acts such as request (Tatton, 2008), apology (Clyne, 1994), complaint (Salmani Nodoushan, 2007), compliment (Grossi, 2009), and refusal (Al-kahtani, 2005). However, the speech act of persuasion has received little attention.

Robin Lakoff (1982) defined persuasion as the "attempt or intention of one party to change behavior, feelings, intentions or view point of another by communicative means" (as cited in Hardin, 2010, p. 155). Therefore, advertising, propaganda, political oratory, court language and religious sermons are example of persuasive discourse; however, persuasion can also used in daily interactions. Persuasion according to Searle (1969) is regarded as the directive speech act in which the speaker's intention is to make the hearer to commit him or herself to perform some form of actions; in other words, persuasion is an attempt of speaker to match the world with his or her words (as cited in Bu, 2010). Persuasion according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) is categorized as a face threatening act, and according to Lakoff (1982) is considered as a kind of

imposition from the speaker upon the hearer; or as Searle (1969) pointed out, persuasion is a kind of commitment or urge for accomplishments of some actions from speaker to hearer. Therefore, having enough knowledge to infer the meaning and the ability to apply appropriate strategies for conducting persuasion seem crucial to hinder breakdown in intercultural communication.

Previous pragmatic research on persuasion has been conducted in different fields. One of these fields is pragmatic analysis of persuasion strategies. Rank (1988, as cited in Hardin, 2010) suggests a basic persuasive formula for advertisements. His five components are attention-getting, confidence-building, desire-stimulating, urgency-stressing, and response-seeking. Combining both Rank's (1988) and Leech's (1966) findings, Hardin (2001) examines persuasive discourse in Spanish language advertising and finds that memorability (making the audience remember the message), force (emotional and logical appeals and the strength of a message), and participation (the desire for a response or audience/hearer involvement) are primary persuasive goals.

Barkley and Anderson (2008) studied persuasion techniques in the courtroom and found that the persuasive effect of arguments is related not only to what is said, but also to how they are said and when they are said. In other words, the more reputable the source of the arguments, the more persuasive the arguments will be. The arguments delivered with confidence, persistence and clarity will be more persuasive.

One of the most recent researchers on the topic under question is Bu (2010), who investigated pragmatic transfer in persuasion strategies by Chinese learners of English. The subjects of the study included 10 native English speakers, 10 Chinese learners of English, and 10 native Chinese speakers, all of whom were university students. The classification of persuasion strategies was mainly based on Hardin's classification of lexical and pragmatic realization of persuading speech act. The data was collected by means of a discourse complete test questionnaire. The Chi-square test was used to compare frequencies of use of persuasion strategies by the Chinese learner of English group, the native English group, and the native Chinese group. Results indicated that although all three groups used complaint strategy most frequently and opting out strategy least frequently, the Chinese learner of English group displayed advice/suggestion/recommendation strategy more frequently than the native English group. The Chinese learner of English group also used opinion-proving strategy less frequently than the native English group and never used consolation/condolence strategies.

Several pragmatic research studies have also been done on the use of directives in persuasive discourse. In his study, Hardin finds that directives are commonly used in Spanish persuasive discourse and directives may be either direct or indirect in force (Hardin, 2001). The illocutionary force of a directive may be softened through mitigation and pragmatic strategies that delocalize the speaker from his/her deictic center (Haverkate 1984; Koike 1992). Indirectness requires the addressee to infer meaning and rely on shared knowledge between the speaker and him/herself. Moreover, since persuasion may involve face threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the speaker must use appropriate politeness strategies to achieve the desired message. Certain forms

or constructions are conventionalized; that is, they are customarily used to perform specific speech acts.

In the Chinese context, Tang Xia (2009) analyzed persuading speech act from the perspective of the theory of Chinese face and indicated that Chinese persuasion strategies are human relation-based strategies. In addition, Zhai Lingzhi (2010) investigated persuasion strategies commonly used by Chinese from the perspective of pragmatics. These strategies included the combination of reason and emotion, analogy, encouragement, irony, praise and metaphor.

More recently, in another comparative study by Pishghadam and Rasouli (2011), the researchers investigated the general application of persuasive strategies among Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. To this end, 150 Iranian English learners took part in this study. The data were collected by means of a discourse completion test, consisting of 6 questions similar to real life persuasive situations. The Chi-square test was applied to compare the frequencies of persuasion strategies' application among Iranian EFL learners. The frequent use of query preparatory by nonnative English speakers was consistent with previous studies' results (Blum-Kalka & Olshtain, 1984; Hong, 2009; Tatton, 2008) which mentioned that mostly all languages prefer the application of conventionally indirect strategies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were the center of focus in the present study:

1. Are there significant differences in the kinds of persuasion strategies used by native English speakers, native Persian speakers, and Iranian EFL learners?
2. What types of persuasion strategies are more likely to be transferred pragmatically from L1 to L2 by Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study took place in Iran and the participants consisted of three groups: the Iranian learners of English group, the native English group, and the native Persian group. Each group of Iranians consisted of 30 participants, and there were 10 participants in the native English speakers group. They were university students ranging in age from 19 to 26 years old. So they showed homogeneity in terms of age and education. The participants in this study were accessed through convenient sampling procedure.

Instruments

The data were collected from participants by means of a discourse completion task (DCT). The DCT consisted of 6 items in different contexts close to real life persuasive situations, three of which were adapted from the aforementioned study by Bu (2010). Modifications were made in the other situations to make them more appropriate in both Iranian culture and English culture since in interlanguage pragmatics studies it is necessary to make sure that the situations in the DCT are equivalent cross-culturally. Through the modification process, three experts in the field

of ELT were asked to examine the DCT to make certain it was as valid and reliable as possible. In order to avoid native Persian speakers' misunderstanding of what they were required to do in the DCT, a translated version was given to them. As far as the scoring of the DCT was concerned, the data were first coded according to their classification based on the Bu (2010) framework. For the analysis of persuasion strategies utilized, descriptive statistics were employed to count the frequency and percentage of each strategy for each group, and Chi-square test was then used to compare the frequencies of persuasion strategies use by the Iranian nonnative English speaker group, the native English speaker group, and the native Persian group.

Procedure

To achieve the objectives of the study, the DCT was adapted and modified to fit the Iranian and American culture. Subsequently, three groups of participants (i.e. native English speakers, native Persian speakers, and Iranian EFL learners) were selected through convenience sampling and asked to take part in this study. They were 'persuaded' to fill out the DCTs and return them to the researchers. Once the completed DCTs were received, the data were subjected to statistical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As the total number of collected data comprised 30 DCTs in English by the Iranian learners of English Group (G1), 30 DCTs in Persian by the native Persian group (G2), and 10 DCTs in English by the native English group (G3), and there were six different persuasive situations in these DCTs, the whole number of responses by G1, G2, and G3 amounted to 180, 180, and 60 answers for each DCT, respectively. First, the answers of the three groups to all six persuasive situations were analyzed and tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Each Strategy by Three Groups

Strategy / Groups	Native Group	English Iranian Group	Learner of English	Native Group	Persian
Complaint	5 (8.33%)		14 (7.77%)		11 (6.11%)
Reaction	2 (3.33%)		8 (4.44%)		7 (3.88%)
Request	7 (11.66%)		27 (15.00%)		30 (16.66%)
Ultimatum	6 (10.00%)		4 (2.22%)		3 (1.66%)
Order	7 (11.66%)		8 (4.44%)		5 (2.77%)
Opinion-proving	6 (10.00%)		31 (17.22%)		38 (21.11%)
Advice	8 (13.33%)		23 (12.77%)		19 (10.55%)
Suggestion	5 (8.33%)		22 (12.22%)		19 (10.55%)
Recommendation	8 (13.33%)		35 (19.44%)		41 (22.77%)
Consolation	0 (0.00%)		0 (0.00%)		0 (0.00%)
Condolence	0 (0.00%)		0 (0.00%)		0 (0.00%)
Opting out	4 (6.66%)		8 (4.44%)		7 (3.88%)
Total	60 (100%)		180 (100%)		180 (100%)

Pearson Chi-Square value = 28.133, df = 4, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.009

The percentage of each strategy in the performance of persuading speech act is provided in parentheses after the frequency. The percentage numbers are rounded to two decimal, so the sum of the percentages may be more or less than 100%.

The descriptive data shown in Table 1 indicates that the frequency and percentage of the selection of the strategies among these three groups was not equally distributed. In order to be more specific, regarding the claim of difference between these three groups, the Chi-square test was run to detect the differences. The Chi-Square result is written beneath Table 1.

Based on these results, the answer to the first question was positive. That means that there was a significant difference in the number of persuasion strategies used by native English speakers, native Persian speakers, and Iranian nonnative English speakers since the groups showed discrepancy in the use of the strategies.

The research findings can be summarized as below: According to Table 1, all the three groups used recommendation strategy most frequently and consolation and condolence strategies least frequently. This phenomenon can be explained by the facts that in most situations the respondents tried to persuade the interlocutor in the same manner. All the participants of the three groups used different statements for recommendation and then tried to persuade the hearer. The second frequently used strategy by the native English group was advice when they performed their persuading act. Thus, advice and recommendation strategies were used equally by this group (13.33%).

By contrast, the second frequently used strategy by the learners of English group and native Persian group was opinion-proving (17.22%). Here the participants of both groups started the persuasion with what they would do to convince the person to do the favor for them. An example of the way they persuaded using opinion-proving regarding situation number six follows:

Situation 6:

You are the owner of a big bookstore. It is the beginning of the semester, and you are very busy. Today you want to extend business hours by an hour. So, you decide to persuade your clerk, whom you know quite well, to stay an extra hour more.

The learners of English, under the influence of their first language (Persian), tried to use expressions like *'If only you could stay a little longer, I promise to pay you more'* and other similar expressions showing their awareness of the situation for the clerk which in some senses were exaggerated to show their understanding. This is due to their use of substitution strategy which results from Persian speakers as well as learners of English highly frequent employment of recommendation to persuade the hearer to comply with the situations.

The third prominent strategy utilized by the learners of English group and native Persian group was that of request ($G2 = 15.00\%$, $G3 = 16.66\%$). The English group used it as their fourth strategy. Here, using request strategy frequently, the learners showed lack of knowledge and insecurity about the proper strategy to apply in assigned situations which resulted in substitution of more polite strategy (e.g. request).

Strategy of order ranked fifth in the category of persuasive strategies for native English group (11.66%), but the other two groups seemed to be reluctant in using this strategy. Strategy of order was used with the same rate as the reaction strategy (4.44%) in the learners of English group and it even ranked after opting-out for the native Persian group (3.88%). Ultimatum was used occasionally after the order strategy for native English group (10.00%); however, the other groups used this strategy less frequently. The strategy of ultimatum was used after opting out in the learners of English group (2.22%) and even less by native Persian group (1.66%). The least frequently used strategy by the three groups was consolation/condolence.

When the participants were asked about the use of recommendation/opinion proving/request/advice/suggestion, 21 out of 30 Iranian learners of English participants said that it was a duty for the speaker to give useful recommendations, prove their opinions, and ask for a favor through request strategy to change the hearer's behavior or to make the person do something for them. When interviewed why they used a certain formula, 18 out of 30 Iranian learners of English participants admitted that they used substitution strategy. For example, some of them said:

'When I needed help and I knew that this favor might bring about some difficulty for the hearer, I wanted to comfort him by giving a recommendation or asking to do the favor in the form of request. I would say: I promised to increase your salary to lessen the difficulty I might impose to them.'

Here, recommending was mostly used instead of other direct and explicit strategies in English. When they were asked about substitution strategy, they said the reason for substituting specific strategies was that they were not willing to impose themselves on the interlocutor through ordering or using ultimatum strategies. They also said that they were not fully familiar with these strategies and did not know how to utilize them properly in the required situations so they tried to avoid the strategies and substitute the ones which were known because of their use in their first language. Thus, these learners used two different pragmatic strategies: the first was avoidance strategy which was defined as "omission of speech acts whose formulas are unfamiliar" (Bu, 2010, p. 100), and the second strategy was substitution which was utilized to compensate for the students' lack of knowledge about the principles and rules of using these strategies pragmatically in a foreign language context. Here, under the impact of Persian, besides their inadequate knowledge, the learners of English group tried to select a strategy with 'less illocutionary force', again to avoid possible imposition on the hearer. From these findings, the second question of the study could be answered: The persuasion strategies

which were more likely to be transferred pragmatically from L1 to L2 by Iranian nonnative English speakers were avoidance and substitution.

Addressing the first research question

In this research, it was found that the frequency of use of persuasion strategies by Iranian EFL learners was significantly different from that of native English speakers, though they did share some similarities ($\chi^2 = 28.133$, $p = 0.009 < 0.05$). Iranian EFL learners were apt to express persuasion with care and/or caution represented by strategies of recommendation, opinion proving, request, advice, and suggestion and avoiding other strategies like ultimatum, ordering, complaint, reaction, consolation, and condolence.

They did this using statement of reason/explanation, statements of sympathy, as well as promise of compensation in the future more than native English speakers. Native English speakers were more sensitive to their interlocutors' higher and lower status, whereas Iranian EFL learners acted similarly to interlocutors with different social status. Additionally, they were reluctant to use direct speech act and they avoided imposition on the hearer. Thus, through analysis of the responses, the researcher came to the conclusion that the most commonly strategies used by Iranian EFL learners were indirect strategies.

The quantitative analysis showed that the Persian learner of English group used opinion-proving/ request/ advice/ suggestion more frequently than the native English group, which means that participants in the Persian learner of English group had a tendency of expressing their sympathetic feeling about their hearers' situation and they preferred to use recommendation/opinion-proving/request/advice to improve their hearer's situation and to comfort their hearers by being more polite and changing every situation to a request one. On the contrary, the participants in the native English group preferred to use recommendation/advice/suggestion to make the hearer comply with these situations. Such differences may result from their different perceptions of these situations. In the Iranian culture, making recommendation, opinion-proving, request, and advice is regarded as rapport-building. Although opinion-proving, request, and advice are also available in English culture for these situations, they were rarely used by native English speakers for the same situations compared to the answers given by Iranian groups. This is not surprising because English society is one of typical instances of individualist societies (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey & Chua, 1988; Hofstede, 1991). Extending business hours by an hour, or persuading a person's little brother to pay the bill on her/his behalf are different matters for native English speakers as they behaved totally differently to these situations. They preferred to use ordering strategy more than the other two groups did, indicating their choice towards a more direct way for persuasion in these situations

Table 1 indicated that frequency of strategy use by the Iranian learner of English group and the native Persian group was similar in the use of recommendation, opinion-proving, request, advice, and suggestion. This phenomenon was due to the fact that in our society,

harmonious social relationship is highly valued. Advice-making, opinion-proving, and request-making are not only a method of keeping harmonious relations among people, but also a duty of benefiting the society. This positive culture orientation of such strategy results in the tendency that Iranian EFL learners of English group display similar frequencies to the native Persian group and more frequencies than the native English group in the use of recommendation, opinion-proving, request, advice, and suggestion. The similarity between the Iranian learners of English group and the native Persian group in the use of recommendation, opinion-proving, and request can explain the difference in the use of these strategies between the Iranian learner of English group and the native English group.

As far as opinion-proving strategy is concerned, the EFL learners of English group used this strategy more frequently than the native English group, which could be due to the fact that they were still influenced by Persian thinking pattern when they persuaded their hearers. Strategy of order, as another example, was used rarely in the learners of English group and it even ranked after opting out for native Persian group. This could be attributed to the fact that EFL learners, under their mother tongue influence, were not willing to use this strategy even when they were dealing with people from lower social level or when they were speaking to their family members. Instead of embarking on the utilization of the required strategies, EFL learners tried to show their politeness and understanding of the situation of the interlocutors, exaggerating their feeling in some situations, which in most of the cases were the reasons for which their utterances were colored and halfway between Persian and English.

In all situations, native Persian speakers and EFL learners of English similarly tried to show their understanding of the situation and difficulty they may bring for the interlocutors upon helping them with their problem; thus, opinion-proving, request, advice, and suggestion are encouraged to use when such situations are dealt with according to Iranian culture. It has also previously been confirmed that indirect speech act usually denoted politeness in the Iranian context as well. According to Allami and Naeimi (2010), in a high-context culture such as Iran, people tend to use indirect, symbolic, vague, and implicit style of communication whereas a low-context culture is generally represented by direct, lucid, accurate, and explicit communication approach. This result is not consistent with Hardin's (2010) finding that, nonnative speakers use explicit speech act verbs in persuasive discourse, and the use of these verbs may be less dominant among native speakers.

Addressing the second research question

From the above-mentioned findings, the researchers deduced that there were a number of factors that partake in the weakness of the Iranian EFL learners in English language selection of correct persuasion strategy; influence from Persian and lack of pragmatic knowledge of English language stood ahead of them. Thus, based on these findings, the second hypothesis stating "there is no pragmatic transfer in persuasion strategies by Iranian EFL learners in their intercultural communication" could safely be rejected.

However, more salient pragmatic transfer of Iranian learners of English was one to one principle strategy, while based on the findings of the present study, avoidance and substitution were among the most frequent strategies which were pragmatically transferred from Persian into English by Iranian EFL learners.

CONCLUSION

The above-mentioned results demonstrated that there were some differences in persuasion strategies between the learners of English group and the native English group, while there were some similarities in persuasion strategy use between the learner of English group and the native Persian group. These research results provided an affirmative answer to the first question: there is a significant difference in the kind of persuasion strategies used by native English speakers and Iranian nonnative English speakers.

It is worth reminding again that the use of rules of speaking from one's speech act community when interacting or when speaking in a second or a foreign language is known as pragmatic transfer. There was also pragmatic transfer in the use of persuasion strategies by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. However, it was impossible to provide evidence of pragmatic transfer without simultaneously describing what was transferred.

As discussed above, the persuasion strategies that were mostly used by Iranian learner of English group and Persian native speakers were: recommendation, opinion proving, request, advice, and suggestion. The Iranian learners of English group also displayed some features of their pragmatic transfer of strategies of avoidance and substitution when they conducted a certain type of speech act. Avoidance and substitution of particular speech act were due to the learners' lack of skill or explicit training, for example, in the way to form appropriate advice, or indirect commands. Moreover, learners tended to avoid or substitute for the level of directness appropriate for each context, either because they were unaware or because they lacked the necessary skills to do so (Koike 1994).

Finally, based on the findings of the study, it could be realized that English and Persian languages demonstrated parallel strategy in application of recommendation formula as the most preferred strategy while they revealed different patterns in application of order and ultimatum strategies as English people utilized them frequently; Persian speakers used these strategies quite rarely. As a result, Iranian learners of English transferred these habits to English not only because of the influence from their mother tongue but also as their lack of knowledge in pragmatic utilization of these strategies in English contexts. Moreover, evidence proved the existence of significant difference between English native speakers and Iranian EFL males and females in application of persuasion strategy. The results obtained from this study should be approached with caution since this study suffers from limitations, one of which is the limited number of native English speakers who served as the participants of the study. Future studies might be able to

make up for this limitation. It could also be suggested that future research in this area take gender differences into consideration and explore whether males and female use different persuasion strategies in the two speech communities under investigation or not.

REFERENCES

- Allami, H. (2006). A Sociopragmatic analysis of griping: The case of Iranian students. *The Linguistics Journal*, 1(1), 59-76.
- Al-Issa, A. (2003). Sociocultural transfer in L2 speech behaviors: Evidence and motivating factors. *International Journal of Intercultural Factors*, 3, 581-601.
- Andersen, R. (1984). The one to one principle of interlanguage construction. *Language Learning*, 34, 77-95.
- Bachman, L. F. (2000). Modern language testing at the turn of the century: Assuring that what we count. *Language Testing*, 17(1), 1-42.
- Barkley, E., & Anderson, D. (2008). Using the science of persuasion in the courtroom. *The Jury Expert*, 8, 1-5.
- Barron, A. (2003). *Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics: Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2002). Pragmatics and second language acquisition. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.). *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 182-192). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and Apologies: A Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns. *Applied Linguistics*, 5 (3), 196- 213.
- Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1986). Too many words: Length of utterance and pragmatic failure. *Journal of Pragmatics* 8, 47-61.
- Brown, J. D. (1988). *Understanding research in second language learning: A teacher's guide to statistics and research design*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). Universals in language usage: Politeness phenomena. In E. Goody (Ed.). *Questions on politeness: Strategies in social interaction* (pp. 256-289). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning how to say what you mean in a second language: A study of speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), pp. 29-60.
- Bu, J. (2010). Study of Pragmatic Transfer in Persuasion Strategies by Chinese Learners of English. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 16 (2), 93-113.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-47.
- Clyne, M. (1994). *Inter-Cultural communication at work: Cultural value in discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Delen, B., & Tavil, Z. M. (2010). Evaluation of four course books in terms of three speech acts: Requests, refusals and complaints. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 692-697.

- Faerch, C., & Kasper G. (1984). Pragmatic knowledge: Rules and procedures. *Applied Linguistics*, 5(3). 214-225.
- Eslami-Rasekh, A., & Mardani, M. (2010). Investigating the Effects of Teaching Apology Speech Act, with a Focus on Intensifying Strategies, on Pragmatic Development of EFL Learners: The Iranian Context. *Journal of Language Society and Culture*, 30, 96-103.
- Ghobadi, A., & Fahim, M. (2009). The effect of explicit teaching of English thanking formulas on Iranian EFL intermediate level students at English language institutes. *System*, 37, 526-537.
- Gudykunst, W., Ting-Toomy, S., & Chua, E. (1988). *Culture and interpersonal communication*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Hardin, K. J. (2001). *Pragmatics of persuasive discourse in Spanish television advertising*. Dallas: SIL International and the University of Texas at Arlington.
- Hardin, K. (2010). Trying to persuade: Speech acts in the persuasive discourse of intermediate Spanish learners. In K. A. Mcelhanon & Gerreesink (Eds.), *A mosaic of languages and cultures* (pp.155-179). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haverkate, H. (1984). *Speech acts, speakers, and hearers: Reference and referential strategies in Spanish*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Hinkel, D. E., Wiersma, W., & Turs, S. G. (1994). *Applied statistics for the behavioral science*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Honglin, L. (2007). A comparative study of refusal speech acts in Chinese and American English. *Canadian Social Science*, 3(4), 64-67.
- Hsu, F. L. K. (1981). *American & Chinese: passage to differences*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Second Language Research*, 8, 203-31.
- Kasper, G. (1998). Interlanguage pragmatics. In H. Byrnes (Ed.). *Learning foreign and second languages: Perspectives in research and scholarship* (pp. 183-208). New York: The Modern Language Association of America.
- Koike, D. A. (1994). Negation in Spanish and English suggestions and requests: Mitigating effects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 21, pp. 513-526.
- Koike, D. A. (1996). Transfer of pragmatic competence and suggestions in Spanish foreign language learning. In S. M. Gass and J. Neu, (Eds.). *Speech acts across cultures: Challenges to communication in a second language*, (pp. 257-281). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lakoff, R. (1982). Persuasive discourse and ordinary conversation, with examples from advertising. In Deborah Tannen (Ed.) *Analyzing discourse: Text and talk* (pp. 154-169). Georgetown: Georgetown University Press.
- Leech, G. N. (1966). *English in advertising: A linguistic study of advertising in Great Britain*. London: Longmans.
- Keshavarz, M. H., Eslami, Z. R., & Ghahreman, V. (2006). Pragmatic transfer and Iranian EFL refusals: A cross-cultural perspective of Persian and English. In K. Bardovi-Harlig, G. Kasper, C. Félix-Brasdefer, & A. Omar (Eds.). *Pragmatics and language learning* (pp. 359-403). Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.

- Rank, H. (1988). *Persuasion analysis: A companion to composition*. Park Forest, IL: Counter-Propaganda Press.
- Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.). *Pragmatics in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 10 (3), 209-231.
- Taguchi, N. (2006). Analysis of Appropriateness in a Speech Act of Request in L2 English. *Pragmatics*, 16 (4), 513-533.
- Tanck, S. (2002). Speech Act Sets of Refusal and Complaint: A Comparison of Native and Non-Native English Speakers' Production. *TESOL Working Papers*, 4 (2), 1-22.
- Tatton, H. (2008). Could You, Perhaps, Pretty Please? Request Directness in Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization. *Applied Linguistics*, 8 (2), 1-4.
- Zegarac, V., & Pennington, M. C. (2000). Pragmatic transfer in intercultural communication. In H. Spencer-Oatey (Ed.). *Cultural speaking: Managing rapport through talk across cultures* (pp.165-190). New York: Continuum.

COMPARING ONLINE DICTIONARIES AND FLASH CARDS ON DEVELOPING VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN ESP CONTEXT

Nafiseh Asadzadeh Maleki (PhD candidate)

*Department of Foreign Language Education, Malekan Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Malekan, Iran
Nafiseh.asadzadeh@gmail.com*

Hanieh Davatgari Asl (PhD)

*Department of Foreign Language Education, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
hdavatgar@ymail.com*

ABSTRACT

Regarding the crucial role of vocabulary learning and retention in pedagogical context and the presence of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) as new and powerful technology in the domain of foreign and second language learning, this study aims to reports on the design and results of an experiment with an objective of assessing the different effects of utilizing two vocabulary development strategies, namely an online dictionary and flash cards, on improving learners' vocabulary knowledge in ESP classes. To do so, 50 freshman learners, majoring information technology (IT), with an age range of 19-20 were randomly assigned into two comparison groups who learnt new technical Information Technology words by making use of an online dictionary and flash cards. The outcomes of the present study indicate that the comparison group 1 who utilized an online dictionary outperformed the comparison group 2 who made use of flash cards. The obtained results of the current study would be more beneficial to the students in order to enhance their capability in remembering and retaining new technical words. As well, it has some advantages for teachers and materials writers to present new vocabulary learning strategies.

KEYWORDS: vocabulary learning, ESP, flash cards, online dictionaries, CALL.

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of vocabulary learning methods and instructional techniques has been recognized as an important element in both first and second language pedagogy. During the 1990s, interest in vocabulary learning and teaching increased. Paul Nation's (1990) "teaching and learning vocabulary" appeared at the beginning of the decade and proved influential in its inclusive review of research on vocabulary while providing pedagogical guidance through interpreting the research in terms of classroom applications.

Second language acquisition depends crucially on the development of a strong vocabulary (Nation, 2001). Without an extensive amount of vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new

target words, learners may be unable to make use of some language learning opportunities around them such as watching TV, reading newspaper, listening to radio, etc. (Renandya & Richard, 2002).

According to Laufer (1997), vocabulary learning is considered as the heart of any language learning and language use. Metaphorically, Zhan-Xiang (2004) illustrates that words of a language are just like bricks of a high building: despite quite small pieces, they are vital to the great structure. If we spend most of our time studying grammar, our English will not improve enormously, much improvement is attained if we learn more words and expressions, little can be said with grammar but almost anything with words (Thornbury, 2002). Researchers now view vocabulary as an important language component upon which effective communication relies (Oxford & Scarella, 1994).

Learning vocabulary is seen as a key element to achieve a high level of proficiency in the target language by a large number of theoreticians (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). Also researchers, teachers, and authors in foreign language learning are paying special attention to foreign language vocabulary acquisition (Zu, 2009). It is believed that having a large and varied vocabulary is the indicator of communicative competence and it is one of the important aspects of language learning (McCrostie, 2007).

Considering the significance of vocabulary learning in the domain of language pedagogy, and with regard to the development of specific English courses such as English for technology, management, accounting, engineering, etc., most of the students encounter difficulties in learning and retaining technical English words relating to their specific course of instruction (ESP). Certainly, a great deal about the origins of ESP could be written. According to Hutchinson and Waters, (1987) there are two reasons common to the emergence of all ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point to the second world war as an " ... age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale · for various reasons, most notably the economic power of the United States in the post-war world, the role [of international language] fell to English" (p. 6).

The second key reason cited as having a tremendous impact on the emergence of ESP was a revolution in linguistics. Whereas traditional linguists set out to describe the features of language, revolutionary pioneers in linguistics began to focus on the ways in which language is used in real communication. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point out that one significant discovery was in the ways that spoken and written English vary. In other words, given the particular context in which English is used, the variant of English will change. This idea was taken one step farther. If language in different situations varies, then tailoring language instruction to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts is also possible. Hence, in the late 1960s and the early 1970s there were many attempts to describe English for Science and Technology (EST). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify Ewer and Latorre, Swales, Selinker and Trimble as a few of the prominent descriptive EST pioneers.

David Carver (1983) identifies three types of ESP First, English as a restricted language such as the language used by air traffic controllers or by waiters. Second, English for academic and occupational purposes in which according to the 'Tree of ELT' (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), ESP is broken down into three branches: a) English for Science and Technology (EST), b) English for Business and Economics (EBE), and c) English for Social Studies (ESS). And third, English with specific topics that emphasis shifts from purpose to topic.

The main focus of ESP in pedagogical domain is on the second type of ESP, i.e. English for academic and occupational purposes. According to Akbari&Tahririan (2009), students in an ESP context come across unfamiliar target words in text materials and need to adopt some deliberate strategies to facilitate learning and retention of those words in their memories. Considering the crucial role attributed to vocabulary learning and teaching in second and foreign language teaching, recently, there has been a revived interest in the vocabulary nature and its role in learning and teaching in general and in learning technical English words in ESP classes in specific (Richard & Renandya, 2002).

According to Al-Seghayer (2001), advances and increased availability of computers have altered and expanded the field of second/foreign language education. The concern has been narrowed to the investigation of the efficiency of presenting information using multiple modalities such as text, audio, still pictures, and dynamic videos in the field of SLA (Robin, 2008; Belmonte & Verdugo, 2007). According to Lomicka (1998), with the advance of multimedia application in second language teaching and learning the investigation of annotation has been taken a step further. The computer is able to take a role as an interlocutor in language learning tasks. As well, it provides additional lexical information in the form of enhanced input for the user or language learner (Groot, 2009)

In today's language classrooms, vocabulary teaching and learning is increasingly supplemented by software products. The most important reason for this is the possibility of integrating different modalities, i.e. pictures, animations, videos, and sounds in the program and consequently creating interactivity with that (al-Seghayer, 2001; Jones & Plass, 2002). Along with the use of computer in order to improve the students' vocabulary knowledge, flash cards are, as well, considered as an educational tool to help people to memorize information. These constructive instruments are considered as a practical tool for stimulating English learners vocabulary in English classes because in addition being handy and useful in the English language learning classrooms, they are highly effective, versatile and fun, too. They're also cheap to acquire or produce and, in fact, could even be made by the learners themselves. These cards are supposed to be imperative elements in teaching vocabulary and developing communicative skills. The learners would be able to improve their language learning ability via utilizing different kinds of flash cards, because these cards concentrate on repeating, memorizing, reading or listening, besides other skills. The teacher must plan this activity with a very specific objective according to the students' level (Lynch, 2010). Flash cards can also help learners to drill in the English alphabet, increase their concentration on games and also helps them to memorize vocabulary elements, images, phrases or even grammar aspects.

Many Iranian EFL learners tend to memorize new words in a conventional way, which is memorizing a long list of words with their translations in their mother tongue. However, this strategy would not be efficient in learning and retaining the words for a long period of time. Therefore, with the birth of new technology and new learning strategies in the field of second and foreign language learning, most EFL learners, teachers, and material writers prefer to utilize these strategies in order to enhance their vocabulary knowledge. Because of the importance of vocabulary learning in general and vocabulary development in ESP courses in specific, the present study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of two vocabulary learning strategies, online dictionary and flash cards, in ESP vocabulary instruction. To fulfill the present study, the following research questions were addressed in this paper:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the effect of using online dictionaries in improving EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge in ESP courses?
2. What is the effect of using flash cards in improving EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge in ESP courses?
3. What is the difference between using flash cards and online dictionaries in promoting EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge in ESP courses? Which one is more beneficial?

METHODOLOGY

This quasi-experimental study reports on the comparison between two vocabulary learning strategies, namely using an online dictionary versus flash cards, on improving Iranian EFL learners' acquisition of ESP words in Information Technology (IT) classes. The dependent variable of this study is learners' achievement of technical Information Technology (IT) vocabularies. The independent variables are two experimental groups who study using flash cards and an online dictionary.

Participants

Initially, 74 male and female students at Islamic Azad University in Bonab, Iran, aged 19-26, majoring Information Technology (IT), took the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP). Based on their scores, 50 were selected to participate in the study. In the next stage the participants were given a test of new target words which were presented in a table with four columns. The aim of this test was to measure whether the new vocabularies are familiar to the students or not. In the final stage the participants were randomly assigned into two comparison groups.

Materials

To fulfill the objectives of this study the following instruments were utilized:

- To ascertain the homogeneity of the subjects in terms of language proficiency, the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP) was employed.
- The new target words were presented in a four-column table to quantify whether the words are new to the students or not. This test was designed by the researcher and piloted

for its reliability and validity. The words were included in the first column. In the second column the participants were supposed to mark “yes” if they know the meaning of the new word, and mark “no” if they have not seen that word before in column three. Finally in column four they were required to write the meaning of the target word if it is familiar to them.

- Eight reading comprehension passages which were adopted from “Special English for the Students of Computer” written by ManoochehrHaghani (1386). The titles of the passages were: 1. *The Information Society*, 2. *Personal Computers*, 3. *Popular Productivity Software: Word Processing*, 4. *Putting Word Processing to Work*, 5. *Popular Productivity Software: Desktop Publishing*, 6. *Spreadsheet: The Magic Matrix*, 7. *The PC System Unit: Looking in the Box*, 8. *Processor Design*, 9.
- A thirty items vocabulary pre-test, with the reliability index of 0.82, measured by Pearson Correlation method, was designed in multiple-choice format.
- Flash cards which consisted of new technical Information Technology (IT) vocabularies on one side and their pronunciations, meanings, and examples on the other side.
- An online Information Technology (IT) dictionary which is a talking IT dictionary and helps users to learn and identify the meaning and pronunciation of technical key vocabularies. This dictionary is available in www.Englisg4IT.com
- And finally, a multiple-choice post-test which was developed for the purpose of this study with thirty items. This test was also measured in terms of its reliability through conducting the scores to Pearson correlation method. The results confirmed its reliability ($r=0.79$)

Procedure

At the beginning of the study, a standardized general English proficiency test, MTELP, was administered to 74 participants who were divided into two groups in order to assess the participants' proficiency level. Based on the outcomes, of this test 50 subjects were selected from among 98 learners. Then, these participants were randomly divided into two comparison groups. In order to measure the familiarity of the participants with the new target vocabularies, these words were presented in a four-column table. As well, the participants were supposed to take a thirty-item pre-test that was in multiple-choice form.

Before treatment the researcher provided a brief introduction about how to use online dictionary and how to use flash cards to learn the meaning of the new words. Afterward, eight reading comprehension passages which were adopted from “Special English for the Students of Computer”, written by ManoghehrHaghani, were presented to the students. The subjects in comparison group 1, were required to learn the new words in each passage by using flash cards. These flash cards included the new vocabulary, its meaning, its pronunciation, and an example. The subjects in comparison group 2 were supposed to learn each new word by using talking online dictionary designed for the students of Information Technology. After treatment, the students were provided with a post-test which comprised of thirty multiple-choice question items with one correct answer and three distracters. At the final stage, the data were collected and submitted to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17.0) to analyze the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was an attempt to survey the relative effects of using an online dictionary and flash cards as two influential vocabulary learning strategies. To bring about the objectives of the present study and to answer the research questions, the collected data were conducted via submitting to SPSS for windows and the outcomes were reported as follows:

First, the scores obtained from general language proficiency tests were analyzed through paired-sample t-test. The results of this analysis are demonstrated in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Paired Samples Statistics in Language Proficiency Test

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	proficiency.G.1	80.6531	37	10.09239	1.44177
	proficiency.G.2	79.9388	37	12.45895	1.77985

Table 2: Paired Samples Test in Language Proficiency Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair proficiency.G.1 - proficiency.G.2	.71429	14.10526	2.01504	-3.33722	4.76579	.354	48	.725

The results in table 1 Shows that the mean score of the subjects in group 1 of proficiency test is 80.65 and the mean score for group 2 is 79.93. Accordingly, the mean scores are approximately at the same level and there is no significant difference in terms of general proficiency level between the participants. ($p=.725$). To answer the first research question, which addresses the effectiveness of utilizing vocabulary online dictionaries on improving EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge, the scores of the both pre and post tests for experimental group 1, those who learnt the target words through an online dictionary, were submitted to paired-sample T-test. The results of this analysis are presented in tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Paired Samples Statistics for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of Comparison Group 1

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	online.dic.pretest	19.1600	25	3.59026	.71805
	online.dic.posttest	24.2800	25	3.70270	.74054

Table 4: Paired Samples Test for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of Comparison Group 1

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair	Online dictionary pre-test Online dictionary post-test	-5.12000	2.22336	.44467	-6.03776	-4.20224	-11.541	24	.000

According to the results of table 3, the mean score for the participants in the comparison group 1, who utilized an online dictionary, in post-test is 24.28 which is higher than the mean score of the same subjects in the pre-test (19.16). These outcomes, as confirmed by the results of table 4, demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the performances of the subjects in group 1 in both pre and post tests and using an online dictionary as a vocabulary learning strategy in ESP classes has an influential effect on enhancing EFL learners vocabulary learning and retention. With regard to the second research question, the collected data from both pre and post test of the subjects in experimental group 2 who learn ESP vocabularies via flash cards were analyzed through utilizing paired-sample t-test and the results are revealed in tables 5 and 6:

Table 5: Paired Samples Statistics for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of Comparison Group 2

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 flashcard.pre	19.8000	25	3.47611	.69522
flashcard.post	22.2800	25	3.60000	.72000

Table 6: Paired Samples Test for both Pre-Test and Post-Test of Comparison Group 2

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair	Flash cards pre-test Flash cards post-test	-2.48000	1.85113	.37023	-3.24411	-1.71589	-6.699	24	.000

The results in table 5 illustrates that the participants in comparison group 2 outperformed in post-test than in pre-test. Since the mean score for post-test is 22.28 which is higher than the mean score for pre-test (19.80). As well, the results of table 6 shows that the difference between performances of the subjects in group 2 in pre and post tests is dominant, since the Sig. ratio is

($p=.000$). Consequently it can be concluded that using flash cards has a positive effect on improving learners' ESP vocabularies. In order to answer the third research question which deals with the comparison between the effectiveness of both aforementioned vocabulary development strategies, the scores of the post-tests of both groups were conducted by the use of paired-sample t-test. The following tables illustrate the obtained results:

Table 7: Paired Samples Statistics for both Comparison Groups in Post-Tests

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	online.dic post-test	24.2800	25	3.70270	.74054
	Flashcard post-test	22.2800	25	3.60000	.72000

Table 8: Paired Samples Test for both Comparison Group in Post-Tests

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair	Online dictionary post-test Flash cards post-test	2.00000	1.93649	.38730	1.20066	2.79934	5.164	24	.000

As it is demonstrated in table 7, the mean score for the subjects who learnt ESP vocabularies through an online dictionary is higher than the mean scores of those who made use of flash cards ($m=24.28 > m=22.28$). in accordance with the end result s of table 7, there is significant difference between the performances of subjects in both comparison groups in post-test and the participants in group 1 outperformed those in group 2 ($p=.000$).

Discussion

The present study was designed to shed light on the effects of using online dictionaries and flash cards on improving Iranian learners' vocabulary knowledge in ESP classes. The first and the second research questions addressed the effectiveness of using different vocabulary development strategies and the third research question compared these two strategies. The outcomes obtained through data analysis confirmed that the comparison group 1 who learnt new words via an online dictionary surpassed than those in group 2 who used flash cards. Furthermore, comparing and measuring the mean scores and standard deviations in tables 7 and 8 indicated that the students are more likely to use multimedia technology than the other paper-based methods. The findings of the present study is in line with the findings of Tick (2009), who have posited online dictionary technology may lead to positive effects in learning environments because of its widespread use and being as a kind of new technology .

As well, the outcomes echo those of the study conducted by Davies (2002), showing that vocabulary learning via flash cards can be more effective than massed vocabulary learning

through paper medium. He believes that this success may be due to students' easy access to flash cards, which results in their repeated exposures to and frequent practice of the vocabulary items on a daily basis.

Le (2010) also studied the effect of multimedia and traditional approach to the identification of English vocabularies. The result of his study was strongly in favor of multimedia technology. Emphasizing the importance of vocabulary learning, Brown (1973) stated that more attention can be placed on new target words by using new strategies to highlight new words for L2 learners.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the current study was investigating two different vocabulary learning strategies, namely using online dictionaries vs. flash cards, in remembering and retaining newly presented technical words. According to the obtained outcomes, it was observed that presenting new words through online dictionaries was more beneficial than presenting those words by the use of flash cards. Since, the mean scores of the students in group 1 (online dictionary group) was higher than those in group 2 (flash card group). The needs of struggling readers highlight the importance of teachers making correct pedagogical decisions in identifying target vocabulary and choosing appropriate materials. Working with a limited range of genres at any one time is also a valid idea to enable students to engage in learning new target words before moving on. These findings highlight the demands on teachers not just to be able to plan effective tasks, but also manage them in a way which will lead to students acquiring vocabulary effectively. Accordingly, this paper shows that making use of multimedia technology in general, and online dictionaries in this study in particular, would provide a wider path to the Iranian learners to enhance the amount of their vocabulary learning and retention. Therefore, in addition to utilizing paper-based methods such as flash cards, it would be very influential to provide learners, especially those in ESP classes with opportunities to be aware of the merits of employing technology in their vocabulary learning and retention. The major limitation of this study was imposed by administrative restrictions. Since this study was done at the university, the number of the students who participated in the study was limited. As well, in this study, only two vocabulary learning strategies were investigated, while it is possible to survey more vocabulary learning strategies.

REFERENCES

- Akbari, Z., & Tahririan, M. H. (2009). Vocabulary learning strategies in an ESP context: The case of para/medical English in Iran. *Asian EFL Journal*, 11 (1), 39-61
- Al-Seghayer, K. (2001). The effect of multimedia annotation modes on L2 vocabulary acquisition: a comparative study. *Journal of Language Learning & Technology*, 5(1): 202-232
- Belmonte, I.A., & Verdugo, D. R. (2007). *Using Digital Stories to Improve Listening Comprehension With Spanish Young Learners Of English*. Retrieved November 21, 2010 from <http://www.llt.msu.edu/vol11num1/ramirez/default.html>
- Boers, F., & Lindstromberg, S. (2008). How cognitive linguistics can foster effective vocabulary teaching. In F. Boers & S. Lindstromberg (Eds.), *Applications of cognitive linguistics:*

- Cognitive linguistic Approaches to teaching vocabulary and phraseology* (pp.1-61). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Brown, R. (1973). *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Carver, D. (1983). Some propositions about ESP. *The ESP Journal*, 2, 131-137
- Davies, G. (2002). *Computer Assisted Language Learning*. Retrieved from [http:// www llt.msu.edu](http://www.llt.msu.edu)
- Groot, A.M. (2006). Effects of stimulus charectristics and background music on foreign language vocabulary learning and forgetting. *Language Learning*, 56(3), 463-506.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, L.C., & Plass, J.L. (2002). Supporting Listening Comprehension and Vocabulary Acquisition in French with Multimedia Annotations. *The Modern language Journal*, 86(4), 546-561.
- Laufer, B. (1997). *The lexical plight in second language reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Le, T. H. (2010). *Learning lexical collocations with concordancing and scaffolding*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Groningen.
- Lomicka, L. (1998). "to gloss or not to gloss": an investigation of reading online. *Journal of Language Learning & Technology*, 2, 41-50.
- Lynch, L. M. (2010). *Vocabulary learning through flash cards*. Retrieved from <http://ezinearticles.com>
- McCrostie, J. (2007). *Examining learner vocabulary notebooks*. ELT Journal: English Language Teachers Journal, 61(3), 246-255.
- Nation, I. S. P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. New York: Newbury House
- Nation, I.S.P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L., & Scarcella, R. C. (1994). Second language vocabulary learning among adults: State of the art in vocabulary instruction. *System*, 22, 231-243.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Robin, B.R. (2008). *The effective uses of digital storytelling as a teaching and learning tool Handbook of Research on Teaching Literacy through the Communicative and Visual Arts*, (Vol. 2), pp. 429-440. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New York.
- Thornbury, S. (2002). *how to teach vocabulary*. London: Pearson Education Limited, Longman.
- Tick, A. (2009). *From Computer Assisted Language Learning to Computer Mediated Language Learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.llt.com>
- Zhan-Xiang, M. (2004). The necessity of intensifying English vocabulary teaching in the remoteminority area college English teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*
- Zu, F. (2009). *Using lexical approach to teach vocabulary*. *US-China Foreign Language*, 7(8), 44-47.

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TWO NEWS ARTICLES ABOUT NUCLEAR DEALS USING HALLIDAY AND HASSAN'S MODEL OF COHESION

Nafiseh Asadzadeh Maleki (PhD candidate)

*Department of Foreign Language Education, Malekan Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Malekan, Iran
nafiseh.asadzadeh@gmail.com*

Nader Asadi (PhD)

Department of Foreign Language Education, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran

ABSTRACT

English language has been an important medium of instruction throughout the world and has been utilized in both spoken and written form for conveying intended meanings. This paper aims to exploit Halliday and Hassan's framework of cohesion (1976) to analyze Ayatollah Khamenei and Rouhani's viewpoints about the nuclear negotiations derived from Reuters(2015) . A qualitative research methodology was utilized to analyze the writing of two news articles, named as "Iran's Khamenei hints ready to accept fair nuclear deal as talks proceed" which was retrieved on February, 2015 and has been translated by Balali and Nasralla(2015), and as "Iran's Rouhani says goal of nuclear negotiation is win-win outcome" translated by Dehghanpisheh and pressed in Reuters on February, 2015. The results confirmed the use of cohesive devices in these papers. Among cohesive devices, references particularly personal references and lexical cohesion were the most cohesive devices which were utilized in these papers.

KEYWORDS: cohesion, cohesive devices, discourse, texture, text

INTRODUCTION

The term "discourse" is used in day-to-day language interchangeably with discussion or dialogue. The story of a discussion or dialogue is the object of discourse analysis. Such analysis aims to expose patterns and hidden rules of how language is used and narratives are created. Thus, discourse analysis is a research method which involves examining communication in order to gain new insights. People in a variety of academic departments use the term discourse and discourse analysis for what they do, how they do it, or both. Many of these people have some training in general linguistics, and some identify themselves as linguists. Others, however, would identify themselves with other fields of study, such as communication, anthropology, psychology, education, and so on (Johnstone, 2008).

The study and analysis of actual language in use is the goal of text and discourse analysis. In talking about texture the most important concept is that of TIE. The term itself implies a relation: you cannot have a tie without two members, and the members cannot appear in a tie unless there is a relation between them. The nature of this link is semantic: the two terms of any tie are tied together through some meaning relation. Such meaning relation form the basis for cohesion between the messages of a text (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). Cohesion is in the level of semantic, which refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Cohesion occurs when the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. Once people are involved in writing two or more interconnected sentences, they have to use cohesive devices and coherence as a means of linking sentences together.

Theoretical background

Blommaert (2005) states that to discourse analysts, discourse refers to real instances of communicative actions in the medium of language, although some defined the term more broadly as a meaningful symbolic behavior in any mode. There are various methods of discourse analyses which are emerged from different interpretations of the meaning of discourse (Mills, 1997; Torfing, 2005). Linguistic traditions define discourse solely as the units of written and spoken communication under study and focus on the content of texts and conversations. Other social science traditions define discourse as being derived from and dependent on social practices –the complex mix of cultural norms, disciplines and rituals– which govern discursive formations (Hajer, 1995). Social practices form sets of rules which work together to construct discourses. A definition of discourse which encompasses social practices draws attention to how discourses are formed and shaped, and to the possibility of contrasting set of influences producing divergent discourses.

Although discourse analysis has been a busy field of activity for many years, there is a good deal of uncertainty about what it actually is. The generally accepted view is that it has something to do with looking at language above or beyond the sentence, but this is hardly an exact formulation. Stubbs (1983) strongly stated that discourse analysis refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence, or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. However, this definition has been criticized because it didn't specify whether the terms clause or sentence refer to the same thing or not and whether the linguistic organization to be analyzed is above a clause or above a sentence.

According to Halliday (1994) a text, in the simplest way, is language that is functional. By functional, he means language that is doing some job in some context as opposed to isolated words or sentences that might be put on the blackboard. So, any instance of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation is called a text. He, further, believes that a text is both product and a process. The text is a product in the sense that it is an output, something that can be recorded and studied, and it is a process in the sense of a continuous process of semantic choice and a movement through the network of meaning potential. Ruqaiya Hasan (1984) proposed that the structure of a text is closely related to the context of situation, so much so that the specific values of field, tenor and mode, which together make up a contextual configuration,

can be used to make certain predictions about the structure of the text, just as the unfolding structure of the text itself can be used as a pointer to the very nature of the contextual configuration. Thus, there is a two-way relationship between text structure and contextual configuration: the on-going structure of the text defines and confirms the nature of the contextual configuration, while the latter acts as a point of reference for deciding what kind of elements can appropriately appear when, where, and how often which refers to texture, the main objective of this study. Texture is the basis for unity and semantic interdependence within text and a text without texture would just be a group of isolated sentences with no relationship to one another.

Eggs (1994: 85) refers to the term texture put forth by Schegloff and Sacks (1973: 74) “sequential implicativeness” which proposes that language follows a linear sequence where one line of text follows another with each line being linked or related to the previous line. This linear progression of text creates a context for meaning. Contextual meaning, at the paragraph level is referred to as “coherence” while the internal properties of meaning are referred to as “cohesion”. Since Systemic Functional Linguistics considers function and semantics as the basis of human language and communicative activity, Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) model of cohesion was adopted as the most suitable method for analyzing the legal text. This is because they (Halliday & Hasan, 1976) gave a detailed insight into the study of cohesion.

According to Van Dijk (1985), cohesion is a concept that is associated with the surface making of coherence which signals the ties between sentences and the points being made. He points out that cohesion is only part of the convention of coherence for the elements of a text to be seen as “connected”, with or without overt linguistic connections between these elements. Woods (2006) defines cohesion in terms of the distinction that is made between the illocutionary act and the proposition. In his view, prepositions, when linked together, form a text, whereas illocutionary acts, when related to each other, create different kinds of “discourse”.

Coherence has both “situational” coherence when field, tenor, and mode can be identified for a certain group of clauses and “generic” coherence when the text can be recognized as belonging to a certain genre. As mentioned before, cohesion relates to the “semantic ties” within text whereby a tie is made when there is some dependent link between items that combine to create meaning. Therefore, texture is created within text when there are properties of coherence and cohesion, outside of the apparent grammatical structure of the text.

Cox, Shanahan, and Sulzby (1990) supported the idea that cohesion is important for the reader in constructing meaning from a text and for the writer in creating a text that can be easily comprehended. Connor (1984) defined cohesion as the use of explicit cohesive devices that signal relations among sentences and parts of a text. This means that the appropriate use of cohesive devices enables readers and listeners to capture the connectedness between what precedes and what follows.

Like all the components of the semantic system, cohesion is realized through grammar and vocabulary (Tanskanen, 2006). Cohesion can therefore be divided into grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion includes devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and

conjunction, while lexical cohesion is divided into reiteration (repetition, synonymy etc.) and collocation (co-occurrence of lexical items).

Grammatical cohesion is constructed by the grammatical structures each component tie each other. Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify grammatical cohesion into 4 major classes: Reference, Substitution/ Ellipsis, Conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

Referencing

Referencing functions as a means for retrieving presupposed information in text and must be identifiable for it to be considered as cohesive. According to Eggins (1994), in written text, referencing is illustrated for determining of how the writer introduces participants and keeps track of them throughout the text. There are three general types of referencing: homophoric referencing, which refers to shared information through the context of culture, exophoric referencing, which refers to information from the immediate context of situation, and endophoric referencing, which refers to information that can be “retrieved” from within the text. It is this endophoric referencing which is the focus of cohesion theory. Endophoric referencing can be divided into three areas: anaphoric, cataphoric, and esphoric. Anaphoric refers to any reference that “points backwards” to previously mentioned information in text. Cataphoric refers to any reference that “points forward” to information that will be presented later in the text. Esphoric refers to any reference within the same nominal group or phrase which follows the presupposed item. For cohesion purposes, anaphoric referencing is the most relevant as it “provides a link with a preceding portion of the text” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 51). Functionally speaking, there are three main types of cohesive references: personal, demonstrative, and comparative. Personal reference keeps track of function through the speech situation using noun pronouns like “he, him, she, her”, etc. and possessive determiners like “mine, yours, his, hers”, etc. Demonstrative reference keeps track of information through location using proximity references like “this, these, that, those, here, there, then, and the”. Comparative reference keeps track of identity and similarity through indirect references using adjectives like “same, equal, similar, and different, else, better, more”, etc. and adverbs like “so, such, similarly, otherwise, so, more”, etc.

Substitution and ellipsis

Substitution and ellipsis operate as a linguistic link at the lexico-grammatical level. In Bloor and Bloor (1995: 96), substitution and ellipsis is used when “a speaker or writer wishes to avoid the repetition of a lexical item and is able to draw on one of the grammatical resources of the language to replace the item”. The three types of classification for substitution and ellipsis: nominal, verbal and clausal, reflect its grammatical function. When something in text is being substituted, it follows that the substituted item maintains the same structural function as the presupposed item. In nominal substitution, the most typical substitution words are “one and ones” and they substitute nouns. In verbal substitution, the most common substitute is the verb “do” and is sometimes used in conjunction with “so” as in “do so” and substitute verbs. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 125–126) point out that “do” often operates with the reference items “it” and “that” but still have the main function as a verbal substitute because of its grammatical role. In clausal substitution, an entire clause is substituted and though it may seem to be similar to either nominal or verbal substitution, the difference is the presupposed anaphoric reference. Though substitution

and ellipsis are similar in their function as the linguistic link for cohesion, ellipsis differs in that it is “substitution by zero” (ibid: 142). Ellipsis refers to a presupposed anaphoric item although the reference is not through a “place-marker” like in substitution. The presupposed item is understood through its structural link. As it is a structural link, ellipsis operates through nominal, verbal and clausal levels. Halliday and Hasan further classify ellipsis in systemic linguistic terminology as deictic, enumerative, epithet, classifier, and qualifier.

Conjunction

Conjunction, as described by Bloor and Bloor (1995: 98) acts as a “cohesive tie between clauses or sections of text in such a way as to demonstrate a meaningful pattern between them”, though Halliday and Hasan (1976: 227) indicate that “conjunctive relations are not tied to any particular sequence in the expression”. Therefore, amongst the cohesion forming devices within text, conjunction is the least directly identifiable relation. Conjunction acts as a semantic cohesive tie within text in four categories: additive, adversative, causal and temporal. Additive conjunction acts to structurally coordinate or link by adding to the presupposed item and are signaled through “and, also, too, furthermore, additionally”, etc. Additive conjunction may also act to negate the presupposed item and is signaled by “nor, and...not, either, neither”, etc. Adversative conjunctions act to indicate “contrary to expectation” (ibid: 250) and are signaled by “yet, though, only, but, in fact, rather”, etc. Causal conjunction expresses “result, reason and purpose” and is signaled by “so, then, for, because, for this reason, as a result, in this respect, etc.”. The last conjunctive category is temporal and links by signaling sequence or time. Some sample temporal conjunctive signals are “then, next, after that, next day, until then, at the same time, at this point”, etc.

Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion differs from the other cohesive elements in text in that it is non-grammatical. Lexical cohesion refers to the “cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary” (ibid: 274). The two basic categories of lexical cohesion are reiteration and collocation. Reiteration pertains to the repetition of a lexical item, either directly or through the use of a synonym, a super ordinate or a generally related word. Collocation pertains to lexical items that are likely to be found together within the same text. Collocation occurs when a pair of words is not necessarily dependent upon the same semantic relationship but rather they tend to occur within the same lexical environment (ibid: 286). The closer lexical items are to each other between sentences, the stronger the cohesive effect.

Empirical background

Many researchers have conducted various researches focusing on cohesive devices and applying these devices in written and spoken languages in EFL and ESL contexts. In a study which was conducted by Liu and Braine (2005) investigating cohesive features in argumentative writing produced by 96 chines undergraduate students, it was confirmed that students were incapable of using cohesive devices proficiently in their writing.

Xuefan (2007) investigated the use of lexical cohesive devices by 15 each of 1st-and 3rd-year English majors in china. The outcomes revealed that proficiency levels were not influential on the

students' implementation of cohesive devices in their writing. Additionally, it was stated that repetition was more significantly used than other types of lexical cohesion. Ahmed (2010) investigated students' cohesion problems in EFL essay writing. The participants in the study were Egyptian student-teachers. The researcher concluded that the low English proficiency of the students caused their non-cohesive writing.

Crossley and McNamara (2012) examined the possibility of predicting second language (L2) writing proficiency through the use of different linguistic features. The study's corpus comprised of 514 essays that were collected from graduating Hong Kong high-school students at seven different grade levels. The study's analysis stressed the notion that proficiency did not produce texts that were more cohesive, though they constructed texts that were more linguistically sophisticated.

Al-Jarf (2001) investigated the use of cohesive devices by 59 Arab EFL students from King Saud University. Substitution was deemed to be the most problematic form of cohesion for the students followed by reference and ellipsis. Furthermore, the outcome of the study also indicated that "cohesion anomalies were caused by poor linguistic competence, especially poor syntactic and semantic awareness, and poor or inaccurate knowledge of the cohesion rules" (Al-Jarf, 2001: 141).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the vital role of coherence and cohesive devices in interpreting the spoken and written discourse, and despite many researchers who have identified several types of cohesion (Brown & Yule, 1983; Cook, 1989; McCarthy, 1991; Renkema, 1993), the current study was designated to interpret the viewpoints of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khameneie, and Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, based on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) cohesion framework due to the comprehensiveness of its well-developed taxonomy. To do so, the following research questions were proposed in the study:

1. What types of cohesive devices are used by Iranian diplomats in their spoken discourse?
2. How frequently do those diplomats use these cohesive devices in their speaking?

METHODOLOGY

Sifting through all the available approaches and facing with the enormous range of suggested ways, on may doubt which one to choose, however, the present study refers to Halliday and Hassan's (1976) four dimensional framework to analyze two news articles. The paper aimed to unveil the cohesion of the texts produced by Iranian leaders through exploiting cohesive devices of news interviews.

The corpus of the study

The corpus for this study on the use of cohesive devices came from two online reports. The first one is about Iran's paramount leader's viewpoints about nuclear power entitled as "Iran's Khamenei hints ready to accept fair nuclear deal as talks proceed" presented in "REUTERS" by

Mehrdad Balali and Shadia Nasralla on February 8, 2015. The second report illustrates Iran's president approach towards nuclear power negotiation which was pressed in "REUTERS" by Babak Dehghanpisheh on February 11, 2015. The title of this report is "Iran's Rouhani says goals of nuclear negotiation are win-win outcome."

The data analysis procedure

Based on the taxonomy of cohesive theory provided by Halliday and Hassan (1976), the four elements of this theory, referencing, substitution and ellipses, conjunction, and lexical cohesion, built the categories for analysis. Each device and its functions are explained below accompanied by examples obtained from the corpus.

Referencing

Referencing functions as a means for retrieving presupposed information in text and must be identifiable for it to be considered as cohesive. *Example: he in line 15 refers to Ayatollah Khameneie; those deadlines in line 94 refers to end of March and a June 30.*

Substitution and ellipsis

Substitution and ellipsis operate as a linguistic link at the lexico-grammatical level. It is used when to avoid the repetition of a lexical item. *Example: in line 44, if they can refers to taking the weapon of sanctions away from the enemy by Iran's nuclear negotiators.*

Conjunction

Conjunction acts as a cohesive tie between clauses or sections of text in such a way as to demonstrate a meaningful pattern between them. *Example: neither, for, however, and, until, etc.*

Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion refers to the "cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary. *Example: date and time.... Sunday, second time, November, in 2013, in 1986, June 30, March, Wednesday, 36th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution, Monday*

To provide detailed portrait of cohesion in writing and speaking, the following results are presented and discussed from cohesive theory with four major cohesive devices (referencing, substitution and ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion) proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1976).

RESULTS AND TEXT ANALYSIS

According to the purpose of the study and abovementioned research questions, the papers were analyzed regarding cohesive devices as follows:

Referencing

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, referencing refers to retrieving presupposed information in text. Generally, there are three main types of cohesive references: personal, demonstrative, and

comparative. This research paper aims to analyze the passages in terms of incidences of personal, demonstrative and comparative references. Table 1 shows the results:

Table 1: Incidences of Personal References

<i>Personal References</i>			
<i>Line</i>	<i>Reference</i>	<i>Line Reference</i>	<i>Referenced Item</i>
1	He	1	Iran's paramount leader
2	It	1-2	A fair nuclear accord
5	I	5-7	Clerical supreme leader Ayatolla AliKhameneie
7	His	7	Clerical supreme leader Ayatolla AliKhameneie
10	His	9-10	President Hassan Rouhani
12	Its	12	The other party
14	It	14	On side
15	His	14	Khamenei
15	He	15	Khamenei
28	He	28	Khamenei
31	His	28	Khamenei
36	Its	35-36	Tehran
37	Themselves	37	Negotiators
38	They	36-36	Negotiators
43	Our	43	Iran
44	They	43-44	Iran's negotiators
44	Our	43-44	Iran
47	He	46-47	Khamenei
55	He	54-55	Zarif
57	They	57	Sanctions
59	You	59-60	Munich gathering
59	Them	57-58	Khamenei and Zsrif
59	He	57	Zarif
61	Its	61	Israel
65	Itself	64-65	Iran
66	His	66	Netanyahu
68	Its	67-68	Iran
70	Its	69-70	Iran
73	He	69	Rouhani
77	He	76	Khamenei
77	It	77	Each side of negotiation
77	His	76	Khamenei
84	His	82	Rouhani
86	His	85-86	Khamenei
87	We	----	Iran's government
88	Our	----	Iran
90	We	----	Iran's government
97	Its	95	Iran
103	You	102	Criticism
105	He	102	Rouhani
106	you	102	Criticism

In this paper, there were forty-one incidences of personal references whichact to track of participants throughout the text. Most of these references are anaphoric. For example, in line 5, the "I" refers back to "Clerical supreme leader Ayatolla AliKhameneie" in lines 5-7. The second

type of references is the demonstrative references which are utilized as verbal pointing to indicate a scale of proximity to presupposed reference. The most common kind of demonstrative reference is a definite article “the” that acts to identify. For instance in line 9, “the conciliatory approach” refers to the approach of President Hassan Rouhani in the same line. “the clerical” in line 82 refers back to Ayatollah Khamenei in lines 80-81. Table 2 reveals the demonstrative reference incidences.

Table 2: Incidences of Demonstrative References

Demonstrative References			
Line	Reference	Line Reference	Referenced Item
9	The conciliatory approach	9-10	President Hassan Rouhani
11	The president	10	Rouhani
12	The other party	3-4	The West
16	The long-running nuclear dispute	3-11	Nuclear negotiation
22	The major oil producer	21	Iran
24	The risk	22-25	Of a wider Middle East War
30	The powers	2	World powers
33	The annual conference	33	Munich Security conference
43	The weapon	42-43	Of sanctions
43	The enemy	General	The other party
46	The highest office	7	The supreme leader
46	The Islamic republic	41	Iran
47	The nuclear talk	43-46	Negotiation
49	The Shi'ite clergy	46	Ayatollah Khameneie
49	The powerful Revolutionary Guard	48-49	Hardliners in parliament
59	The Munich gathering	31-34	The annual high-profile Munich Security conference
82	The clerical	80-81	Ayatollah Khameneie
89	The official news agency	89	IRNA
94	Those deadlines	91-93	End of March and a June 30
95	The march deadline	91-93	End of march
110	The region	109-111	Islamic State

In addition to personal and demonstrative incidences of reference, this paper is comprised of several comparative incidences of referencing. The major contribution of these kinds of references is to show similarity or likeness as well as demonstrating the comparison between or among referenced items. For example in line 6, “no agreement is better than” compares the no agreement with an agreement which runs contrary to our nation’s interests. Or in line 46, “the highest office” shows the most important person (Ayatollah Khamenei) in Iran. The whole analysis of the texts in terms of showing comparative reference incidences are presented in table 3.

Table 3: incidences of comparative references

Comparative references

Line	Reference	Line Reference	Referenced Item
6	No agreement is Better than bad one	5-6	Agreement
12	The other party	10	Western powers
22	The major oil producer	21	Iran
24	The risk of wider war	24-25	Middle East war
40	Major sticking points	35-39	Points in nuclear negotiation
46	The highest office	46	Ayatollah Khameneie
76	Iran's highest authority	76	Ayatollah Khameneie

Substitution and ellipsis

As aforementioned, Halliday (1994) introduced substitution and ellipsis as the crucial characteristics of spoken text. These are utilized to represent grammatically cohesive relations. In substitution, one item is replaced with another and in ellipsis an item is omitted. In this article, there were just three notations of substitution. For example, in lines 43-44, "if they can" is interpreted to be a substitution of "taking the weapon of sanctions away from the enemy by Iran's nuclear negotiators. The other instances of substitutions are presented in table 4. Regarding ellipsis, something is left unsaid in the passage and it's the responsibility of the reader to supply the missing information. In line 14, "one side" refers to line 9-12 in which the elliptical reference to the negotiators in nuclear dispute that are the world powers and Iran. Table 5 represents the elliptical references in the article.

Table 4: Substitution Summary

Substitution			
Line	Reference	Line Reference	Substituted Information
44	If they can	43	taking the weapon of sanctions away from the enemy by Iran's nuclear negotiators
44	If they fail	43	not taking the weapon of sanctions away from the enemy by Iran's nuclear negotiators
81	Than a bad one	80	having an argument with the powers

Table 5: Ellipsis Summary

Ellipsis			
Line	Reference	Line Reference	Elliptical Reference
14	One side	9-12	Parties in nuclear negotiation
29	A single-stage	28	Negotiation
30	As the powers want	29	To lift the weapons of sanctions
37	A seven month extension	35-36	Extension of negotiation
44	They can	43-44	Taking the weapon of sanction away...
44	They fail	43-44	Not taking the weapon of sanction ...
45	This weapon	43	Weapon of sanctions
45	Khameneie	General	Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khameneie
46	Islamic Republic	General	Of Iran
50	Tehran and Washington	35	Nuclear negotiators
54	Zarif	General	Iranian Foreign Minister, Mohammad JavadZarif
77	Neither side	69-72	Of nuclear negotiations
87	The battle field	87-89	Of negotiation table
102	Rouhani	General	Iran's President Hassan Rouhani
104	No path	103	Of having peace and well-being to be ...
111	The region	103-105	Middle East

Conjunction

Conjunction contributes to textual cohesion by linking successive sentences that are not structurally related. Halliday defines conjunction as “ a clause or clause complex, or some longer stretch of text, which may be related to what follows it by one or other of a specific set of semantic relations” (1994: 310). Under broad category of conjunction, four subcategories capture different relations: additive (and, in addition to, also, etc), adversative (however, instead, but, etc), causal (for this reason, because, since, for, etc), and temporal (next, after that, until, previously, etc). All four types of conjunctions represented in the current article are demonstrated in table 6.

Table 6: Conjunction Summary

Conjunctions			
Additive	Adversative	Causal	Temporal
Neither And Also	But However Rather Yet Than	Since For	After Until Last November

Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion differ from the other cohesive elements in that it is non grammatical. Lexical cohesion refers to the “cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary” (Halliday and Hassan, 1976:274). The two basic categories of lexical cohesion are reiteration and collocation. Reiteration pertains to the repetition of a lexical item, either directly or through the use of a synonym, a super-ordinate or a generally related word. Collocation pertains to lexical items that are likely to be found together within the same text. Collocation occurs when a pair of words is not necessarily dependent upon the same semantic relationship but rather they tend to occur within the same lexical environment. Whether it is through the different forms of reiteration or through collocation, a clearly identifiable choice of lexical pattern is very apparent. In table 7, a general word list is utilized to generalize the overall pattern of lexical cohesion from the article. It is necessary to mention that repetition of lexis is due to repetition in the text.

Table 7: Lexical Cohesion Summary

Lexical Cohesion	
Categories	Lexis
Power	Paramount, power, supreme, clerical, leader, president, clergy, senior, senator, prime minister, authority, elite.
Date and time	Sunday, second time, November, in 2013, in 1986, June 30, March, Wednesday, 36 th anniversary of Iran's Islamic Revolution, Monday
Improvement	Boosting, landslide, enrichment, ambitious, extension, raise, develop, continue.
negotiators	Officials, negotiators
Disagreement	Oppose, contrary, illogical, rejection, against, suspected, deny, conflict, stand-off, preventing, enemy, overrule, skeptical, criticism, severed, blasted, conservative, critics
Agreement	Go along, accept, back up, sanction, coincide, agree, endorse, assuring, agreement, rapprochement, fair accord, interest, conciliatory, détente, diplomatic relation, compromise, final accord, reach a common point.
Negotiation	Deal, statement, message, negotiation, dispute, remark, talk, comment, discussion, sticking point, consultation, speech.
Nations	Iran, world, nations, West, international world, Middle East, Syria, Iraq, Tehran, US, Russia, China, Britain, France, Munich, Islamic Republic of Iran, Washington, Afghanistan, Israel, Germany, Lebanon, Yemen, Islamic State
News Agencies	ISNA, RUTERS, IRNA, FARS.
Output	Demand, behavior, capability, consensus, output.
Nuclear	Nuclear weapon, uranium, nuclear arm agenda, nuclear program, civilian energy, nuclear fuel production capacity, oil production, nuclear bomb, nuclear talk/negotiation.
Amount	Major, excessive, alternative, crucial, wider, deeply, firmly, high profile, more time, technical, size, length, so much, highest, bilateral, underlying, further, strongest, high stake, mutual, broad.
End	End up, finals, limit, end, deadline, removed, take away, crippling, scrap, get rid of s.th, defuse, undermining, quite, change, ravage, uprooted, drive s.th out.
Meeting	Conference, parliament, meeting, office, gathering, cabinet,
Nationalities	Shi'ite, Sunni Muslims, Islamic State, Al-Qaeda.
Dangers	Dull, unidentified, mortal, thread, bad, dangerous, imperil, warn, fear, suspicious, wrong, inhuman, illegal, covert, war, battlefield, independence.
People	Ayatollah Ali Khameneie, Zarif, Benjamin Netanyahu, Rouhani, John Mclain, Barak Obama.
Idea	Approach, point of view
Peace	Peace, well-being, peaceful, win-win, security, ceremony, independence, liability.
Groups	Government, terrorism, world powers, arms, negotiators, terrorist groups, people, militants, hardliners, officials, diplomats, western officials.

CONCLUSION

Discourse analysis challenges researchers to question policy making process, how dialogue takes place, and how power relations produce dominant discourses and marginalizes others. Such questions require researchers to be reflective, querying the research material in ways that they may not otherwise consider (Richardson, 2001). This study contributes to literature on pragmatic analysis of metadiscourse in lectures of clerical Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani about Iran's nuclear negotiations with world powers. The relevance theory was adapted from Halliday and Hassan's cohesive theory (1974). This theory is constructed to theoretically explore the occurrence and the role of cohesive devices in lectures by Iranian diplomats. In order to meet the requirements of the current study, two lectures by Ayatollah Khamenei and Hassan Rouhani were selected from Reuters and was analyzed based on

cohesive theory considering the occurrences of four major cohesive devices (reference, substitution and ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion).

Cohesion analysis has shown what principles exist that creates semantic links within text between sentence and paragraph boundaries. The data of the study was qualitatively analyzed through identifying the numbers and the types of aforementioned cohesive devices. According to the discussion of results presented hereinbefore, two cohesive types, namely reference and lexical cohesion are the major forms of cohesion used to hang sentences together in editorials analyzed. Of these ties, it was demonstrated that the occurrence of lexical cohesion in terms of frequency was slightly higher than reference cohesion. But among different types of references, it was observed that personal reference items were the most of the reference cohesions utilized in the texts. The results, as well, illustrated that the lectures are highly coherent texts as they tend to make use of all cohesive devices in hanging sentences together, albeit at varying degrees or frequencies of occurrence. In this study, only two article papers were analyzed by the use of cohesive theory. The corpus of two articles is not small considering the qualitative and quantitative nature of the study. However, the corpus does not provide sufficient findings to allow generalization about the rhetorical structures of all the news articles. One way to verify the results is to undertake investigations using larger sample sizes from various journals.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed A. H.(2010).Students' problems with cohesion and coherence in EFL essay writing in Egypt: Different perspectives. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 1, 211-221
- Al-Jarf R. S.(2001). Processing of cohesive ties by EFL Arab college students. *Foreign Language Annals*, 34, 141-151
- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bloor, T., & Bloor, M. 1995. *The Functional Analysis of English London*. New York, etc: Arnold
- Brown G., Yule G.(1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Connor U.(1984). A study of cohesion and coherence in English as a second language students' writing. *Papers in Linguistics*, 17, 301-316
- Cook G.(1989). *Discourse*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press
- Crossley S. A., & McNamara D. S.(2012). Predicting second language writing proficiency: The roles of cohesion and linguistic sophistication. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 35, 115-135
- Cox B. E., Shanahan T., & Sulzby E.(1990). Good and poor elementary readers' use of cohesion in writing. *Research Quarterly*, 15, 47-65.
- Eggins, S. (1994). *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. London: Pinter
- Hajer, M. (1995) *The politics of environmental discourse: ecological modernization and the policy process*. Clarendon Press: Oxfor
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1994). *Introduction to Functional Grammar London*. New York, etc: Arnold
- Halliday M. A. K., & Hasan R.(1976). *Cohesion in English*. London, England: Longman.

- Hassan, R. (1984). What kind of resources is language? *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 7(1), pp. 57-85
- Johnson, P. (1983). Cohesion and coherence in compositions in Malay and English. *RELIC*, 23(2), 1-17
- Liu M., & Braine G. (2005). Cohesive features in argumentative writing produced by Chinese undergraduates. *System*, 33, 623-636
- McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*, Routledge: London
- Renkema, J. (1993). *Discourse studies*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Richardson, T. (2001) „Freedom and control in planning: using discourse in the pursuit of reflexive practice“. *Interface* 353-361
- Schegloff, E.A., & Sacks, H. (1973). ‘Opening up Closings’. *Semiotica*, 7(4), 289–327
- Stubbs, M. (1983). *Discourse analysis: the sociolinguistic analysis of natural language*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Tanskanen, S. K. (2006). *Collaborating towards coherence: Lexical cohesion in English discourse*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.
- Torring, J. (2005) „Discourse theory: achievements, arguments and challenges“ in: Howarth, D., and Torring, J. (eds.) *Discourse theory in European politics: identity, policy and governance*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 1-32
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1985). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. London: Academic Press
- Woods, N., 2006. *Describing discourse: A practical guide to discourse analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Xuefan, C. (2007). Lexical cohesion in Chinese college EFL writing. *CELEA Journal*, 30, 46-57

EXPLORING IRANIAN EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MOBILE APPLICATIONS FOR VOCABULARY LEARNING

Saeideh Mahmoodi Moemen Abadi

Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Bran

Department of English, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran

Corresponding author email: mahmoodi.s2012@gmail.com

Farhad Fahandezh Saadi Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

In the modern world, mobile phone as a new addition to information and communication technologies have provided new ways to help learners in the process of language learning. Given the importance of vocabulary, this study thus investigated the learners' attitudes toward vocabulary learning by mobile applications. To this end, One hundred higher-intermediate university students in Sirjan, Iran, participated in this study. After administered a pretest, the next phase started. During the experiment which lasted for four weeks, the participants in the experimental group were expected to use 504 Software installed on their mobile phone to do all vocabulary learning activities. Meanwhile, the control group worked with the 504 printed Book. At the end of the experiment, they were given a vocabulary test to see the effect of mobile application on their vocabulary learning and then attitudes' questionnaire was given to the experimental group. Then, their pre- test and post- test scores were compared using an independent t-test. Results of t-tests run revealed that the experimental group students significantly outperformed their control group in EFL vocabulary learning. Moreover, the students exhibited their positive attitudes to use mobile applications in vocabulary learning. The finding of the study underscored the vital role mobile phones play in extending learning out of the classroom anywhere anytime. Also, This study has some implications for syllabus designers to incorporate technological and mobile-based learning into the pedagogical language courses.

KEYWORDS: students' attitude, mobile application, vocabulary learning

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary learning is a basic component of foreign language acquisition. According to Wilkins 1972 "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing at all can be conveyed". Also (Laufer, 1998) stated that learners should know at least 5000 lexical items in order to understand non-technical English text. Therefore enlarging English vocabulary is of great significance in English acquisition. However, the best means of achieving good vocabulary is still unclear, partly because it depends on a wide variety of factors. EFL learners in Iran face the challenge of lacking exposure to English vocabulary since for the majority of them the English class is only time to use English. Because of the inadequate class time, students do not

have the opportunity to speak and use all of the words in class (Motallebzadeh & Ganji, 2011). In such conditions, there are some problems for language teachers and learners. The problem faced a language teacher is difficult choices about how to use this limited time to teach this large number of vocabulary. Here, there seems an urgent need to find an effective self-study approach for students to enlarge their vocabulary size outside classroom hours (Alemi & Lari, 2013).

Teachers should make them responsible for their own learning outside the classroom. Furthermore, some Iranian students are bored to learn vocabulary through papers, books, and dictionaries. One of the ways that can help teachers and learners in teaching and learning of This large number of vocabulary is using different technologies available to students (Alemi & Lari, 2013). An abundance of evidence from some researchers suggested that one of the technologies that can be used to help learners in learning a foreign language is mobile phone. This technology has brought a new type of language learning called Mobile Assisted Language Learning (Thrnton & Houser, 2005; Chinnery, 2006). With the inevitable integration of mobile technology into our lives, to justify learners' needs in learning English vocabulary, it seems that mobile applications play an important role (Grace, 1998). Mobile learning is effective method; it can overcome restrictions of time and space, enabling learners to learn vocabulary at any time and any place. Besides, for students mobile applications offer a wide range of learning tools they can be download to their mobile devices and help language learners to manage their time of studying more efficiently. And of course, the exposure can be happened better and more frequent by mobile applications. Therefore, this study, aims to implement a complementary learning aid to solve the learners' vocabulary learning problems. In spite of the fact that the use of mobile applications has been on the rise during the last few years, however, so far to the best knowledge of the researcher, very limited research has been undertaken to evaluate the students' attitudes toward mobile learning. Few studies investigated " students' personal use of mobile applications for learning and learning benefits" (Steel, 2012, p. 1).

Moreover, there is a serious lack of research on the issue of mobile applications in the Iranian language teaching and learning context (Dashtestani, 2013). In an attempt to fill in some the gaps that currently exist in the literature, the researcher aimed to examine Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward mobile applications for vocabulary learning, thereby the researcher tried to show some ways of implementing and integrating mobile phones into the language classroom. Many features of mobile phones, which have been mainly used in language learning, include Short Message Service (SMS), recording voice services, email services and java dictionaries. However, some applications and their role in language learning have been neglected. One such type of applications is, 504 Software. The current study is significant because it can shed more light on the students' attitudes on effectiveness of mobile assisted language learning (MALL), in general, and mobile applications in particular on speeding up foreign language vocabulary learning.

Also, this study explores the gender differences in acceptance of mobile learning. Moreover, the findings of this study help EFL teachers, EFL learners, syllabus designers, educational managers, English institutes, colleges and other places working on the English language teaching and learning to facilitate the process of vocabulary teaching and learning through supplementing books with mobile Applications in language classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mobile learning can be defined as the acquisition of any knowledge and skill through using mobile device, anywhere and anytime (Geddes, 2004). According to O'Malley, Sharples and Lefrer (2003), any kind of learning that happens when the learner is not at a fixed state and takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies.

Squire and Dikkers (2012) described the following affordances of mobile phones as basic contributors to their enhanced popularity: a) Portability: such devices can be taken to different sites and move around within a location due to small size. b) Social interactivity: can exchange data and collaborate with other learners face to face. c) Context sensitivity: the data can be gathered uniquely to the current location and time including both real and simulated data. d) Connectivity: mobile devices can connect handhelds to other devices, data collection devices or a common network that creates a true- shared network. e) Individuality: activities platform that is customized to the individuals' path of investigation. Mobile phones are effective devices for language learning, (e.g. Rosell & Aguilar, 2007; FallahKhair, 2012; Pemberton & Griffiths, 2007), have positive effect on the development of language skills (e.g., Chen & Chung, 2011) and enhance learners' language learning attitudes and motivation (e.g., Hang & Lin, 2012). In the study conducted by Steel (2012), the researcher investigated how 134 language learners used mobile apps to profit from their available learning time outside of class. It provides insights into student perspectives on the benefits of using mobile apps for foreign language learning. Mobile technologies provide EFL learners with additional exposure to target content anytime, anywhere. Mobile devices have numerous advantages for vocabulary learning. Recently, a few studies have investigated the pedagogical use of mobile phones for vocabulary learning. The projects (Thornton & Houser, 2005; Ghorbandordinejad et al. Baleghizadeh & Oladrostam, 2010; Lu, 2008; Zhang et al., 2011) integrating text message and vocabulary learning were generally well received. Students learn more effectively when exposed to spaced-repetition of vocabulary than massed repetition.

Similar to mobile phones PDAs Which also offer features such as personalization, localization, and mobility can be used for language learning. Song and Fox (2008), for instance, investigated undergraduate students' dictionary use of PDAs to increase their vocabulary learning in English. The results revealed that the students produced positive attitudes towards the use of mobile devices in learning. One of the most used features of mobile phones in language learning is short message service-SMS and has been used to help learners in different aspects of language learning Especially vocabulary learning.

In a study conducted in Iran, Derakhshan and Kaivanpanah (2011) provided evidence for the effectiveness of SMS on university students' vocabulary learning. During the experiment, which lasted for seven weeks, the participants were taught fifteen to twenty words each session and were asked to work in groups to talk about the words. Then the experimental groups were told to send a sentence for each word taught in class to researcher and to three of their classmates. The participants of the control group were asked to write sentences on paper and bring it to the class. The result of the posttest showed that the experimental group had higher scores than the control group; that is they outperformed the control group in vocabulary retention. In another study

conducted in Iran, Amirian and Zare (2013) investigated the effect of Java mobile dictionaries on EFL students' vocabulary learning. To this end, the researchers divided forty intermediate Iranian EFL learners into experimental and control group. Both groups, initially, took the pretest designed based on the vocabulary in the course book, Touchstone 3. While the experimental group received three java mobile dictionaries and installed them on their mobile phones, the control group attended conventional classes without any additional tool. Experimental group took the advantage of their mobile dictionaries throughout the course looking up the meaning of unknown words. After the treatment both groups firstly filled out questionnaire, which would elicit the learners' attitude toward java mobile dictionaries. Then, they took the posttest. Findings showed that the experimental group students significantly outperformed their control group in EFL vocabulary learning. Moreover, participants demonstrate positive attitudes toward MALL that more technology-based tasks and activities will definitely contribute to Better vocabulary learning.

In a study, Shih-hsieh Yang (2012) investigated the attitudes and self-efficacy of using mobile learning devices for college students in a language class by employing task-based instruction. The participants of the study comprised 58 second-year students at a technical university in central Taiwan who used mobile devices for M-learning in an English class to complete assigned tasks under the guidance of the instructor. Results showed that most students agreed that their motivation for English learning was enhanced and most of them had positive attitudes towards M-learning. The results related to research on students' attitudes toward the use of mobile devices for Language learning suggested that there is a general consensus among the majority of students over the suitability of mobile use for language learning in Asia and other parts of the world. As the literature clearly depicted, although many studies related to mobile phones use in Language learning were carried out, there are still steps to take probing areas which have not received as much attention as they observe. One of such areas is the mobile Applications in vocabulary learning. In this respect, the current study was designed to determine students' attitudes toward the mobile applications in vocabulary learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To this end, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the attitudes of Iranian EFL university students towards the Mobile Applications for vocabulary Learning (MAELL)?
2. Do attitudes of the male and female students toward the mobile learning differ significantly?
3. Does mobile application affect the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL university students?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of vocabulary learning via mobile applications?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

An original population of 140 EFL students from Paiaame noor University in Sirjan, Iran, voluntary were selected to participate in this study. A TOEFL test was administered to homogenize the students. Having administered a test of homogeneity, the researcher could finally

select one hundred students for the purpose of this study. The participants were divided into experimental (25 male and 25 female) and control groups (25 male and 25 female) based on their choice to work with a mobile application or a printed book for their vocabulary learning. The sample was comprised of fifty female and fifty male students, identical in number. The participants in this research, with an age range of 19 to 22, were in the higher-intermediate level based on their performance of the placement test.

Instruments

To fulfill the current study, the following instruments were applied:

Placement test

A Language proficiency test, a TOEFL test consisting of 75 questions, was administered to screen the students and homogenize them based on their level of proficiency before experiments were launched. The time limited for answering the test was 75 minutes. After administering the TOEFL test, those students who scores fell one standard deviation below and above the mean were chosen as valid sample of this study and divided into experimental and control groups.

Questionnaire

The design of the questionnaire came from previous research on mobile assisted language learning (e.g., Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008; Stockwell, 2007). The 30 items questionnaire consisted of two parts based on five points Likert-scale format with strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree; and strongly disagree, was used. The time considered to complete the questionnaire was 35 minutes.

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, content of the questionnaire was validated by a team of three experts who were EFL and educational technology university professors. The evaluation session was held and they passed their comments. On the basis of the review panel feedback the content and the layout of the questionnaire were improved. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha was 0/82, which is acceptable value.

Pre- test and post-test

In order to assess the participants' level of achievement throughout the research, a vocabulary test was developed by the researcher. The participants took the test before and after the treatment as the pretest and posttest. The researcher randomly selected 8 units of 504 Book for this study. The words (N=96) were extracted from 8 units from the 504 absolutely essential words book and the students were expected to learn.

Both groups were pretested on their vocabulary knowledge prior to the study and after finishing the treatment were post tested to see the effect of mobile applications on their vocabulary learning. Due to the long interval between the pre-test and post-test, the same test was used as post-test at the end of treatment but in order to minimize the effect of memorization the order of the items were changed for the posttest. The best time to the participants based on the pilot test was determined to be twenty minutes. Before any instruction 30 vocabulary items were administered to 30 students for the purposes of the pilot study. Based on the performance of the

participants, the item analysis was performed and 10 items were omitted. The reliability of the test was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha 0/85 after item analysis.

The item facility and item discrimination indexes were 0.48 and 0.52 respectively, which are acceptable values. To determine the validity of the test, the researcher asked the supervisor and 3 experts to pass their comments on the content of the test. Therefore, some items were deleted and some items were revised.

504 Software and 504 Book

The 504 Software is a mobile application, which can be installed in diverse mobile phones. The distinguished feature of the 504 is that it is not only an application but also has some aids for vocabulary memorizing. The 504 Software provides the text and meanings of the words to assist word memorizing.

The screen was divided into three main sections. When a word is displayed on the screen, the learner can read the word by his/her self from phonetic symbol or can click the button on the right top of the screen to listen to the pronunciation of the word. In the second section, Persian explanation was given to help learners understand the word. In the third section three sentences was given to provide a context that the word can be used. The experimental group used the 504 Software, mobile version. The control group used the 504 Book.

Interview

In order to gather data about the advantages and disadvantages of mobile application for vocabulary learning fifteen interviews were conducted with randomly selected participants from the experimental group and they were recorded using the digital voice recorder. The interview was conducted with the students individually and face to face. It lasted between fifteen to twenty minutes. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. The participants' names are not real; the researcher used pseudo names for the participants.

Procedures

In order to accomplish its goals, this study used two groups each consisting of fifty participants. Before the application, participants met with the researcher. They were given a brief introduction to the program, its objectives, and its methods. The researcher explained the instruction of the program to participants how to move from one section to another and how to use 504 Software in their smart phones. All these procedures were also conducted in the control group with the only absence of mobile application outside and inside the classroom.

Before the start of the experiment and in order to assess participant's vocabulary knowledge, they were administered by pretest and then next stage of the study started. During the experiment which lasted for four weeks, the participants in the experimental group were expected to use 504 Software installed on their mobile phone to do all vocabulary -learning activities. Meanwhile, the control group worked with the 504 Book and they were expected to use the traditional vocabulary learning techniques. Moreover, the researcher made sure that the control group participants did not have access to this application in their smart phones during the treatment phase. At the end of treatment post-test was given to both groups to see the effects of mobile application on their

vocabulary learning and then attitudes' questionnaire was given to the experimental group. After the quantitative part of the study, qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interview questions. The interview took place in the Paiam-Noor University. The interview lasted between fifteen to twenty minutes and all audio –taped and then transcribed. It was semi-structured with the following open-ended questions:

What are the advantages of use of mobile applications for vocabulary learning?

What are disadvantages of use of mobile applications for vocabulary learning?

Data analysis

The mean and standard deviation were used to analysis of the questionnaires' study, SPSS (version 19.0) was used to calculate the required statistical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two instruments that were used in this study, Vocabulary Test and Attitude Questionnaire, were piloted to estimate their reliability. The piloting results as appeared in Table 1 indicated that these two tests were piloted with 30 intermediate EFL learners who had almost the same characteristics with the final sample of this study. The reliability of attitude questionnaire, containing 30 items, was estimated .82 through Cronbach Alpha, and the reliability of vocabulary test, consisting of 20 items, was estimated .85, and which are good indicators of internal consistency.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Vocabulary Test and Attitude Questionnaire

Test	No. Of Students	No. of Items	Reliability Index	Reliability Method
Attitude Questionnaire	30	30	.82	Cronbach Alpha
Vocabulary Test	30	20	.85	Cronbach Alpha

Investigation of the First Research Question

The results of One Sample Test that was performed to examine the attitudes of Iranian EFL university students towards the mobile application for vocabulary learning are set forth in Table 2 below. As can be seen in the table, the One Sample Test was significant, $t = 4.94$, $p = .000$, $p < .05$, in fact the t observed, 4.94 was above the t critical, 2.00, and also the p value was below the selected significant level for this study, .05, with 95% Confidence Interval ranging from .349 to .828; accordingly it was concluded that the EFL university students in the target group showed positive attitude towards the mobile application for vocabulary learning.

Table 2: One Sample Test for the Attitudes towards Mobile Application for Vocabulary Learning

Test Value = 3					
T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower	Upper
4.946	49	.000	.591	.349	.828

Investigation of the second Research Question

Table 3: Independent Samples Test to Compare Male and Female Students' Attitude Scores

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
Equal variance	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	Mean Diff.
Assumed	5.925	.019	1.053	48	.298	.250
Not assumed	5.925	.019	1.053	43.72	.298	.250

Independent Samples Test results as shown in Table 3 showed that there was no statistically significant difference in attitude scores between the two female and male groups, $t_{(43.72)} = 1.053$, $p = .29$, $p > .05$, in which the t value, 1.053 was below the t critical, 2.02, and the p value, .29 was more than the selected significant level for this study, .05; in consequence, the second null hypothesis as "Attitudes of the male and female students towards the mobile learning do not differ significantly" was retained.

Investigation of the third Research Question

The third research question of this study inquired if mobile application affects the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL university students. Independent Sample Test was carried out to answer this research question. The table indicates that the mean and standard deviation of the two target ($M = 7.54$, $SD = 3.54$) and control ($M = 7.36$, $SD = 3.86$) groups are not far from each other on pre-test of vocabulary. But the results revealed that the students in the target group ($M = 14.84$, $SD = 3.19$) surpassed those in the control group ($M = 13.02$, $SD = 3.06$) on post-test of vocabulary.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Two Group's Scores on the Pre-test and Post-test of Vocabulary

Source	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	Target	50	7.54	3.54
	Control	50	7.36	3.86
Post-test	Target	50	14.84	3.19
	Control	50	13.02	3.06

Table 5: Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Scores on the Pre-test of Vocabulary

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	.237	.627	.242	98	.809	.180

Independent Samples Test results as appeared in Table 5 showed that there was no statistically significant difference in means between the two groups on the pre-test of vocabulary, $t_{(98)} = .24$,

$p = .80$, $p > .05$, in which the t -observed, .24 was less the t critical, 2.00, and the p value, .80 was more the selected significant level for this study, .05; consequently we could conclude that the two groups were homogeneous considering vocabulary knowledge before experiencing any treatment.

Additionally, the researcher performed another analysis of Independent Samples Test to compare two groups' vocabulary scores on the post-test of vocabulary, and the related results are laid out in Table 6. The table shows that the Sig., .64 in Levene's Test was larger than .05 and therefore the assumption of equal of variances was met.

Table 6: Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Scores on the Post-test of Vocabulary

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	.219	.641	2.911	98	.004	1.820

Table 6 manifests that Independent Samples Test detected a statistically significant difference in vocabulary scores between the two target and control groups, ($t_{(58)} = 2.91$, $p = .004$, $p < .05$, in which the t value, 2.91 exceeded the t critical, 2.00, and the p value, .004 was lower than the selected significant level for this study, .05; as a result, the second null hypothesis as "Mobile application does not affect the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL university students" was rejected. So it can be claimed that application of mobile influences .

Data from the interview

The data was gathered from fifteen participants then reported and interpreted in the following way:

The first question: what are the advantages of mobile applications for vocabulary learning?

The results of interview showed that the majority of participants believed that learning vocabulary through mobile applications is convenient and efficient. It encourages them to make full use of fragmented time. Also, they can learn at anytime and anywhere. It seemed that the convenience of mobile phones was provided to be one major affordances of the use of mobile applications for vocabulary learning.

Marjan

Sometimes, when travelling in the bus or subway, I can read the vocabulary in my phone and to remember them. In a word, it can help me to make use of leisure time to learn vocabulary."

The results also showed that some of interviewees thought that portability is another advantage of mobile applications for vocabulary learning. They referred to the fact that mobile phones are light and small and they require little space to be kept and easy to be carried that increased their access to their applications.

Negar

"Mobile phones are small and can be carried very easily just unlike heavy books and dictionaries. So, I can benefit from this advantage of mobile phones to vocabulary learning."

In addition, the results showed that the majority of the participants believed that the possibility of connectivity to the Internet is one of affordance of the use of mobile phones. In fact the Internet can facilitate the process of language learning. The use of Internet will improve interaction, communication and problem solving.

Mahbobe

"When EFL learners use mobile phones for vocabulary learning, they have access to thousands of online EFL resources and this Internet is facilitative and very useful for learners' learning."

The second question: what are the disadvantages of mobile applications for vocabulary learning?

The findings showed that the majority of the participants believed that physical aspects of mobile phones may prevent an optimal learning and experience and some limitations. These limitations include: small screen size, limited battery life and limited memory size. For instance:

Danial

"Mobile devices have limited storage capabilities so, if you have large or many files your device may not be able to store everything"

Discussion

Regarding to the first research question, the results showed that experimental group showed positive attitudes toward Vocabulary learning using mobile applications. The findings might suggest that Iranian EFL students are aware of possible benefits and affordance of mobile implementation for vocabulary learning. Also, it seemed that participants found learning English vocabulary on mobile phones effective and entertaining. As Chang and Hsu (2011) argued students' attitude toward the use of mobile phones would play a pivotal role in determining the efficacy of this technology for education purposes.

The findings of this study are in line with Song and Fox (2008) who found out students produced positive attitudes toward the use of mobile devices in learning. Regarding to the second research question, based on the results of the questionnaire there was no significant differences in students' attitudes between male and female students. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender was not a fundamental factor which influenced attitudes toward mobile learning. The results are compatible with the Shih-hsien Yang (2012) who demonstrated that there were no major differences in students' attitudes between male and female students. Regarding to the third research question, the results showed that students of experimental group out-performed control group in terms of vocabulary acquisition and there was a difference between the two groups. It appeared that this may be due to the students' easy access to the mobile devices which results in their repeated exposure to and frequent practice of the vocabulary. The findings are supported by

the study conducted by Zare and Amirian (2013) which revealed that the experimental group students significantly outperformed their control group counterparts in EFL vocabulary learning. Regarding to the fourth research question, the findings revealed that learning vocabulary through mobile applications is convenient and efficient. Also, they can be easily accessed everywhere and anytime. It appeared that due to the convenience facilitated by the portability and accessibility of the mobile phones, students use them as an English Vocabulary learning device in their leisure time. Therefore, in line with the points suggested at the literature section by Klopfer et al (2002) like portability, accessibility and ubiquity. The findings are supported by the study conducted by Steel (2012) which showed that Students appreciated the flexibility and convenience of using their apps to meet their personal learning needs at times and in places that suited their lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

This paper was generally an attempt to assess the students' attitudes toward using mobile phones for promoting students' vocabulary learning. It can be concluded that using mobile applications has affected the students' performance in experimental group. Therefore, the method used in this study can be more effective in English vocabulary learning. As the findings of this study demonstrated, mobile applications could be an effective pedagogical tool for self-learning English vocabulary. Thus, these results highlight the importance of MALL and its features as an attractive path through which success of learning process can be enhanced. Besides, in this study students have shown their desire to use mobile applications for language learning due to convenience facilitated by the portability and accessibility of the mobile phones.

Their positive attitudes toward mobile applications showed that more technology based activities will contribute to better language learning. Therefore, the success of mobile learning depends largely on whether mobile technologies are accepted by students. Also, according to the interview, all participants expressed that they liked the experiences of using their own mobile phones to learn vocabulary and enjoyed very much the convenience and flexibility that mobile phones bring to them for vocabulary building.

The findings can be useful for language teachers, administrators and language institutes. It informs them in making decision about a readily available tool to help improving students' vocabulary knowledge. Teachers can change their methods and move toward learner oriented methods. Students also have more opportunity to improve their vocabulary rather than only using mobile devices for ever-day life.

Although being successful in confirming the effect of mobile applications on vocabulary learning, this study faced a number of limitations that could not be avoided. First of all, the study lasted for four weeks, which was not an enough time to measure all aspects of students' knowledge of language vocabulary.

Second, the population of the research was small. It was not appropriate to generalize the researches' results to other groups. Only 100 students might not sufficiently represent the majority of students at this level. Also, a more comprehensive questionnaire could be designed to

assess more precisely the learners' attitudes toward the mobile applications for vocabulary learning.

REFERENCES

- Alami, M., & Lari, Z. (2012). *The Effects of Short Message Service- SMS- on University Students' Vocabulary Learning: The 1st Conference on Language Learning & Teaching: An Interdisciplinary Approach (LLT -IA)*
- Amirian, S. M., & Zare, Z. (2013). The impact of using java dictionary on vocabulary learning and retention of Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Research studies in Educational Technology*, 2(1), 35-44.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Oladrostam, E. (2010). The effect of mobile assisted language learning (MALL) on grammatical accuracy of EFL students. *MEXTESOL Journal*, 34(2).
- Chinnery, G. M. (2006). Emerging technologies, going to the MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10, 9-16.
- Chen, N.-S., Hsieh, S.-W., & Kinshuk (2008). Effects on short-term memory and content representation type on mobile language learning. *Language Learning and Technology*, 12(3), 93-113.
- Derakhshan, A., & Kaivanpanah, S. (2011). The impact of text-messaging on EFL freshmen's vocabulary learning. *EUROCALL*, 39-47.
- Fallahkhair, S., Pemberton, L., & Griffiths, R. (2007). Development of a cross-platform ubiquitous language learning service via mobile phone and interactive television. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 23, 321-325.
- Gedds, S.J. (2004). *Mobile learning in the 21st century: Benefit to learners*. Accessed 27th August 2007 from: <http://knoledgetree.flexiblelearning.net.au/edition06/download/geddes.pdf>.
- Ghorbandordinejad, F., Aghasafi, A., Farjadnasab, A., & Hardani, A. (2010, December). Mobile handheld recording devices in the general English classroom. *Paper presented at the first symposium of educational technology, Oman*.
- Kukulka-Hulme, A., & Shield, L. (2008). An overview of mobile assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction. *ReCALL*, 20(03), 271–289.
- Laufer, B. (1998). The Development of passive and active vocabulary in a second language: same or different? *Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 255-271.
- Lu, M. (2008). Effectiveness of vocabulary learning via mobile phone. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 24(6), 515-525.
- O'Malley, C., Vavoula, G., Glew, J. P., Taylor, J., Sharples, M., & Lefrere, P. (2003). *MOBILearn WP4 – Guidelines for Learning/Teaching/Tutoring in a Mobile Environment*. Retrieved October 2, 2011, from <http://www.mobilelearn.org/download/results/guidelines.pdf>
- Prenskey, M. (2005). What can You Learn from a Cell Phone? Almost Anything. *The Innovative Gateway 1* (June/July). Retrived July 24, 2011 from: <http://www.inovateonline.info/index.php>
- Rosell-Aguilar, F. (2007). Top of the pods-in search of a podcasting “podagogy” for language

- learning, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 20, 471-492.
- Squire, K., & Dikkers, S. (2012). Amplifications of learning: Use of mobile media devices among youth. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 18, 445-464.
- Steel, C. (2012). Fitting learning into life: Language students' perspectives on benefits of using mobile apps. *Proceedings of ascilite 2012, Future Challenges Sustainable Future*. Wellington, New Zealand.
- Song, Y., & Fox, R. (2008). Using PDA for undergraduate student incidental vocabulary testing. *European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 20(3), 290-314.
- Thornton, P., & Houser, C. (2005). Using mobile phones in English education in Japan. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 21, 217-228.
- Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Zhao, Y. (2005). *The future of research in technology and second language education*. In Zhao, Y.(Ed).
- Zhang, H. (2011). Reexamining the effectiveness of vocabulary learning via mobile phones. *TOJET*, 10(3), 203-214.
- Zhang, H. S., & Song, W. (2009). *A study of Chinese learners' behaviors in self-regulated CALL environments*. In W. Li & J. Zhou (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 2nd IEEE International Conference on Computer Science and Information Technology* (pp. 4-8), Vol. Piscataway, NJ: IEEE Press.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HEDGING IN NEWS STORIES OF NATIVE ENGLISH, NONNATIVE ENGLISH AND PERSIAN NEWSPAPERS

Leila Owraki

*Department of TEFL, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
E-mail: leila.oraki@gmail.com*

Vahid Ghahraman

*Assistant Professor at Iranian Institute for Encyclopedia Research, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: ghahraman@iecf.ir*

Farzin Fahimniya

*Assistant Professor at Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: farzin.fahimniya@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare frequency, forms and functions of hedging devices in news stories selected from native English, non-native English and Persian newspapers. The news stories were selected from four sections: arts & culture, business & economy, politics, and sports. The analysis was based on a corpora of 300 news stories; 100 from native English newspapers (The New York Times and Washington post), 100 from nonnative English newspapers (Tehran Times and Iran daily), and 100 from Persian newspapers (Jaamejaam and Iran). After identifying and categorizing the frequency and forms of hedges based on Yuryevna's (2012) taxonomy and also determining the functions of identified hedges based on an adapted taxonomy of Yu's (2009) classification of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model, chi-square tests were utilized to clarify the probable differences. As the results of this study showed, regardless of epistemic nouns, implicit pragmatic markers, and reader-oriented hedges that were not employed in the news stories, there is a statistically significant difference between the native, non-native English and Persian news stories in terms of the frequency, forms (except epistemic adverbs) and functions of identified hedging devices. The findings have implications for ESP students and instructors, material developers, and also Persian and nonnative English journalists. In other words, this study may to some degree familiarize ESP students and also Persian and nonnative English journalists attempting to publish their news articles in international journals and English newspapers with the selection of acceptable language to have their voice. The findings of the present are also expected to be beneficial for ESP instructors in instructing their learners and increasing their understanding regarding the importance of the hedging phenomenon in news stories. Furthermore, the findings have also implications for material developers to design some authentic materials which reflect the natural frequency, forms and functions of hedges.

KEYWORDS: News Stories; Form; Function; Hedging

INTRODUCTION

The ability to write English texts correctly and professionally has a significant role in all fields because it helps one to communicate more effectively and be fully accepted as a member and participant in his/her particular or international community. Hedging can be considered as an important characteristic of professional writing (Noorian & Biria, 2010, 72). The growing interest in hedges is apparent in the majority of articles and researches mainly dealt with hedging in academic/scientific discourse. According to Hyland (1998), hedging is “an inherent aspect of language use” (p. 261). Although the literature gives special attention to the significance of hedging, we know little about its use, distribution, frequency of forms and functions in different genres. Despite its noticeable role in news genre, there have not been many studies that attempted to shed light on hedging in the news stories. It is commonly acknowledged that the language used in the news reports is required to be accurate, brief, and objective. However, these requirements do not deny the existence of hedges in news reports (Yuryevna, 2012, p. 3). Furthermore, mistakes in the employment of hedges can make indeterminacy, ambiguity, misunderstanding and uncertainty. Lack of awareness of the hedge structures and forms can cause serious problem for those who attempt to write, translate and read English journalistic texts. Thus, comparative analyses of hedging devices in news genre present better understanding and realization regarding hedging devices. The purpose of this study was to shed more light on comparing the frequency, forms and functions of linguistic devices which act as hedges in the news stories selected from four sections (arts & culture, business & economy, politics, and sports) of native English newspapers written by American news story journalists as native speakers of English, non-native English newspapers written by Iranian news story journalists who write in English as nonnative speakers of English, and Persian newspapers written by Iranian news story journalists who write in Persian as native speakers of Persian (that is, between two languages - English and Persian).

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Definition of Hedges

Although the terms hedge and hedging have been part of the linguistic vocabulary for some thirty years now, no unified description of the concepts is to be found in literature (varttala, 2001, p.4). As Hyland (1998) mentions straightforward definitions of the *hedging* and *hedge* concepts are rather scarce and the available characterizations soon show that the terms are applied in various directions by authors. In spite of efforts to bring order into the large number of definitions (e.g. Crompton 1997), it seems that investigators follow to approach the notions of *hedge* and *hedging* in a diversity of ways. As a result, there is still little agreement and clearness as to what regards as a hedge and no usual explanation exists about hedge and hedging in the literature. In various researchers hedges are determined differently, that shows the difficulty of specifying what precisely the hedge is. The notion of hedge dates back to the work of Lakoff. Lakoff (1972) employed the term hedge as “words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy” (p. 471). According to Poveda Cabanes (2007), “This definition became the starting point for several studies on this phenomenon, which was demonstrated to have multiple facets and therefore has been approached in many different ways by each author”(p. 140). Zuck and Zuck (1986) defined hedges as “the process whereby the author reduces the strength of what he is writing” in case the reported news turn out not to be true (p. 172). Falahaty (2004) denoted that “they try to extend

the scope of hedging in a way that it draws on pragmatic uses of the term in language” (p. 12). Brown and Levinson (1987), suggested hedges as “a particle, word or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or a noun phrase in a set; it says of that membership that it is partial or true only in certain respects, or that it is more true and complete than perhaps might be expected” (p. 145). Skelton (1997) defined that “the term “hedge” is best used, when narrowly, only for mitigations of responsibility and/or certainty to the truth value of a proposition” (p. 45). According to other definition, that was suggested by Crompton (1997) hedges can be defined as “items of language which a speaker uses to explicitly qualify his/her lack of commitment to the truth of a proposition he/she utters” (p. 281). According to Carter and McCarthy (1997), hedges are defined as means that “allow speakers to personalize or otherwise soften the force of what they say, all in different ways, either because they have no wish to sound definite and authoritative, or because they believe the speaker not to be fully acquainted with their propositions or, very simply, because they do not know or are searching for the right word or expression” (p. 16). Hyland (1998) defined hedges as “linguistic means used to indicate either a) lack of complete commitment to the truth of the proposition, and b) a desire not to express the commitment categorically” (p. 1). This definition is the basis of our study, because according to Yuryevna (2012), “the overview of the related literature showed that the most commonly adopted definition of hedge is that proposed by Hyland” (p. 15). Hyland (1998) defines hedges as “the means by which writers can present a proposition as an opinion rather than a fact: items are only hedges in their epistemic sense, and only when they mark uncertainty” (p. 5).

Types of Hedges

Markkanen and Schroder (1997) have noted that “there is no limit to the linguistic expressions that can be considered as hedges” and “almost any linguistic item or expression can be interpreted as hedge” (p. 6). Due to the fact that hedging is primarily viewed as a pragmatic phenomenon, there is also little agreement among linguists about what linguistic devices should and should not be considered as hedges (Martin-Martin, 2008, p.136). Clemen (1997) asserted that “taking into account that hedging typically depends on context and situation and is not determined by individual lexical units and phrases, it does not seem possible to establish “list of hedges” (p. 236). Therefore, this can be regarded as the reason of lacking a complete explanation of hedging devices in reference works. Although establishing hedging devices taxonomy is difficult and there is a little certainty on the notion of hedge, a number of investigators attempted to propose more or less general list of linguistic devices which are more likely to act as hedges.

Crompton (1997) regarding Skelton (1988), Myers (1989), Salager-Meyer (1994) and Hyland’s works (1994) attempted to prepare an overview of the forms commonly took into account to be hedges, that contain *copulas other than be, lexical verbs, modal verbs, probability adverbs and probability adjectives*. The extent of what is regarded to be a hedge differs significantly. Moreover, as Yuryevna (2012) mentioned in her study, hedging has also been supposed to appear in, for example, lexis stating personal involvement, emotionally charged intensifiers, approximators (Salager-Meyer, 1994), agentless constructions, parenthetical expressions (Namsaraev, 1997), personal attribution, hypotheticals, direct questions (Hyland, 1998), pragmatic markers (Yu, 2009), concessive conjuncts, conditional subordinators, metalinguistic comments (Fraser, 2010). Yu

(2009) described hedges and their linguistic realization clearly. As concerns the complex analysis of semantic, grammatical and pragmatic characteristics of hedges, he asserted that “it can be predicted that certain linguistic areas are more likely to be the source of hedges than others” (p. 77). He presented hedges in six categories and they are modal auxiliaries, approximators, epistemic verbs, epistemic adverbs, adjectives and nouns as categories that are more presumably to be hedge candidates, “because all of them possess a meaning of ‘modifiability’” (Yu, 2009, p. 77).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The major issues that were addressed in the present study included the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in terms of the frequency of identified hedging devices?
2. Is there any significant difference between native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in terms of the forms of identified hedging devices?
3. Is there any significant difference between native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in terms of the functions of identified hedging devices?

METHODOLOGY

Corpora of the Study

The corpora of this study were based on a set of English and Persian data composed of 300 news stories; 100 native English news stories (comprising a total of 44,277) written by American news story journalists, 100 nonnative English news stories (containing 39,861) written by Iranian news story journalists who write in English, and 100 Persian news stories (comprising 39,856) written by Iranian news story journalists who write in Persian. 11 native English news stories were excluded in order to balance the total number of words for all three corpora. Therefore, the total numbers of words in the native English news stories decreased from 44,277 to 39,855 words. The news stories were chosen from six elite newspapers in Iran (*Tehran Times*, *Iran daily*, *Jaamejaam* and *Iran*) and United States of America (*The New York Times* and *Washington post*). These newspapers have major readers and include different sections. The news stories were selected randomly from each newspaper and found in the following four sections dealing with: arts & culture, business & economy, politics and sports. The researchers did their best to select the news stories from the four different sections to increase the external validity of the results. The corpora of the study were restricted to a short period of time because writers’ styles may change through longer period of time. Table 1 presented below show general information about the corpora.

Table1: General Information about the Corpora

Section Corpus	Arts & Culture	Business & Economy	Politics	Sports	No. of NS	No. of words	Publication Date
NENS	22	23	21	23	89	39855	August, September & October 2014
NNENS	25	25	25	25	100	39861	
PNS	25	25	25	25	100	39856	

Note. Native English News Stories (NENS), Non-Native English News Stories (NNENS), Persian News Stories (PNS)

Instrumentation

Although establishing a comprehensive taxonomy of hedging devices is difficult, different classifications of hedges that are more or less exhaustive have been introduced in the literature.

Based on these different classifications, Yuryevna's (2012) compiled taxonomy of hedging devices was applied in the research paper in order to compare and analyze probable differences between the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories regarding the frequency and forms of hedging devices (see appendix A). As for analyzing hedging functions, it was decided to employ the adapted classification which is based on the combination of Yu's (2009) classification of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model (see appendix B). The researchers who are familiar with hedge analysis suggested Persian equivalents for the taxonomy and theoretical model in order to examine hedges in the Persian news stories.

Procedure

After selecting the news stories from the leading newspapers, they were read word by word and carefully to determine the frequency and forms of hedging devices based on the Yuryevna's (2012) taxonomy. All hedges were written down and counted. All the forms of hedges were located in their proper categories based on the taxonomy. Afterwards, the frequency of each category of hedging forms and also overall frequency were recorded in the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories separately.

In order to become certain regarding the reliability of the results, the corpora were double-checked by the researchers who are familiar with hedge analysis and all cases were considered in text to become sure they are hedging devices. According to Tahririan and Shahzamani (2009) "needless to say that due to the tentative, indeterminate and complex nature of the hedging phenomenon, no study can claims to be absolutely valid and reliable and provide objective interpretations with respect to the analysis of hedging" (p. 204). After determining the frequency and forms of hedging devices, chi-square tests were employed to show whether there is a statistically significant difference between all three corpora in terms of the frequency and also forms of identified hedges. Then, functions of all identified hedging forms were also determined in the native, non-native English and Persian news stories separately based on the adapted classification that combined two models, namely Yu's (2009) classification of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model. Finally, chi-square tests were used to indicate whether

or not there is a statistically significant difference between all three corpora in terms of the functions of identified hedging devices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of Frequency of Hedging Devices in Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

The frequency of hedges was counted separately for all three corpora (Table 2). As can be seen in Table 2, the hedging devices were classified into ten categories.

Table 2: Frequency of Hedges in the Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

Category	F ¹	F ²	F ³
Modal verbs	80	55	17
Epistemic adverbs	7	8	2
Epistemic adjectives	27	10	4
Epistemic nouns	0	0	0
Epistemic lexical verbs	27	16	4
Approximators	99	53	34
Impersonal passives	17	19	3
Passive constructions	121	52	59
Attribution to the source	38	21	16
Implicit pragmatic markers	0	0	0
Total	416	234	139

Note. F¹ - Raw Frequency in the Native English News Stories, F² - Raw Frequency in the Nonnative English News Stories, F³ - Raw Frequency in the Persian News Stories

According to the Table, the native English news stories with total of 416 items employed a higher number of hedges than the nonnative English and Persian ones which had 234 and 139 hedging items in total, respectively. To examine the differences between all three corpora in the frequency of utilized hedging devices, chi-square test was used. Table 3 presents the summary of the results of this chi-square.

Table 3: Chi-square for the Frequency of Hedges in the Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

Chi-square Test		
X ²	df	p
150.66	2	0.001**

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

As shown in the Table, the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=150.66$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) indicating that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the frequency of employed hedges. Therefore, the native English news stories present a higher number of hedging devices than the nonnative English and Persian ones, respectively. It shows that the native English news story journalists tend to show their lack of complete commitment, tentativeness, uncertainty and doubt towards the proposition more than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian news story journalists. Results were examined in more details for each category of hedging forms in the following section.

Comparison of Hedging Forms in Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

The findings of the present study for each category of hedging forms were supported by the chi-square tests in Table 4 in order to see whether or not native, nonnative English and Persian news stories are different in the distribution of each category.

Table 4: Results of Chi-square Tests for the Frequency of each Category of Hedging Forms in the Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

Chi-square Test			
Categories	χ^2	df	p
Modal verbs	39.72	2	0.001**
Epistemic adverbs	3.64	2	0.161
Epistemic adjectives	20.82	2	0.001**
Epistemic nouns	-	-	-
Epistemic lexical verbs	16.89	2	0.001**
Approximators	36.03	2	0.001**
Impersonal passives	11.69	2	0.003**
Passive constructions	37.30	2	0.001**
Attribution to the source	10.64	2	0.005**
Implicit pragmatic markers	-	-	-

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

It can be noticed that according to the Table 4 presented above, the results showed that the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=39.72$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) indicating that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the use of modal auxiliary verbs. Therefore, the native English news stories favor more number of this category of hedging forms than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones. It implies that the native English news story journalists tend to express prediction, possibility and tentative assumption by employing modal auxiliary verbs to a greater extent than the nonnative English and Persian news story journalists, respectively.

As seen in the Table 4, the chi-square results revealed that there is no significant difference between all three corpora in the use of epistemic adverbs. It means that the news stories are not different from each other in the use of this kind of hedging forms. It shows that the native, nonnative English and Persian news story journalists show a certain degree of ambiguity to the information they convey and also indicate a not clearly understood representation of reality almost equally.

As shown in the Table 4, the results revealed that the value of observed chi square ($\chi^2=20.82$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) showing that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the use of epistemic adjectives. Therefore, epistemic adjectives are more frequent in the native English news stories than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones. It implies that the native English news story journalists show uncertainty, lack of exactness to the information and also present tentative statements more frequently than the nonnative English and Persian news story journalists, respectively.

As the findings of the present study showed, epistemic nouns weren't present and available in the news stories. It shows that the journalists don't employ this category of hedging forms that convey uncertain and indefinite meaning in their news stories. The reason for the absence of epistemic nouns in this study can be related to the functions of news stories. The main function of news stories is to objectively inform the readers, to provide them with hard facts (Buitkiene, 2008, p. 12). According to Table 4, the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=16.89$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) showing that there is a significant difference between the news stories of native, nonnative English and Persian newspapers in the use of lexical verbs with epistemic meaning. Therefore, the native English news stories favor more number of this kind of hedges than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones. Based on this, it shows that the native English news story journalists tend to hedge their commitments, and code the subjectivity of the epistemic source and also establish non-factual status of a proposition by means of various types of epistemic lexical verbs more than the nonnative English and Persian news story journalists, respectively.

To summarize the results regarding approximators of quantity, frequency and degree, it can be said that as Table 4 presented, the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=36.03$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) demonstrating that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the use of approximators as one category of hedging forms. On a general level, the native English news stories employ a higher number of approximators than the non-native English news stories, followed by the Persian ones. It implies that the native English news story journalists work locally on the meaning of a phrase or a word within the proposition in order to seem inaccurate, uncertain, unclear and fuzzy by using this category of hedging forms to a greater extent than the nonnative English and Persian ones, respectively.

As seen earlier in the Table 4, the results showed that the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=11.69$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.003$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) indicating that there is a difference between the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in the use of impersonal passive constructions. Therefore, it indicates that impersonal passive constructions are more frequent in the nonnative English news stories than the native English, followed by the Persian ones. As

shown in the Table 4, the results indicated that the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=37.30$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) showing that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the use of agentless passive constructions. The native English news stories present a higher number of agentless passive constructions than the Persian and nonnative English ones, respectively. It shows that the native English news story journalists tend to prevent accepting responsibility for what they are asserting about in order to exhibit the news stories as objectively as possible by means of employing passive constructions to a greater extent than the Persian and nonnative English news story journalists, respectively.

It can be noticed that according to the Table 4, the results showed that the value of observed chi-square ($\chi^2=10.64$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.005$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) indicating that there is a significant difference between the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in the use of attribution to the source. Therefore, the native English news stories favor more number of this category of hedging forms than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones. It implies that the native English news story journalists tend to prevent misunderstanding of the issues, facts or realities and support themselves from the probability being negatively judged by the readers more frequently than the nonnative English and Persian news story journalists, respectively. The implicit pragmatic markers include some devices such as hypothetical conditionals, direct questions, parenthetical constructions, etc. As the findings of this study indicated, implicit pragmatic markers weren't employed in the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories. According to Yu (2009), "pragmatic markers with interpersonal and interactive functions may bring a sense of cooperation, sharing, intimacy or solidarity between the interlocutors, expressed by humble and modest attitude, in a reduced or weakened tone" (p. 98). Therefore, the reason for the absence of implicit pragmatic markers with epistemic meaning as hedging devices in the present study can also be related to the nature of news stories. News stories are used in news genre to inform the readers as objectively as possible and provide them with hard information, facts and evidences.

Comparison of Hedging Functions in Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

The frequency of hedging functions was counted separately for the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories (Table 5). As can be seen in Table 5, the hedging functions were divided into three main categories.

Table 5: Frequency of each Category of Hedging Functions in the Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

Function of Hedge	NENS F ¹	NNENS F ²	PNS F ³
Writer-oriented	317	181	105
Accuracy-oriented	99	53	34
Reader-oriented	0	0	0

Key to Table: Native English News Stories (NENS), Non-Native English News Stories (NNENS), Persian News Stories (PNS), F¹- Raw Frequency in NENS, F²- Raw Frequency in NNENS, F³- Raw Frequency in PNS

To examine the differences between all three corpora in the frequency of each category of hedging functions, chi-square tests were run. The results of the analyses for each category were described in turn in Table 6 presented below.

Table 6: Results of Chi-square Tests for the Frequency of each Category of Hedging Functions in the Native, Nonnative English and Persian News Stories

Chi- Square Test			
Categories	X^2	df	p
Writer-oriented hedges	114.78	2	0.001**
Accuracy-oriented hedges	36.03	2	0.001**

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

As shown in the Table 6, the results indicated that the value of observed chi-square ($x^2=114.78$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) indicating that there is a significant difference between the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in the use of writer-oriented hedges. Therefore, the native English news stories present a higher number of this category of hedging functions than the nonnative English and Persian ones, respectively. It implies that the native English news story journalists tend to keep some distance from statements in order to decrease the possibility of refutation and support themselves against any possible results of error by reducing their personal commitment to a greater extent than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones.

To summarize the results regarding accuracy-oriented hedges, it can be said that as Table 6 showed, the value of observed chi-square ($x^2=36.03$) is significant at α level ($\alpha=0.001$) with degrees of freedom of 2 ($df=2$) demonstrating that there is a significant difference between all three corpora in the use of this category. On a general level, the native English news stories favor more number of this category of hedging functions than the nonnative English, followed by the Persian ones. Based on this, it shows that the native English news story journalists tend to present information with greater objectivity, accuracy and exactness according to realities than the nonnative English and Persian news story journalists, respectively.

According to the findings, reader-oriented hedges weren't present in all three corpora. As Falahaty (2004) mentioned, this category of hedging functions "makes the readers involved in a dialog and addresses them as a thoughtful individual to respond and judge the truth value of the proposition" (p. 38). The reason for the absence of reader-oriented hedges in the present study can be related to the function of news stories. Journalists use news stories in order to present information, realities and truths to the readers as objectively as possible.

Discussion

As the findings of the present study showed, regardless of epistemic nouns and implicit pragmatic markers as two categories of the hedging forms and also reader-oriented hedges as one category of the hedging functions that were not present in the news stories, there is a statistically

significant difference between all three corpora in terms of the frequency, forms (except epistemic adverbs) and functions of identified hedging devices. As the results showed, there is not any significant difference between the native, nonnative English and Persian news stories in the use of epistemic adverbs as one category of the hedging forms. The findings of the present study seemed to confirm Yuryevna's (2012) findings that showed epistemic nouns, implicit pragmatic markers and reader-oriented hedges aren't present in the news stories. In addition, the findings also supported the results of Buitkiene's (2008) research which showed that news articles utilize different types of passive constructions in order to present information as objectively as possible and "to avoid taking responsibility for what they are claiming about" (p.14).

The findings of this study indicated that there are differences in the understandings of members of different cultures about applying appropriate discourses for stating their purposes. Differences in cultural background can give an explanation for the variation of such linguistic features. Culturally defined frameworks and paradigms may affect journalists' choices. Furthermore, Dahl (2004) claims that national culture is the main reason for variations in texts across languages and can influence the written discourse conventions. Therefore, in the present study, culture can be regarded as a reason for differences between all three corpora in terms of the frequency, forms and functions of identified hedging devices. Moreover, content of the sections and their argumentations can lead to some differences. According to this view, some sections favor more hedging devices and employ different forms and functions of hedges in comparison to other sections. This means that some sections like political section in the Persian newspapers may include some materials that are not the norms and convention of other sections. Therefore, content of the sections and their argumentations can be regarded as other reasons for the observed differences.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to compare the frequency, forms and functions of hedging devices in the news stories selected from the native, non-native English and Persian newspapers. The news stories were selected from four sections: arts & culture, business & economy, politics, and sports. As the results of this study showed, regardless of epistemic nouns, implicit pragmatic markers, and reader-oriented hedges that were not employed in the news stories, there is a statistically significant difference between all three corpora in terms of the frequency, forms (except epistemic adverbs) and functions of identified hedging devices. This study includes some limitations. First, there is still little agreement and clearness as to what regards as a hedge. In other words, no usual explanation exists about hedge and hedging in the literature. Second, Yuryevna's (2012) taxonomy of hedging devices and adapted classification which is based on the combination of Yu's (2009) classification of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model were used in this research paper. Although these are by no means comprehensive, the main reason for selecting them is due to their most common examples found across the literature. There are a number of delimitations in the present study that should be taken into consideration. First, the size of given corpora is small (300 news stories). This can cause a problem for extending the research results to other contexts. Second, access to the printed form of *the New York Times* and *Washington post* was really difficult in Iran, so online editions of the

news stories were used in this study. Future researches are needed to employ different theoretical models of hedging in order to investigate their applicability to this special discourse. By conducting such researches, we would probably get wider insights on the presence of hedging phenomenon in news genre. It is also suggested that future researches concentrate on other genres of news. The findings have implications for ESP students and instructors, material developers, and also Persian and nonnative English journalists. In other words, this study may to some degree familiarize ESP students and also Persian and nonnative English journalists attempting to publish their news articles in international journals and English newspapers with the selection of acceptable language to have their voice and convey the latest news and events in order to inform English readers in all around the world as precisely, clearly and fully expressed as possible. Moreover, the findings of the present are expected to be beneficial for ESP instructors in instructing their learners and increasing and enriching their understanding and comprehension regarding the importance and usage of the hedging phenomenon in one specific genre of news writing, namely news stories. Furthermore, the findings have also implications for material developers to design some authentic materials which reflect the natural frequency, forms and functions of hedges.

REFERENCES

- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: some universals in language usage*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Buitkiene, J. (2008). Hedging in newspaper discourse. *Žmogus ir žodis*, 10(3), 11-15. Retrieved March, 27, 2011 from <http://WWW.biblioteka.vpu.lt>
- Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (1997). *Exploring spoken English*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Clemen, G. (1997). The concept of hedging: Origins, approaches and definitions. In R. Markkanen & H. Schroder (Eds.), *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 235-245). Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.
- Crompton, P. (1997). Hedging in academic writing: Some theoretical problems. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16 (4), 271-287.
- Dahl, T. (2004). Textual Metadiscourse in research articles: A marker of national culture or of academic discourse? *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36(10), 1807-1825.
- Falahati, R. (2004). *A contrastive study of hedging in English and Farsi academic discourse* (Unpublished MA Thesis). University of Victoria. Retrieved April, 12, 2011, from <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca>
- Fraser, B. (2010). Pragmatic competence: The case of hedging. In G. Kaltenböck, W. Mihatsch & S. Schneider *New approaches to hedging* (pp. 15-34). UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Hyland, K. (1994). Hedging in academic writing and EAP textbooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13, 239-256.
- Hyland, K. (1998). *Hedging in scientific research articles*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: JohnBenjamins Publishing Company.
- Hyland, K. (1998). Exploring corporate rhetoric: Metadiscourse in the ceo's letter. *Journal of Business Communication* 35(2), 224-245.

- Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscours. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.
- Lakoff, G. (1972). Hedges: A study in meaning criteria and the logic of fuzzy concepts. *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 2, 458-508.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (1997). Hedging: A challenge for pragmatics and discourse analysis. In R. Markkanen & H. Schröder (Eds.), *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 3-18). Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (Eds.). (1997). *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts*. Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter.
- Martin-Martin, P. (2008). The mitigation of scientific claims in research papers: A comparative study. *International Journal of English Studies*, 8 (2), 133-152. Retrieved April, 28, 2011, from <http://revistas.um.es/ijes/article/view/49201>
- Meyers, G. (1989). The pragmatic of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied linguistics*, 10 (1), 1-35.
- Namsaraev, V. (1997). Hedging in Russian academic writing in sociological texts. In R. Markkanen & H. Schröder (Eds.), *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 64-81). Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter.
- Noorian, M., & Biria, R. (2010). Interpersonal metadiscourse in persuasive journalism: A study of texts by American and Iranian columnists. *Journal of Modern Languages*, 20, 64-79.
- Poveda Cabanes, P. (2007). A contrastive analysis of hedging in English and Spanish architecture project descriptions. *Spanish Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 20, 139-158.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical written discourse. *English for specific purposes*, 13(2), 149-171.
[DOI:10.1016/0889-4906\(94\)900132](https://doi.org/10.1016/0889-4906(94)900132)
- Skelton, J. (1988). The care and maintenance of hedges. *ELT Journal*, 42 (1), 37-43. Retrieved May, 4, 2011, from <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/>
- Tahririan, M. H., & Shahzamani, M. (2009). Hedging in English and Persian Editorials: A Contrastive Study. *IJAL*, Vol. 12, No. 1, March 2009.
- Varttala, T. (2001). *Hedging in scientifically oriented discourse: Exploring variation according to discipline and intended audience* (Unpublished MA Thesis). University of Tampere. Retrieved May, 8, 2011, from <http://acta.uta.fi/english/teos.php?id=5718>
- Yu, S. (2009). The pragmatic development of hedging in EFL learners. (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation) City University Hong Kong. Retrieved May, 1, 2011, from <http://dspace.cityu.edu.hk/handle/2031/5731>
- Yuryevna, B. E. (2012). *Hedging in online news writing*. (unpublished Master's Thesis). National Taiwan University of science and technology. Retrieved January, 1, 2012, from <http://dspace.cityu.edu.hk/handle/2031/5731>.
- Zuck, J. G., & Zuck, L. V. (1986). Hedging in newswriting. In A.M. Cornu, J. Van Parjis, M. Delahaye & L. Baten (Eds), *Beads or bracelets? How do we approach LSP, Selected papers from the Fifth European symposium on LSP* (pp. 172-180). Oxford: OUP.

Appendix A

Taxonomy of Hedging Devices (Yuryevna, 2012, p. 97)

Common Lexical Items Expressing Hedging

1. Modal Verbs

Can, could, may, might, should, would

2. Epistemic Lexical Verbs

Seem, appear, believe, think, guess, suggest, suppose, propose, predict, assume, speculate, suspect, attempt, seek

3. Epistemic Adverbs

Probably, perhaps, maybe, possibly, apparently

4. Epistemic Adjectives

Likely, unlikely, possible, probable

5. Epistemic Nouns

Possibility, probability, chance

6. Approximators

Some, about, nearly, almost, quite, somewhat, kind of, sort of, somehow, to some extent, approximately, around

Syntactic Items Expressing Hedging

1. Impersonal Passive Constructions

It is believed/assumed/said that...; X is believed/though/supposed to...

2. Agentless Passive Constructions (Passive Construction without By-Agent)

3. Attribution to the Source

According to X,...; As x stated,...

4. Parenthetical Constructions Expressing Personal Reference and Attribution

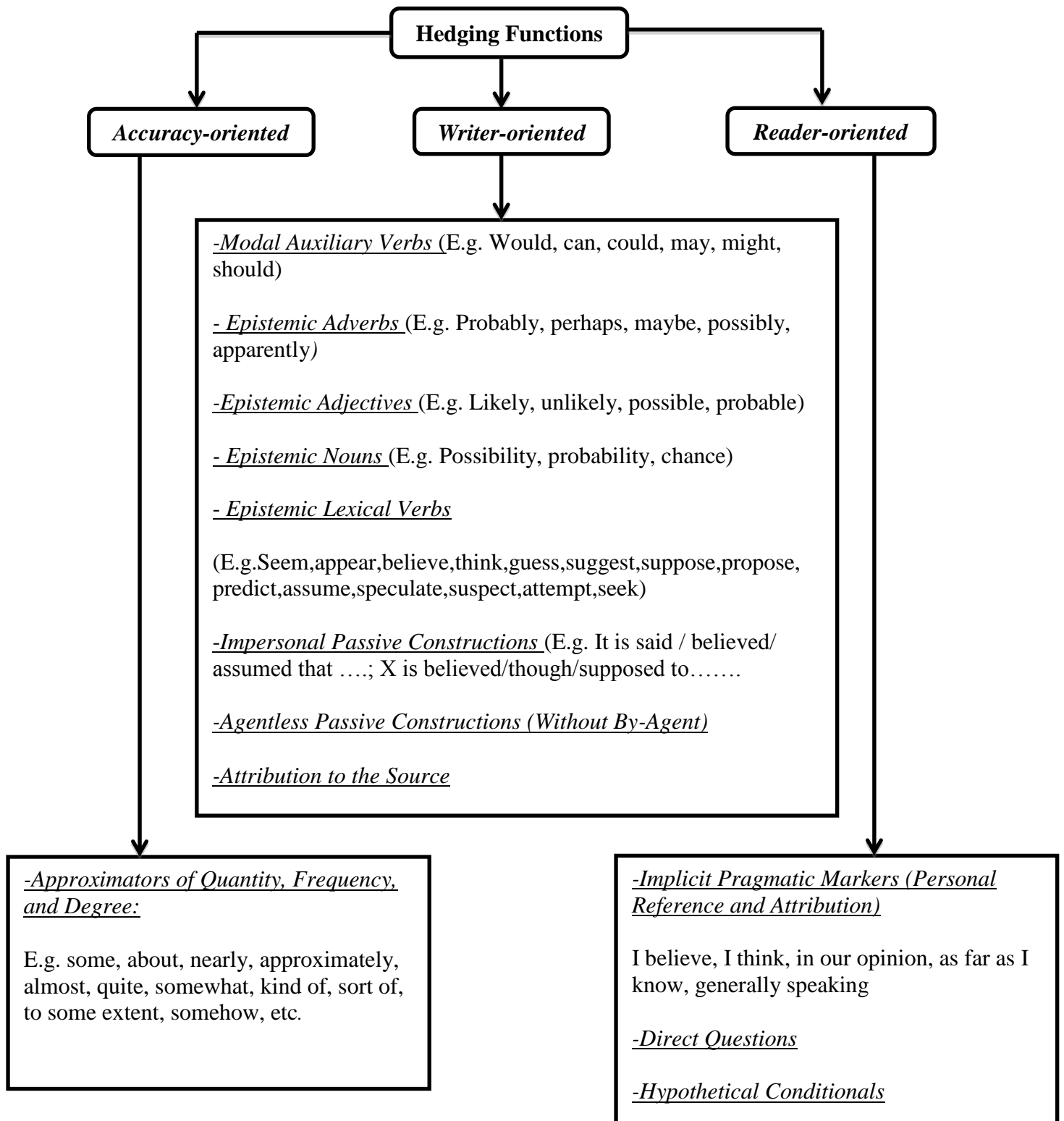
I believe, I think, as far as I know, in my/our opinion

5. Direct Questions

6. Hypothetical Conditionals

Appendix B

Theoretical Model for Analyzing Functions of Hedges (Adapted From Hyland, 1998, p.186; Yu, 2009, p.106)



ACTION RESEARCH TO HONE ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS

Mrs. M. CHANDRASENA RAJESWARAN (Author)

Research scholar & Associate Professor of English

Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute University

Maduravoyal, Chennai – 600 095 (INDIA)

email: chandrasena_raj@yahoo.in

Phone: 044 - 24960005 /Mob: 9840556559

Dr. S. Padmasani Kannan (Supervisor)

Professor of English

Dr. M. G. R. Educational And Research Institute University

Maduravoyal, Chennai – 600 095 (INDIA)

Email: thangamw@gmail.com

Phone: 044- 24843640 / Mob:9283293754

ABSTRACT

Given to the context of globalization, and the importance of learning English for academic and professional lineage, the Technical English syllabus of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University has the objective of developing the oral communication skills of students in English. So an action research was designed to hone the oral communication skills of first year engineering students. As part of the program, a pilot study was conducted on the first year engineering students. It was a small scale survey study; it made use of a customized questionnaire to investigate the participants' personal factors such as age, mother tongue, nativity, and parental support that usually influence second language learning at the early stages and academic details like, medium of instruction and method of English learning in schools, the level of learners' English proficiency and the reason for the lack of it, in the learners' own view. Then the details were inferred to find the influence of socio environmental and socio political factors on English as second language learning in the Indian context. The descriptive survey method was adopted to scrutinize the responses and explain them. Lack of parental and societal support and probably the conventional methods of teaching English in schools might be the reasons for the students' lack of English fluency; reflecting on the observations, it was decided that the next action was to administer a diagnostic test to decide upon the learners' language skills to cope with the present venture and remedial measures for the deficiencies. The study was not final and conclusive; it has shown only the tip of the iceberg.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, action research, oral communication, pilot study, small scale survey study, questionnaire, descriptive survey method

INTRODUCTION

It is known that language is primarily speech. Spoken English enables us to express our views, ideas and our needs with others for obtaining information and for solving many problems. Today we live in a world that is highly developed technically and scientifically, that we need to keep pace with new innovations and developments happening around the world. The world communities are tied up with each other in one way or the other for the purpose of education, employment and business. The matrix of interdependence is so strong and fascinating that communication in English is the dire need of the hour. It is evident that all those pass the engineering courses cannot be employed within India because of the mismatch between the industries and the number of engineering candidates seeking for employment. Hence, obvious choice could be employment in the developed countries which look for skilled professionals who could manage the multilingual employees in different industries. Without adequate English proficiency they cannot hope to comprehend the subjects which are taught in English and aspire for a global career. A recent survey suggests at least 50% of the engineering graduates fail to fit into the category of employable candidates because of their inability to communicate fluently in English. The interviewers expect the candidates to be fluent if not accurate.

Globalization has transformed English into a language of opportunity. Given to the context of globalization, and the importance of learning English for academic and professional lineage, the Technical English syllabus of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University has the objective of developing the oral communication skills of students in English. To realise this objective, an action research was planned. Any teaching learning process must include, “planning (including needs analysis, goal and objective setting), implementation (including methods and materials development) and evaluation” (Nunan, D.1991, p.3). As part of the program, a small scale pilot study was conducted to find the factors, which could have influenced first year engineering students’ learning of English in schools. The course of the action research and the findings of the study are deliberated in this paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the field of education, action research is about teachers identifying and posing problems as well as addressing issues and concerns related to the problem. It is about working toward understanding and possibly resolving these problems by setting goals and creating and initiating a plan of action as well as reflecting on the degree to which the plan works. It is a small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention (Cohen & Manion 1985, p.174)

Many researchers have framed their action researches to explore the academic performance of university students, particularly focusing on individual factors and their psychological implications in second language acquisition. The relationship between age and second language acquisition has often been discussed in language forums. Johnson & Newport, 1989; Lenneberg, 1967; Schachter, 1989 have recorded their investigation results as generalised sweeping comments. For them, in general, younger learners seem to be better at language learning in the long term than older learners are.

The sociocultural contexts in second language learning are also considered equally important because language learning is psychological at the individual level and sociological at the broader societal context. It is the present researcher's wish that the need for contextualised, detailed research designs and the significance of sociocultural and socio political approaches in understanding the university students' ability to speak and write in English have to be defined in the Indian context, at least, for the research reported here in.

The theoretical perspective of language socialization (Ochs, 1988; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) and its link between English as second language learning and sociocultural contexts (Duff, 1995; Willet, 1995) cannot be ignored in the present research. The present research perceives our students as striving to achieve their goal of communicative competence through the sociocultural and socio political interactive factors (Clement, 1980) which are found in various contexts. Skehan (1986) found a strong relationship between second language learning in a school situation and a set of measures relating to family background, parental education and parental literacy. Thus in addition to native ability in processing language, family influences inculcate in a child the ability to deal with language in a formal and decontextualized context. Barry McLaughlin (1990) believes that family variables influence the child's ability to use the kinds of language learning strategies that Oxford (1986) lists: asking questions to gather information, and initiating and sustaining conversations to say a few.

Naoka Morita (2000) says language socialization is a much desired phenomenon in an academic life because the less competent directly learn from the more knowledgeable peers while the competent members also learn from novices; this kind of learning process is known as guided participation whereas Lave and Wenger (1991) described it 'legitimate peripheral participation'. In her hypothesis Morita finds parents as experts and children as novices. This perception is on line with Skehan's family influence on children's L2 acquisition. As parents modify their children's oral communication, language socialization is usually applied to first language acquisition of children. In the L2 acquisition context, educated parents interact with their children in English and modify their output in order that they acquire the language. Thus parental influence also decides children's second language proficiency.

The purpose of the present study was to understand the English language proficiency of the first year engineering students in the theoretical perspectives deliberated earlier. The implications of socio political and cultural aversions have by and large been an impact on the social and political milieu of the sub-continent. The investigation should also help to ascertain the pattern of weaknesses in learning English in the tertiary level, and to earmark the specific area for improvisation in the ESL performance of the students to cope up with the demands of university education. The individual revelations observed should give scope for reflections and remedial teaching there on.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions addressed were as follows:

1. What are the individual variables that interacted in the overall proficiency of the participants in the research?
2. What is their present proficiency in English as second language?
3. How can the students be facilitated to hone the required oral communication skills to seek global opportunity?

METHODOLOGY

The first step in a teaching process, is the collection of information about learners in order to diagnose the objective needs of the students (Richterich,1972); and it is more so with the action research. Action research is not exploratory in nature rather it is the process of posing the problem and identifying a solution which will give scope for exploring our teaching beliefs. “It is a cyclical process that follows a series of repeated steps like setting a goal, planning an action, to reach this goal, acting on this plan, observing the action, reflecting on the observation and setting the next goal”(Gebhard,1999 p.63) . As such the research methodology has included a questionnaire to investigate the interrelationship between the various components of L1 and L2 language proficiency. The pilot study made use of a customised questionnaire to investigate the participants’ personal factors such as age, and parental factors that usually influence language learning at the early stages and which act as affective filters in SLA. The next step was to investigate the pattern of learning in the schools (medium of instruction and method of English learning), and then infer the socio political and cultural factors that might have influenced the students. The importance of English in the learner’s perspective was to be ascertained. The entire process was carried as survey; it was a survey research because it was conducted by using questionnaires to collect the data, thoughts and feelings of participants. The descriptive survey method was adopted to scrutinise the responses and explain them. The appropriate objective inferences and findings make the entire action research process reliable and valid.

Participants

The research was conducted in the undergraduate engineering programme of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai. The participants were sixty five in number. They were from the different states of India and hence heterogeneous by virtue of their mother tongue, culture and tradition. They got admitted to the university after passing public examinations in science, mathematics, and English as second language on completion of the plus2 course.

Research instrument 1 – questionnaire

Printed copies of the questionnaire were distributed to all the participants. The questionnaire focused on their age, family background such as literate and educated family, mother tongue and medium of instruction, length of exposure to English language learning (LOE), language proficiency and their interest in language learning programme.

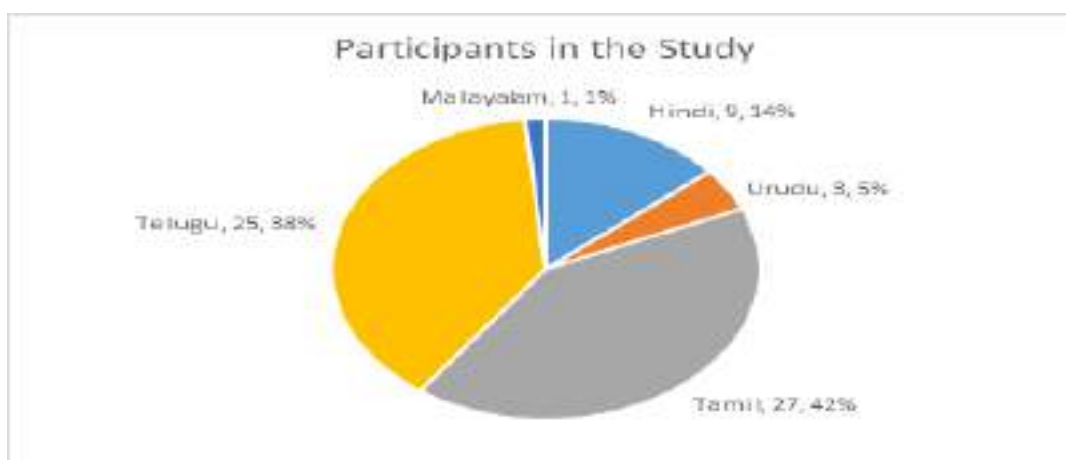
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age factor

The purpose of this study was to measure the relationship between their age and their second language acquisition. The study found that the students were in the age group of 17 - 20 years. They were young adults by virtue of their age.

Mother tongue

The study showed that twenty seven students had Tamil as their mother tongue; twenty five were Telugu students; nine were speaking Hindi and three students were speaking Urdu, while only one had Malayalam as mother tongue.

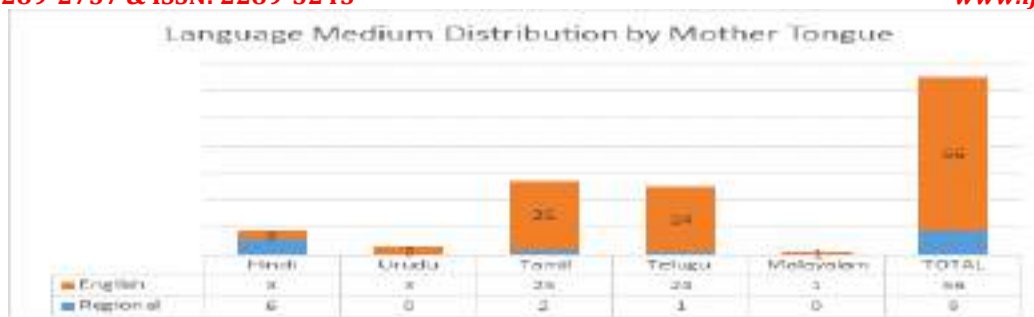


Medium of Instruction

Fifty six students had studied through the medium of English in schools invariably from LKG or first standard to plus2 (12/14 years). Nine students studied in regional medium schools, but they had also learnt English from third standard as second language – for not less than a period of nine years.

Location of Schools

Thirteen students had studied in rural schools; forty two students had studied in urban schools; only ten students had studied in semi urban schools.



Mother tongue	No. of students	Medium of instruction		Location of school			Graduate parents	Non-graduate parents	To speak English	
		Regional	English	Rural	S.urban	Urban			Yes	No.
Hindi	9	6	3	4	4	1	3	6	3	6
Urudu	3	-	3	-	3	-	3	0	0	3
Tamil	27	2	25	5	18	4	15	12	9	18
Telugu	25	1	24	3	17	5	16	9	7	18
Malayalam	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	0	1
TOTAL	65	9	56	13	42	10	38	27	19	46

Parental influence

The study showed that fifteen Tamil parents were graduates; the remaining twelve parents were non- graduates. Sixteen Telugu parents were graduates; nine parents had not even done school education. The sole Malayalam participant's parents were graduates. Only three of the Hindi speaking parents were graduates and the rest were just tenth standard passed. Regarding Urudu speaking parents, all the three of them were graduates.

English language proficiency

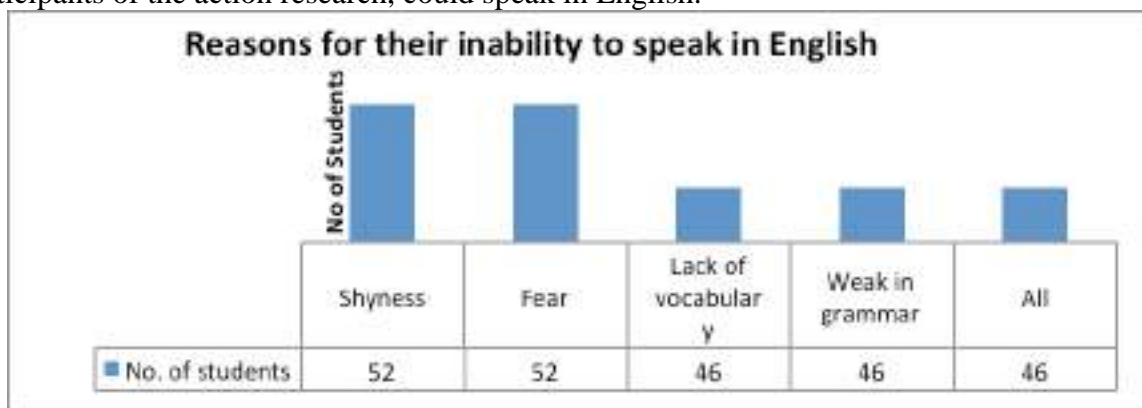
The questionnaire also inquired into the students' proficiency level in ESL. It was revealed that only three of the nine Hindi speaking students could speak in English; none of the Urudu speaking students could speak in English; only nine Tamil speaking students could speak in English; only seven Telugu speaking students could speak in English and the only one Malayalam student also could not speak in English. To sum up, nineteen students from different linguistic background could speak in English. Forty six students could not speak in English.

Teaching methodology at schools

The participants' response to the question on the way they had been taught English at schools showed it was mostly, teacher centred language pedagogy- (grammar- translation method, comprehension exercises, reading poems and prose aloud) and there were little opportunities for group discussions, role play, games and puzzles in the English classes. The students had learnt English as any other subject. Only the students who studied in central schools knew oral language activities like role plays, quizzes and puzzles.

Reason for their inability to speak in English

The students were honest in expressing their inability to speak in English. Forty nine students said they felt shy and were afraid of speaking in English amidst their teachers and peers because they were not sure of their vocabulary and the structure for the purpose. Despite having been educated in English medium, even those who said they could speak in English agreed that they experienced shyness and fear to speak in public. Six of the nineteen students, who said they could speak in English, felt sad that they are not competent enough to interact in English because of shyness and fear. The analysis showed fifty two students could not speak in English because of shyness, fear, lack of vocabulary and weak in grammar while only thirteen out of sixty five participants of the action research, could speak in English.



Socio environmental factor

Native speaker environment is obviously absent and so as children, the learners were not exposed to what it was to speak with native speakers of English. However, the information regarding their linguistic identity finds correlation in the people's socio-political milieu of the states to which they belong.

Discussion

The students were young adults in the age group of 17- 20. The age factor was not a disadvantage for the students to interact among themselves. The age could not be considered to be detrimental to learn English, in fact, they were better poised for learning English as second language. Ehrman and Oxford (1995) state that older learners have an advantage in understanding the grammatical system and in bringing greater 'world knowledge' to the target language learning context (p. 69). To conclude we may accept, David Singleton (2008) is correct when he says age effects are exclusively neurologically based and associating them with language learning is not credit worthy. The investigation has a positive note that the participants of this research are young adults and hence "they bring a great deal of life experience and cognitive maturity to the classroom" (Hills & Sutton, 2001: p.386).

The data obtained by the questionnaire proved that the students came from different states and their mother tongues were also varied. So the participants were heterogeneous. The researcher's observation showed they were good in speaking in their mother tongues. The Telugu and Malayalam students could pick up words in Tamil and could converse with Tamil students with

certain difficulty. At those times they tried to use English vocabulary and gestures to avoid conversation break ups. Students from North India, who spoke either Hindi or Urdu were hesitant to get into conversation because their languages could not be understood by the south Indians and they were not proficient in English to converse with the other classmates. Hence they were reticent most of the time.

The behaviourists believe that language is environmentally determined, controlled from the outside of the stimuli learners are exposed to and the reinforcement they receive. However, an early start and length of exposure to English language did not necessarily lead the participants to higher linguistic proficiency. Their percentage of marks in English in plus2 examination did not assure their oral fluency because in India, the language exams are written with no oral components assessment.

As per the students' declaration, it was found that English was taught in schools by direct method and they had little opportunity to speak in English for basic interpersonal communications, leave alone for academic purposes. Their lack of language proficiency in English can be attributed to the school teachers' indifference or ignorance towards the demands of the students as ESL learners. Practically speaking, there was no difference between the English medium students and regional medium students in speaking English; there was no difference in the students' oral performance in terms of their having studied in rural, urban and semi urban schools. However one significant fact evolved by this survey was that the students who had studied in central schools could speak better in English because of their exposure to oral activities. To sum up, the study observed that the students had not sharpened their listening and speaking skills at the tertiary level.

This research found further, the following observation: apart from not finding the expert-novice relationship between the parents and the children for language acquisition, which is considered primary strategy, the family support, which is considered support strategy in language acquisition was lacking for the present participants during their critical period of learning. Support strategies are recognised as instrumental to enhance or support learning indirectly by creating a good attitude in the learner, establishing learner goals and reducing learner frustration, tension and anxiety. The learners as young children under the control of their parents did not know the necessity to speak English anywhere; the teachers also did not throw the required opportunities to interact in English. In the absence of zone of proximal development, and so away from native speakers of English, there was no need for English in everyday communication outside the home and schools. So, the participants lacked the practice of speaking in English. Moreover, they were taught the language but were not taught to use the language for communication.

The linguistic divisions which were instrumental in the formation of linguistic states in India were also one of the reasons for the regional political parties to thrive in India. Their divide and function attitude has in fact, made language a pawn to achieve their selfish desires. In such a context, the status of English is purely a constitutional assurance but the people do not experience the crunch to speak the language in different inter personal and official situations inside and outside their homes. Furthermore, the regional language fanatics in the southern states even today do not allow the state governments to take stringent policy decisions on English language

teaching and their insistence on government's responsibility to make the university education in the mother tongue medium and the jobs for sons of the soil deter the language learners' and more particularly the society's attitude to accept the importance of English as an empowerment tool in the changed global context. This kind of societal and parental attitude has been detrimental in developing the language attitude of the students and finally has left them least motivated to learn the language (Skehan, 1986; Clement, 1980). The study takes an interesting new direction towards the L2 proficiency as Cummins (1984) points out that with appropriate help the students will learn to use L2 language in their oral communication. The simple fact that they have come from different states of India, to join a professional course assures one that they are focused on enhancing their career prospects. The engineering students are extrinsically motivated to learn the language which is the language of opportunity for global placement. Although there is ample evidence to show the lack of social and parental motivation have been a demotivating factor in the participants' language learning, from a practicing teacher's point of view the pressing question now is how the students can be motivated to realise their goal of oral communication.

CONCLUSION

The pilot study – the questionnaire has only helped to make an overall assessment of participants as individuals and members of a language group and learners. Having arrived at this point, the researcher needs to be focused to customise a test that could tell the students' past learning and its bearing on their present proficiency in terms of their strength and weakness and also give directions for further proceedings. The test, we are talking about, is the diagnostic test, to decide upon the learners' language skills and their ability to cope with the present venture and also the material and methodology to support the researcher's objective of honing the engineering students' oral communication skills, by showing them proper language learning strategies and engaging them in activities appropriate to their age.

Scope and limitations of the study

In view of the findings and their usefulness in planning and designing further course of action, the researcher feels such studies may be conducted for the benefit of student community. However, it is true that the pilot study was limited to a limited number of I B.Tech. students of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University, Chennai – 95.

REFERENCES

- McLaughlin, B. (1990). *The relationship between first and second languages*. In Brigit Harley et al. (eds.) *The Development of second language proficiency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clement, R. (1980). *Ethnicity, contact, and communicative competence in a second language*. In H.Giles, P. Robinson, and P. Smith, (eds.) *Language, social, psychological perspectives*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1985) *Research methods in education*. (2nd ed. London: Groom Helm. (p.174).

- Cummins, J. (1984) *Bilingual Education and Special Education: Issues in Assessment and Pedagogy* San Diego: College Hill.
- Dornyei, Z. (2001). New themes and approaches in second language motivation research. In *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 43-59.
- Duff, P. A. (1995). An ethnography of communication in immersion classrooms in Hungary. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 505-537.
- Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1995). Adult learning styles and strategies in an intensive training setting. *Modern Language Journal*, 74, 311- 327.
- Gebhard, J.G., & Robert Oprandy (1999). *Language Teaching Awareness: A guide to exploring beliefs and practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hills, S. & Sutton, A. (2001). *Teaching Adults*. In Celce –Murcia Marianne (ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 3rd edition. Heinle& Heinle: Thomson Learning.
- Johnson, J., & Newport, E. (1989). Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of ESL. *Cognitive psychology*, 21, 60-99.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, F. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lenneberg, E. (1967) *Biological Foundations of Language*. New York: Wiley
- Naoka, M. (2000). Discourse Socialization through Oral Classroom Activities in a TESL Graduate Program. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34 (2), 279-310.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *The Learner-Centred Curriculum: A study in second language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ochs, E. (1988) *Culture and language development: Language acquisition and language socialization in a samoan village*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1986). *Second language learning strategies: current research and implication for practice*. Los Angeles: University of Callifornia Center for Language Education and Research.
- Richterich, R. (1972). *A Model for the Definition of Language Needs*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Schachter, J. (1989). *Testing a proposed Universal*. In S. M. Gas & J. Schachter (eds.) *Linguistic perspectives on second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schieffelin, B. B., & Ochs, E (1986). *Language Socialization across Cultures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Singleton, D. (2001). Age and L2 acquisition. In *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 77-89.
- Skehan, P. (1986). The role of foreign language aptitude in a model of school learning. *Language Testing*, 3 (2), 188- 221.
- Willet, J. (1995). Becoming first graders in an L2: An ethnographic study of L2 socialization. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 473-503.

QUESTIONNAIRE - 1

PERSONAL PROFILE

(SECTION – I)

1. Name : _____
2. Course : _____ Year : _____

Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University, Chennai - 95

3. Date of Birth _____ Age: _____ yr.
4. Mother Tongue _____ State _____
5. Parents' education: (Put a tick mark in the relevant box)

PARENTS	EDUCATION				
FATHER	School	Intermediate	Graduation	Post-Graduation	Nil
MOTHER	School	Intermediate	Graduation	Post-Graduation	Nil

6. Do your parents speak English at home? Tick: YES / NO

ACADEMIC PROFILE (SECTION – II)

7. Name of the school last studied:
(Put a tick mark in the relevant box)

SCHOOL	BOARD				LOCATION			Medium of Instruction	
	SB	CBSC	Matric		rural	urban	semi-	R.M	Eng.
	Others				urban			Medium	
Primary									
Secondary									
Hr. Secondary									
LENGTH OF EXPOSURE TO ENGLISH (years)									
Marks obtained in English in 12 th std. public exam:								%	

SB: State Board / CBSC: Central Board of Secondary Education / Matric: Matriculation
R.M.: Regional medium/ Eng. Medium: English medium

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SECTION – III

8. Tick the activities through which you were taught English in schools:

Translation	comprehension	Grammar exercises	reading poems & prose	Group Discussion	role play	games	puzzles
-------------	---------------	-------------------	-----------------------	------------------	-----------	-------	---------

9. Tick your proficiency level in English:

Understand only	write only	Speak and write
-----------------	------------	-----------------

10. If you cannot speak, give reason:

Shyness	Fear	lack of vocabulary	weak in grammar
---------	------	--------------------	-----------------

THE EFFECT OF CONCEPT MAPPING AND INFORMATION GAP TASK ON IRANIAN POSTGRADUATE EFL LEARNERS' WRITING

Arezoo Emamian

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, Iran
(Email:Emamian.arezoo@gmail.com)*

Mehrdad Moloudi

*Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, Iran
(Email:dr.moloudi@yahoo.com)*

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of concept mapping and information gap task on Iranian Postgraduates English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' writing. The participants were forty-two Iranian postgraduate students majoring in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at Islamic Azad University, Karaj Branch, Tehran, Iran. They were assigned into two twenty one experimental groups of concept mapping and information gap task. Then, both groups sat for the pre-test, which was a TOFEL writing test. The purpose of this test was to measure the learners' initial writing ability. Afterwards, participants in one experimental group received concept mapping instruction and used it in their writings; while, participants in another experimental group were asked to complete writing information gap tasks. The treatment period took six weeks. Finally, both groups sat for the post-test which was another TOFEL writing test parallel to the pretest. After keying in the data into SPSS, the Mixed Within-Between Groups ANOVA statistical test was used to compare mean scores of both groups. It can be concluded that although both groups' performance improved significantly on their writing post-tests in comparison to their pretests, the comparison of post-tests of two groups showed that the concept mapping group outperformed the information gap task group. The results revealed that the application of concept mapping and information gap task improved learners' writing. The findings of this study could have a number of important implications for teaching writing to EFL learners effectively.

KEYWORDS: Concept Mapping, Information Gap Task, Writing

INTRODUCTION

The major purpose of all languages is communication. People all around the world with different native languages use English as their means of communication. English language consists of four skills. According to Chastain (1988), "writing is a basic communication skill and a unique asset

in the process of learning a second language” (p.244). Richard and Renandya (2002) states that comparing to other skills, writing is considered the major one and the most difficult skill for learners to master. Richards (1990) asserts that “The nature and significant of writing have traditionally been underestimated in language Teaching” (p.106). But in the recent decades, writing pedagogy has undergone remarkable changes. In the past, product approach was the most popular teaching methodology. Based on Brown (2001), writing teachers were only concerned with the final product of writing. In the mid 1960s, a number of changes happened which led to the emergence of process-centered approach. According to Keh (1990), process-centered approach assists learners in understanding their own composition process and building their body of strategies for pre-writing (gathering, exploring, and organizing raw materials), drafting (structuring ideas into a piece of linear discourse), and re-writing (revising, editing, and proofreading).

Concept mapping is a kind of pre-writing task which makes ideas visual. Concept maps help learners in generating and organizing their ideas, ordering, and establishing the relationship between them. According to Buzan (1995), “using mapping technique, students were able to complete essays in one third of the previous time, while receiving higher marks” (p.102).

Information-gap tasks make students actively participate in the process of learning (Ur, 1996). They encourage students to increase their target language practice.

Regardless of all the recent improvements in writing instruction, traditional methods of teaching are still used in most of Iranian academic settings and most EFL learners with good command of language have difficulty with learning writing. This study aims to examine the effect of concept mapping and information gap task on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners’ writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

During the recent decades Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) became one of the most leading teaching methodologies. Tasks play crucial role in Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT). Nunan (2004, p.1) asserts that “task is an important element in syllabus design, classroom teaching, and learners assessment”. Richards and Rodgers argue that “task-based language teaching refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core units of planning and instruction in language teaching” (2001, p.223). Based on Prabhu (1987) task is an activity which requires students to reach an outcome by the use of given information. Using task as a kind of class activity makes classes more student-centered. In addition, it encourages students to interact in target language and focus their attention on meaning instead of form.

Information Gap Task

In recent years there has been an interest in using Information gap task. In such kind of activity learners are required to use the language in order to exchange information while their attention is on meaning rather than structure of the language. Ellis (2004) defines information gap task as “A task where one participant holds information that the other participant(s) do(es) not have and that

must be exchanged in order to complete the task”(p. 213). According to (Prabhu, 1987), information gap task is a kind of task in which there is a missing piece of information that students need to complete. Also, Ur (1996) asserts that information gap task is “A particularly interesting type of task which is based on the need to understand or transmit information finding out what is in a partner’s picture, for example” (p.54).

Concept Mapping

In 1970s, concept mapping was first developed by Novak in a research program where he sought to follow and understand changes in children’s knowledge of science (Novak & Canas, 2006). Concept mapping is based on the David Ausubel’s learning psychology, which believes that learning takes place by assimilation of new concepts and propositions into existing concept propositional frameworks held by the learner (Novak, 2001). Based on Ausubel 1963, there are two kinds of learning; one of them is rote learning and the other one is meaningful learning. He defines meaningful learning as a kind of learning in which the learner consciously tries to make a connection between new knowledge and the knowledge already knows. According to (Novak and Canas, 2006), concept is “a perceived regularity in events or objects, or records of events or objects, designated by a label”. Nesbit and Adescope (2006) defines concept map as “a visual representation of individual’s knowledge structure on a particular topic as constructed by the learner” (p.414). Concept maps are a kind of brain storming tools which help us in generating and organizing ideas. They are composed of concepts, enclosed in circles and boxes, and connecting lines indicating the relationships between concepts and propositions. Concepts usually arrange hierarchically, from the most inclusive and general at the top to the least inclusive and the most specific at the bottom.

Writing

It is an undeniable fact that writing is the most challenging language skill for most of ESL/EFL learners and mastering it requires a considerable amount of time and effort. Writing is an extremely complex cognitive ability in which the writer is required to control a number of variables simultaneously. At micro level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. At macro level, the writer needs to integrate information into cohesive and coherent text (Bell & Burnaby, 1984). To become a skillful writer is the main goal of many language learners, especially those who want to continue their education in academic settings. White and Arndt (1991) states that “through writing, we are able to share ideas, arouse feeling, persuade and convince other people, we are able to discover and articulate ideas in a way that only writing makes them possible” (p.1).

Empirical Studies on Concept Mapping and Information Gap Task

In a study Fahim and Karimi (2011) investigated the effect of concept mapping strategy on the writing performance of EFL learners. Learners in experimental group received instruction about how to use concept mapping as pre-writing strategy. The findings of the study showed that writing performance of students in experimental group significantly improved in comparison to students of control group. In another study, Nobahar, Nemat Tabrizi, and Shaghaghi (2013) examined the impact of concept mapping on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' self-efficacy and expository writing accuracy. Experimental group received concept mapping instruction as their

treatment while control group received no treatment. Results revealed that concept mapping instruction had positive effect on learners' self-efficacy and expository writing accuracy. Also, Soleimani, Zare, and Abbasi (2014) investigated the effect of pre-task planning through information gap on speaking skill of foreign language learners. The result of the study indicated that pre-task planning through split information activities significantly improved students speaking skill.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the objectives of this study, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1: Does concept mapping have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing?

RQ2: Does information gap task have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing?

Based on the above research questions and in order to investigate them empirically, the following null hypotheses are formulated:

HO1: Concept mapping does not have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing.

HO2: Information gap task does not have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study was conducted among 42 Iranian postgraduate TEFL students, 36 females (81%), and 8 males (19%) at Islamic Azad University, Karaj Branch, Tehran, Iran. The participants had enrolled Essay Writing classes. Participants ranged in age mostly from 23 to 30 years old and with a few exceptions over the age of 30. They were assigned into two intact groups. It should be mentioned that all participants in two groups were informed that they were part of a research project. In each class, the researcher explained that their writings would be used in her research anonymously. In addition to the student participants, there were also two raters who were experienced English teachers with an MA degree in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language).

Instruments

To fulfill the objectives of this study, the researcher administered the following instruments:

Pre-test

In the first stage, as a pre-test a TOFEL writing exam was administered. The participants were given 30 minutes to write a five-paragraph essay containing minimum of 300 words. This test was used before starting the treatment. The writing test was chosen from the book "185 TOEFL

Writing (TWE) Topics and Model Essays". The topic of the writing test was "People attend to college or universities for many different reasons (for example, new experiences, career preparation, and increased knowledge), why do you think people attend college or university?"

Materials

The treatment of this study was conducted for eight weeks. The researcher developed some concept mapping instructional materials which contained definition and examples of concept mapping, and also some writing information gap tasks. During treatment period, participants in one experimental group completed their writing tasks based on concept mapping instruction. On the other hand, participants in another experimental group were asked to complete writing information gap tasks.

Post-test

At the end of the study, another TOEFL writing exam parallel to genre and topic of pre-test was given to recognize any changes in the participants' writing ability in different groups. The participants were given 30 minutes to write a five-paragraph essay containing minimum of 300 words. Writing test was chosen from the book "185 TOEFL Writing (TWE) Topics and Model Essays". The topic of the final writing test was "Some participants like classes where teachers lecture (do all of the talking) in class. Other participants prefer classes where participants do some of the talking. Which type of class do you prefer?"

Writing Rating scale

Jacob, et al., (1981, cited in Weigle, 2002) analytic scale was used in rating essays. It is a weighted analytic scoring scale developed for rating second language learners' writing tasks. Scripts were rated on five aspects of writing including: content, language use, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics.

Procedure

The present study was conducted *for eight weeks* among 42 Iranian postgraduate TEFL students at Islamic Azad University, Karaj Branch, *Tehran, Iran*. Two TOEFL writing exams were used in the pre-test and post-test. The first test was taken as the pre-test before starting the treatment. The participants were given 30 minutes to write a five- paragraph essay containing minimum of 300 words. They were divided into two experimental groups. Based on the schedule, the participants of one experimental group received concept mapping instruction and used it before writing their compositions. In contrast, participants in another experimental group were asked to complete writing information gap tasks. At the end of the study, both groups took part in another test that was the post-test. They were given 30 minutes to write a five-paragraph essay containing minimum of 300 words. Finally, two raters who were experienced English teachers rated the papers on the basis of the analytical method of scoring. Inter-rater reliability was calculated. Next, the average of the scores given by the two raters was determined.

Design

The design of the present study was quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design. The participants were non-randomly assigned into two experimental groups. The independent variables of this study were concept mapping and information gap task, while the dependent variable was writing.

Data Analysis

In order to test the null hypotheses of this study, the following statistical analyses were carried out: First, the Spearman rho value was used to estimate the inter-rater reliability between the two raters for the writing sections. Second, descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation were computed for both experimental groups. Third, Mixed Within-Between Group Analysis of Variance ANOVA was used in order to compare mean scores of both experimental groups in both pre-test and post-test. These data were calculated by using 21st version of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learners' Performance on the Pre-test

First of all, the participants of the study were divided into two experimental groups. Half of them were in the Concept mapping group and the others were in the information gap task group. The participants of both groups took part in TOFEL Writing exam as a pre-test in order to show their initial writing ability. The pre-tests were scored by two raters. In order to demonstrate the inter-rater reliability between the raters, the Spearman's rho value was calculated. The results are shown in the following tables.

Table 1: Inter-rater Reliability of Raters in Pretest of Concept Mapping Group

Pre-test CM-R2			
Pre-test CM-R1	Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	.536**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N		21

Table 2: Inter-rater Reliability of Raters in Pretest of Information Gap Task Group

Pre-test IG-R2			
Pre-test IG-R1	Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	.690**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N		21

Table 1 reveals that Spearman's rho value is equal .536 and sig level is equal .004 which is less than 0.01, so there is an inter-rater reliability between the raters in this test. In addition, as the

Table 2 presents, Spearman's rho value is equal .690 and sig level is equal .001 that is less than 0.01, thus there is an inter-rater reliability between the raters in this test.

Learners' Performance on the Post-test

After the treatment, participants took part in another test which is called post-test. In order to estimate learners' writing ability after the treatment, participants of both groups took part in another TOFEL Writing exam as a post-test. The same as the pre-test, this post-test was scored by two raters. In order to indicate the inter-rater reliability between the raters, the Spearman's rho value was calculated. The results are shown in the following tables.

Table 3: Inter-rater Reliability of Raters in Post-test of the Concept Mapping Group

Post-test CM-R2			
Pos-test CM-R1	Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	.631**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N		21

Table 4: Inter-rater Reliability of Raters in Post-test of the Information Gap Task Group

Post-test IG-R2			
Post-test IG-R1	Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	.825**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N		21

Based on Table 3, Spearman's rho value equals .631 and sig level is .001 which is less than 0.01. Therefore, there is an inter-rater reliability between the raters in the post-tests of concept mapping group. Moreover, Table 4 indicates that Spearman's rho value equals .852 and sig level is equal .000 that is less than 0.01. So, there is also an inter-rater reliability between the raters in the post-test of information gap task group, too.

Null Hypotheses

HO1: Concept mapping does not have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing.

HO2: Information gap task does not have any significant effect on Iranian postgraduate EFL learners' writing.

In order to show whether there is any significant difference between the writing ability of participants in both concept mapping and information gap task groups, Mixed Between-Within Groups ANOVA was employed as the data analysis technique. Therefore, pre-test and post-test results for both groups were compared by this test. The results are shown in the following tables.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test of writing

Group	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CM	pre-test	74.64	6.172	21
	Post-test	86.14	4.108	21
IG	pre-test	74.02	5.090	21
	Post-test	78.04	4.795	21

Table 6: Multivariate Tests of Pretest and Post-test of Writing

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
CM Wilks' Lambda	.777	11.511 ^b	1.000	40.000	.002	.223
IG Wilks' Lambda	.825	8.472 ^b	1.000	40.000	.006	.175

Table 5 indicates that the concept mapping group averaged 74.64 on the pre-test and 86.14 on the post-test. The mean difference of concept mapping group is 11.5. The result shows that this group's improvement is statistically significant. In addition, the value for Wilks' Lambda for time is .002 which is less than .05. Thus, the conclusion is that there is a statistically significant effect for time. Table 6 also shows that information gap task group averaged 74.02 on the pre-test and 78.04 on the post-test. The mean difference of this group is 4.02 which is not as significant as the difference of the concept mapping group. Moreover, the values for Wilks' Lambda for time is .006 which is less than .05. Therefore, the conclusion is that there is a statistically significant difference for time. Figure 1 presents the post-test differences in both groups.

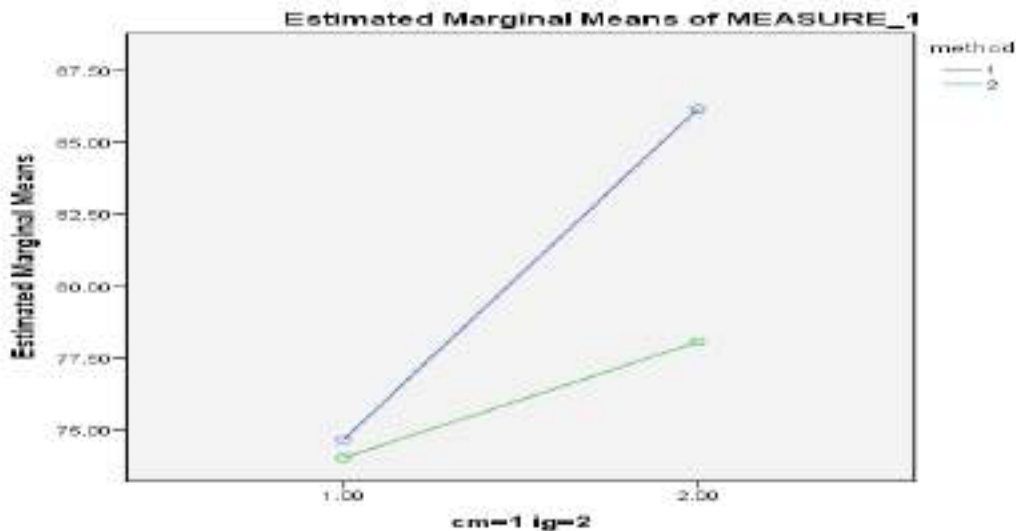


Figure1: The Post-tests' Differences in the Concept Mapping and Information Gap Task groups

According to the above figure, although both groups' performance improved in the post-test, the concept mapping group outperformed the information gap task group. Therefore, both null hypotheses can be rejected, and it can be said that both concept mapping and information gap task positively affected the writing ability of Iranian Postgraduate EFL learners. Great amount of studies have been done on the impact of concept mapping on EFL learners' writing ability. The results of the present study are in line with the results of other studies (Fahim & Karimi, 2011; Nobahar, Nemati Tabriz, & Shaghaghi, 2013; Ojima, 2006; Pishghadam & Ghanizadeh, 2006; Roa, 2007; Talebinezhad, & Negari, 2009). All above mentioned studies approved the fact that, concept mapping instruction significantly improves learners' writing ability. Also, the findings of current study are consistent with previous studies that showed the positive effect of information gap task on second or foreign language learning (Defrioka, 2009; Jondeya, 2011; Soleimani, Zare, & Abbasi 2014).

CONCLUSION

This research was designed to investigate whether the application of concept mapping and information gap task have any significant effect on improving learners' writing performance or not. Therefore, the following research questions were developed. The first question was, "does concept mapping have any significant effect on Iranian Postgraduate EFL learners' writing?" And the second question was, "does information gap task have any significant effect on Iranian Postgraduate EFL learners' writing?" In order to answer the above mentioned questions, the following statistical analyses were carried out. Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation were computed for both experimental groups. Also, Mixed Within-Between Group Analysis of Variance ANOVA was used in order to compare mean scores of two experimental groups in both pre-test and post-test. Based on the findings of this research, since there were significant differences between the pre-tests and the post-tests of two groups, both null-hypotheses were rejected and it could be concluded that application of concept mapping and information gap task improved learners' writing. The findings of the present study can be beneficial for both students and instructors. Concept maps can be used by students as a brainstorming tool which could help them in generating and organizing their thoughts and ideas. It also can be used by instructors as a tool in assessing learners' understanding of the materials. Instructors can use information gap tasks as small group class activities to encourage students to increase their target language practice.

Limitations of the Study

The current study was limited in several ways. The first limitation was related to the inability of the researcher in controlling the gender variable, participants were both males and females. Another limitation was about the participants of the study who were not randomly selected. They were selected based on convenience sampling. Finally, due to the time restriction on university courses, the researcher was allowed to use only 30 minutes of every session for writing treatments.

REFERENCES

- Bell, J., & Burnaby, B (1984). *A handbook for ESL literacy*. Toronto, Ontario.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (2nd ed), New York: Pearson Education.
- Buzan, T. (1995). *The mindmap book*. (2nd ed). London, UK: BBC Books.
- Cronin, H., Sinatra, R., & Barkley, W. F. (1992). Combining writing with text in content instruction. *NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals) Bulletin*, 76, 34-45.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing Second Language Skills: Theory and Practice* (3rd ed), Virginia: Harcourt brace Jovanovich Publishers.okm
- Defrioka. A. (2009). Improving Students' Interaction in Speaking class Through Information Gap Activities. *Leksika Journal*.
- Ellis, R. (2004). *Task-based language learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fahim, M., & Rahimi, A. (2011). The Effect of Concept Mapping Strategy on the Writing Performance of EFL Learners. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 1(5), 1-8.
- Jondeya S. R., (2011) The Effectiveness of Using Information Gap on Developing Speaking Skills for the Eight Graders in Gaza. Retrieved June 2013, from: http://ntdc.alazhar.edu.ps/upload/e_thesis/RaniaSameerJondeya.pdf
- Keh, C. L. (1990). Feedback in the writing: A model and methods for implementation. *ELT*, 44(4), 294-303.
- Nesbit, J. C., & Adesope, O. (2006). Learning with concept and knowledge maps: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(3), 413-448
- Nobahar, B., Nemati Azad, A. R., & Shaghaghi, M. The effect of Concept Mapping on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Self-efficacy and Expository Writing Accuracy. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(11), 2117-2127
- Novak, J. D. (2001). *The theory underlying concept maps and how to construct them*. Retrieved October 14, 2012, from <http://cmap.cognist.Uwf.edu/info/html>.
- Novak, J.D., & Canas, A. (2006). "The origins of the concept mapping tool and the continuing evolution of the tool", in *Information Visualization*, 5, 175-184.
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ojima, M. (2006). Concept mapping as pre-task planning: A case study of three Japanese ESL Writers. *System*, 34 (4), 566-585.
- Pishghadam, R., & Ghanizadeh, A. (2006). On the impact of concept mapping as a pre-writing activity on EFL learners' writing ability. *Iranian journal of applied linguistics*, 9(2), 103-130.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second language pedagogy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, C. J., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001) *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rao, Z. (2007). Training in brainstorming and developing writing skills. *ELT Journal*, 61 (2): 100-106. *language writing*, 12, (1), 17-29, *tools in schools and corporations* (2nd Ed.). New York: Routledge
- Soleimani, H., Zare, H., & Abbasi, A. (2014). The Effect of Pre-task Planning on Speaking Skill of Second Language Learner. *International Journal of Language Learning and*

Applied Linguistics World, 5(3), 238-247.

Talebinezhad, M. R., & Mansourpor Negari, G. (2009). The effect of explicit teaching of concept mapping in expository writing on EFL students' self-regulation, [special issue].

Pazhuhesh-e- Zabanha-ye Kharegi, 49, 85-108.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weigle, S.C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

White, R., & Arndt, V. (1991). *Process Writing*. London: Longman.

THE COMPARATIVE IMPACT OF LEXICAL INFERENCE AND CONCEPT MAPPING ON EFL LEXICAL COLLOCATIONS LEARNING

Raheleh Ganji Kashan

Islamic Azad University of Central Tehran Branch
Rahelehganji1940@gmail.com

Behdokht Mall-Amiri

Islamic Azad University of Central Tehran Branch
b_m_amiri@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to investigate the comparative impact of lexical inferencing and concept mapping on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' lexical collocation learning. Accordingly, 60 female EFL learners were selected from a group of 90 learners based on their performance on a sample piloted PET in Zabansara Institute, Tehran. They were randomly assigned into two experimental groups. They were given a teacher made lexical collocation test to ensure that the participants had no knowledge of the target lexical collocations prior to the treatment. The ten session treatment which followed included teaching lexical collocations using lexical inferencing in one experimental group and concept mapping in the other. Everything in both groups such as materials, the amount of instruction was the same except the treatment. At the end of the instructional period, a piloted teacher-made lexical collocation test was administered to both groups to see if there is any significance difference between two groups in terms of their performance on the posttest. The analysis of the test scores using an independent samples t-test indicated that Concept mapping techniques was as effective as lexical inferencing in learning lexical collocations. As a result of the study, the lexical collocation knowledge of EFL students may be developed by familiarizing them with the perception underlying the lexical inferencing and concept mapping techniques.

KEYWORDS: Concept mapping- Lexical inferencing - Intermediate Learners- Lexical collocations

INTRODUCTION

The importance of vocabulary in learning a language as a key element in language classes can hardly be denied. Wilkins (1972) said, "Without grammar little can be conveyed; but without vocabulary nothing can be transferred" (p. 111). Vocabulary knowledge is important as a result learning vocabulary is considered as a key factor in achieving a high level of proficiency in the target language (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008). That is to say, even an adequate knowledge of vocabulary alone could be enough to go on a communication (Wallace, 1982). Furthermore, Celce-Murcia and Rosensweig (1989) approve that vocabulary should be considered as a central element in language teaching from the beginning stages. According to Sinclair (1987), using

language is selecting more than one word at a time, and blending them together. McCarten (2007) states, “the way in which some words are usually used is generally called collocation” (p. 5). In addition, Stubbs (2002) defines collocation as “the habitual co-occurrence of two unordered content words or a content word and a lexical set” (p. 215). Since much of natural language consists of prefabricated chunks, learning words in isolation does not help L2 learners to be successful in communications. Learners also have to obtain a large number of fixed sequences in order to be able to produce and comprehend ideas accurately and fluently (Wray, 2002). In addition, collocations especially the lexical collocations are the most important part of second language acquisition and they are also essential to non-native speakers in order to speak or write fluently and accurately (Jaén, 2007). Lewis (2000) also believes that “lexical collocations are combinations of two equal lexical components” (p. 133). Teaching vocabulary and collocation to students is a complex process, so Genç (2004) states that in order to stimulate interest and awareness in students about vocabulary improvement and make the vocabulary learning process more meaningful, there is a plenty of vocabulary teaching techniques. Vocabulary learning strategies include concept mapping, organizing, note taking, identifying important information, lexical inferencing and summarizing (Pressley, 1982; Weinstein, 1988). Moreover, Spencer and Guillaume (2006) said “words must be presented to students through several different contexts and situations in order to develop their knowledge (p. 208). Also, Quain (1996) states, “most researchers believe vocabulary is best taught in context rather than isolated lists” (p.120). As a result guessing from context is certainly the most significant vocabulary learning strategy that is called Lexical inferencing, and has been defined as the connections that people begin when they try to understand texts. Lexical inferencing allows the learners to learn vocabulary without the teacher’s help and they can understand their reading without stopping to check each word in the dictionary. Nation (2001) mentions that, “Incidental learning via guessing and inferencing from context is the most important of all sources of vocabulary learning” (p.232). Also, Beers (2003) states that “An inference is the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to create an educated guess” (p. 62). Its aim for learners is being able to make a well-formed guess of the meaning of an unknown word in a context without interrupting the reading too much.

Another useful strategy is concept mapping which has been described as “metacognitive strategies” (Mintzes, Wandersee & Novak, 1997) that encourage students to think reflectively, and used as a learning technique in different fields and they are suitable for presenting and organizing knowledge. The researcher as a teacher noticed that it is very fundamental to find a suitable way to overcome the learners’ problems with collocations because collocation is very important for a person who is learning a second language, also understanding collocations is crucial for both language production and comprehension (McIntosh et al., 2009). Finally, according to Hill (1999), most learners with good vocabulary knowledge have problems with fluency and the researcher as a teacher has witnessed the lack of learners’ collocational competence as a source of error, which hinders their fluency. Therefore, the researcher decided to look for the useful strategies in teaching collocation in order to help students develop collocational competence, but in the present study, she decided to focus just on lexical collocations. According to Williams and Burden (1997), one of the areas that can shed light on the issue of collocational knowledge is a study of language learning strategies. It would be useful to present the techniques and activities that affect the ways of teaching collocation, and help

learners develop collocational capability. Hence, the researcher tried to focus on some classroom strategies, which remind the importance of collocations to learners. Among the strategies graphic organizers are recommended (Chularut & De Backer, 2003) because they provide visual scaffolds that encourage students to extract and represent the meaning of words from texts. Concept mapping is a metacognitive strategy, which may be helpful for students to develop their vocabulary competence (Chularut & De Backer, 2003). On the other hand, the context is one of the most significant factors in learning vocabulary, and according to Nagy (1997), L2 learners may have a greater need to use context in vocabulary development. In addition, L2 learners learn new words considerably as they encounter them in context through reading and listening activities, similar to the way native speakers of a language expand their vocabulary knowledge (Read, 2000). Although these learning strategies have been studied in Iran, few studies have considered the use of strategies for learning collocations among Iranian EFL learners. Among these strategies, lexical inferencing as a cognitive strategy and concept mapping as one of the metacognitive strategies were chosen because based on what Chularut and De Backer (2003) argues these strategies help students to develop the vocabulary knowledge.

The present study is considered to be significant for some reasons. First, the results can help teachers have a better view on using the lexical inferencing and concept mapping technique in teaching lexical collocation. In addition, the use of these two strategies seems to be helpful for the teacher in constructing and using them to improve lexical collocations. Secondly, the results can help students have a better view on using vocabulary-learning techniques. Third, gaining a better understanding of these kinds of strategies help educators develop more effective interventions to enhance lexical collocation, too. However, collocations are important and Howarth (1998) believes that learning collocations helps ESL/EFL learners to become more native-like because English native speakers tell EFL learners that a sentence is good in English, but as the native speakers, they never use it. Thus, if EFL learners apply chunks of language they will be able to become more native-like.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND NULL HYPOTHESIS

To fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research question was formulated:

Is there any statistically significant difference between the impact of using lexical inferencing and concept mapping on EFL learners' lexical collocations learning?

H₀: There is no significant difference between the impact of using lexical inferencing and concept mapping on EFL learners' lexical collocations learning.

METHODOLOGY

A thorough description of the participants, procedure, and instrumentation carried out for this study are presented in this section.

Participants

The participants, compromising the population of the present study, were 60 female intermediate EFL students. They were females whose age ranged from 15 to 22. Their language proficiency

was intermediate level according to the criteria set by the language school. The participants were selected from among 90 students via the administration of a PET (Preliminary English Test), (2004). In addition, 30 participants with almost similar characteristics to that of the target sample took part in the piloting of the present study's instruments.

Instrumentation

In order to come up with a homogeneous sample, a proficiency test was administered in this study. To minimize the individual differences among the participants and to ensure homogeneity of them, a version of the PET (Preliminary English Test) proficiency test was employed as a reliable and standard criterion to help the researcher choose the sample. The second instrument was a researcher made lexical collocation test (a pretest and a post-test) each containing 50 multiple-choice items on the lexical collocation and it took 60 minutes. These two parallel 50-item multiple choice tests were made based on their course book (Top Notch intermediate) one for pretest and one for post-test.

Procedure

To complete the course of study, four stages were followed: First the PET was piloted on 30 participants demonstrating almost similar characteristics as the target sample before the actual administration in order to make sure that the test had appropriate reliability (0.93) and item characteristics (no items were modified or removed) and thus suitable for the target sample. The administration of the whole test took 1 hour and 20 minutes. The second stage consisted of administering the piloted PET to help the researcher make sure about the homogeneity of the participants regarding their language proficiency. Having administered the test used for homogenization, out of 90 students the eligible ones -those 60 whose scores ranged from one standard deviation above and below the mean on the test were selected as the participants of the study. The participants were then randomly assigned to two experimental groups. Two experimental groups were administered the researcher- made lexical collocation pretest at the beginning of the instruction session. Before the test was administered, participants were provided with an explanation of the study being conducted and were assured that the results would have no influence on the course outcomes. The pretest was conducted to assess the lexical collocation knowledge of the two groups before the course of instruction and to check their homogeneity in not knowing the lexical collocations prior to the treatment. In the lexical inferencing group, lexical inferencing instruction was introduced in a way that the students got some contextual cues to use while they were trying to infer the meaning of unknown lexical items. The other experimental group was instructed through concept mapping strategy. In this group, the students first read the passage of their book and then the teacher presented the new vocabulary items. She presented suitable multiple collocates for each word. In this way, students learned a new word through its collocations. Then, the teacher drew a circle in the center of the board and wrote the verb on it such as "make". Then, the students should say different words that could be collocated with that verb, such as "choice". "A mistake". "An excuse". The teacher drew lines from the circle for each of the words involved. After that, she drew a circle at the end of each of the lines, and wrote each word in one circle. After that, the teacher chose one of the words associated with that verb (such as make a mistake), explained the meaning of it, and wrote it in the other circle in the same line. After coming up with the correct meaning of lexical items through contexts and the

provision of the necessary feedback, the researcher asked the students to make new sentences with the taught lexical collocations. The teachers gave feedback on the sentences made by the students. Then, the students were asked to make more sentences with them as their homework. After the end of the instruction, a piloted researcher-made post-test consisted of 50 multiple-choice items based on those lexical collocations covered during the instruction was administered to compare the participants' learning of lexical collocations in both groups.

Design

The participants of this study were selected based on nonrandom sampling method but randomly were assigned into two experimental groups to receive two different kinds of treatment; therefore, this study is a quasi-experimental. The study enjoyed a posttest only design with two concept mapping and lexical inferencing strategies as the two values of the independent variable and lexical collocations learning as the dependent variable. Furthermore, all participants were female intermediate EFL learners, so language proficiency and gender were considered as the control variables of the study.

Statistical Analysis

Several statistical analyses were conducted to answer the research question in this study. After scoring PET, pretest, and posttest, the researcher calculated mean, standard deviation of the scores (descriptive statistic). The inter rater reliability of the two raters in the writing section of PET was calculated by the use of Cronbach alpha. The means of two groups' scores at posttest were compared using an independent samples *t*-test to test the null hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of the PET Piloting

Prior to the actual administration, the PET was piloted to ensure that it could be used confidently for participant selection. The section below describes the details of the piloting administration of PET. The data collected from piloting PET were examined with regard to the normality of their distribution. All items of the PET went through an item analysis procedure and no items were discarded thanks to their non-malfunctioning characteristics. Furthermore, the mean and standard deviation of the scores and the reliability were calculated. The mean of the test was 53.26 and the standard deviation of the test was found to be 10.185. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the PET Piloting.

Table 1: The Descriptive Statistics of the PET Piloting.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Total	30	35.50	71.00	53.2667	10.18513	-.261	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

The reliability of PET was calculated through the Cronbach alpha formula. The reliability of .826 was achieved which was satisfactory. Table 2 shows the reliability of the piloting PET.

Table 2 : Reliability of the PET in the Pilot Phase

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.826	67

The writing section of the test was rated by two raters, the researcher and one of her colleagues using the predetermined PET rating scale. The rating was done based on the Cambridge General Mark Schemes including the range of scores from zero to five. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used in order to calculate the inter-rater reliability between the raters. The inter-rater reliability of the two raters scoring the writing papers proved significant ($r = 0.89$, $p < 0.01$). The reliability showed that there was a significant correlation between the two raters. Therefore, this ensured the researcher that the same raters could be used for the actual administration of the test (Table 3).

Table 3: Inter-rater Reliability of the Two Raters in writing section of the Piloting Correlations

			Rater1	Rater2
Spearman's rho	Rater1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.894**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	60	60
	Rater2	Correlation Coefficient	.894**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	60	60

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

Descriptive Statistics of the PET Main Administration

After piloting the PET, the researcher used it as an instrument to homogenize the students in this study. Generally, 90 students participated in the test and after the administration of the test; the researcher selected 60 students whose scores fell between one standard deviation above and below the mean. Similar to the piloting phase, descriptive statistics were conducted after the administration of the test. Table 4 shows these statistics with the mean of 56.08 and the standard deviation of 7.11.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the PET Main Administration

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
scores	90	35.50	69.50	56.0889	7.11091	-1.024	.254
Valid N (listwise)	90						

Out of the 90 participants, 60 whose scores fell between one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen. In addition, the reliability of the PET for the homogenization of the participants was calculated (Table 5). An index of .701 reassured the researcher of the reliability of this test.

Table 5: Reliability of the PET Main Administration

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
.701	.720	67

Descriptive Statistics of the Lexical Collocation Piloting test

The lexical collocation posttest was piloted with a group of 30 participants in Zabansara institute with almost the same characteristics (the same language proficiency level and age) as the group of the main study. The results of the piloting revealed that there were not any malfunctioning items to be discarded. (Table 6). It has to be indicated also that the posttest was parallel to the pre-treatment test of lexical collocations. And as for the content, those items that were not known to the learners, hence taught to them during the instructions, were included in the posttest.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Piloting Lexical Collocations posttest

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Lexical collocation posttest	30	14.0	22.0	17.300	1.8411	.448	.427
Valid N (listwise)	30						

The reliability of each of the test was calculated using K-R 21 formula. The reliability of the lexical collocation posttest came out to be 0.75 which was satisfactory.

Table 7: Reliability of the Lexical Collocation posttest Piloting

	K-R 21 formula	No. of items
Lexical collocation Posttest pilot	.75	50

Descriptive Statistics of Lexical Collocation Pretest and Posttest Main Administration

Before the treatment, a Lexical collocation pre-test was administered in order to make sure the participants in both groups had no background knowledge of the Lexical collocations, which were taught during treatment sessions. As displayed in Table 8 the mean scores for lexical inferencing and concept-mapping groups on the pretest of Lexical collocation are 15.87 and 16.20. However, only those items which were not known by any of the participants were selected to be taught and included in the posttest. At the end of the treatment, in order to test the achievement of the Lexical collocation, a posttest was run to both groups. As displayed in Tables 4.8 the mean scores of lexical inferencing and concept mapping groups on posttest of lexical collocation turned out to be 34.51 and 35.17 respectively.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of Lexical Collocation Pretest and Posttest scores (main administration)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Skewness ratios
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	
Lexical Inferencing pretest	30	15.8710	2.83716	.542	.421	1.28
Lexical Inferencing posttest	30	34.5161	3.13976	.778	.421	1.84
Concept Mapping pretest	30	16.2000	3.25259	-.140	.427	-.32
Concept Mapping posttest	28	35.1786	4.52199	-.255	.441	-.57
Valid N (listwise)	28					

As shown in table 8 all the skewness ratios fell within the normality range of ± 1.96 .

In order to examine the comparative effect of lexical inferencing and concept mapping as teaching techniques in improving the knowledge of students in learning lexical collocations, the scores on the lexical collocation posttest of the lexical inferencing group, and the scores obtained from the concept mapping group lexical collocation posttest were compared through applying an independent samples *t*-test. The results were to show whether or not there was any significant difference in the performance of the two groups in the post-test of lexical collocation. The following table shows the result:

Table 10: Independent Samples *t*-test of the Posttest Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	3.329	.073	.659	57	.513	.662	1.00551	-1.351	2.675
	Equal variances not assumed			.647	47.5	.521	.662	1.02387	-1.396	2.721

With the equality of variances assumed ($F=3.32$, $p=.07>.05$), the first row was used for the result of the *t* -test. As displayed there, the difference between the posttest mean scores turned out to be non-significant ($t=.659$, $p=.513>.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis fails to be rejected. This study compared the impact of lexical inferencing and concept mapping as teaching techniques in improving the ability of students in learning lexical collocations. The scores on the lexical collocations post-test of the lexical inferencing group, and the scores obtained from the concept mapping group were compared through applying an independent samples *t*-test. The results showed that there was not any significant difference between the two groups in terms of their post treatment learning of the collocations. The null hypothesis of the study fails to be rejected according to the results of the data analysis. In fact, the results of the lexical collocation post-tests strongly indicated that learning lexical collocation through the lexical inferencing strategy was as effective as the concept mapping strategy. In other words, the participants who were exposed to these two strategies demonstrated enhanced learning of the lexical collocation as they did not know them before the intervention. Furthermore, based on the statistical analysis which has been done, there was no significant difference between the impacts of these two strategies on learning lexical collocations. This outcome is in line with the findings of Nosratinia (2012). She studied the effects of the "concept mapping" and the "Lexical Inferencing" strategies on EFL learners'

retention of phrasal verbs. Similarly, regarding the results of statistical analysis, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between two groups on retention of the phrasal verbs. This result also supports the findings of Cooper (1999) in which he found out the learners are successful in using lexical inferencing strategies to learn idioms. Theoretically, perhaps there is a claim that there is a stronger relationship between learning vocabulary through inferencing and higher levels of achievements than learning the words through memorizing. One probable explanation is that inferencing techniques involve deeper mental processing. In addition, students who used more inferencing strategies considered guessing as a problem solving strategy and it made them enjoy their reading and comprehend the text better. The construction of concept maps may have helped students to build more complex structures in regard to information in the texts than they were able to construct on the basis of individual study and in-class discussions. By the use of concept mapping, students may have been ready to understand not only the ideas in the text, but also the relationships among the concepts and notions, which lead to a better understanding of the texts. It appears that the act of concept mapping helps ESL students to tie information from the text at hand to prior knowledge, to organize and summarize their thoughts during reading, and to organize recall of specific text details and difficult vocabulary which are likewise involved in inferencing process. This may explain why the two techniques were similarly effective on the learning of the collocations. The students in concept mapping group talked about the concept and their relations among these concepts and it is exactly in line with Stice and Alvarez's findings (1987) that drawing concept maps helped students understand relationships between concepts such as compare, contrast, cause and effect.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the comparative impact of using lexical inferencing and concept mapping on EFL learners' lexical collocations learning. The results indicated that there was no significant difference between the effect of these two instructions in learning lexical collocations. Before starting the instruction, a prepiloted sample PET was administered to 90 female students through which 60 of them whose scores fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. Ultimately, 60 students selected as the main sample of this study were randomly divided into two experimental groups referred to concept mapping and lexical inferencing groups. To make further sure that the two groups manifested no significant difference in terms of the dependent variable of the study, independent samples *t*-tests were run separately at the outset on the mean scores of both groups on a lexical collocation test at the outset. Following the instruction, both groups took a post test of lexical collocation with the mean and standard deviation in the concept-mapping group being 35.17 and 4.52, respectively. In the lexical inferencing, the mean was 34.51 while the standard deviation came out to be 3.13. Comparison of the means of two groups through an independent samples *t*-test was calculated to test the null hypothesis of the study which showed that there was no significant difference between the performances of the two groups on the posttest. In other words the two teaching techniques were equally effective.

Suggestion for Further Research

Drawing on the theoretical concepts and practical procedures followed throughout this study, some other related studies can be carried out:

Only female students participated in this research; it would be interesting to see whether gender is also a factor or not. Moreover, the focus of the present study was exclusively on the effect of concept mapping and lexical inferencing strategies on lexical collocation learning. Therefore, further research can be conducted with the result of teaching other skills or sub skills through these two strategies. This research was carried out among teenagers; the same experiment could be implemented among other age groups to see whether age is a factor in comparing the impact of concept mapping and lexical inferencing strategies on lexical collocation learning. While this study focused on lexical collocations as one of its outcomes, other studies within the same design could seek other types of collocations including learning of grammatical collocations, technical and academic collocations, weak and strong collocations, and open and restricted collocations. Other kinds of learning strategies could be investigated to find out if there is a better learning strategy suited for teaching and learning collocations.

Limitations

The limitations imposed to the present study were as follows:

1. The researcher could not control the students' age as there were in a class based on their proficiency level not their age; therefore the result of this study may not be generalizable to other age groups.
2. This research was conducted only in two classes in a language school; consequently, generalizability of the results was limited by the small sample of the study.

REFERENCES

- Beers, K. (2003). *When kids can't read what teachers can do: A guide for teachers*. New York: Heinemann.
- Bolinger, D. (1976). Meaning and memory. *Forum Linguisticum*, 1(1), 1-14.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Rosensweig, F. (1989). Teaching vocabulary in the ESL classroom. In M. Celce-Murcia, & L. McIntosh (Eds.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (1st ed.). New York, Newbury House Publishers Inc.
- Chularut, P., & DeBacker, T. K. (2003). The influence of concept mapping on achievement, self-regulation, and self-efficacy in students of English as a second language. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 29, 248-263.
- Cooper, T.C. (1999). Processing of idioms by L2 learners of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 233-262.
- Genç, B. (2004). New trends in teaching and learning vocabulary. *Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences*, 13(2), 117-126. Retrieved from <http://sosyalbilimler.cukurova.edu.tr/dergi/dosyalar/2004.13.2.155.pdf>
- Hill, J. (1999). Collocational competence. *English Teaching Professional*, 11, 3-6.
- Howarth, P. (1998). Phraseology and second language proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 24-44.

- Huang, L. (2001). *Knowledge of English collocations: An analysis of Taiwanese EFL learners*. Retrieved from www.utexas.edu/students/flesa/tpfle/contents7.doc
- Jaen, M. M. (2007). A corpus-driven design of a test for assessing the ESL collocational competence of university students. *International Journal of English Studies*, 7(2), 127-147.
- Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach: Putting theories into practice*. London: Language Teaching Publications.
- McCarten, J. (2007). *Teaching Vocabulary Lessons from the Corpus Lessons for the Classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McIntosh, C., Francis, B., & Pool, R. (2009). *Oxford collocation dictionary for students of English* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mintzes, J. J., Wandersee, J. H., & Novak, J. D. (1997). Meaningful learning in science: The human constructivist perspective. In G. D. Phye (Ed.), *Handbook of Academic Learning* (pp. 405-447). Orlando: Academic Press.
- Morin, D., & Goebel, J. (2001). Basic vocabulary instruction: Teaching strategies or works? *Foreign Language Annals*, 34(1), 8-16.
- Nagy, W. (1997). On the role of context in first and second language vocabulary learning. In N. Schmitt, & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition and pedagogy* (pp. 64-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nosratinia, M., Amini, M., & Sarabchian, E. (2013). The comparative impact of conceptmapping and lexical inferencing on EFL learners' retention of phrasal verbs. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 4 (3), 343-363.
- Quain, D. (1996). ESL vocabulary acquisition: Contextualization and decontextualization. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53, 120-42.
- Pressley, M. (1982). Elaboration and memory development. *Child Development*, 53, 296-309.
- Spencer, B. H., & Guillaume, A. M. (2006). Integrating curriculum through the learning cycle: Content-based reading and vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(3), 206-219.
- Stice, C. F. & Alvarez, M. C. (1987). Hierchical concept mapping in the early grades. *Childhood Education*, 64(2), 86-96.
- Stubbs, M. (2002). *Words and Phrase: Corpus Studies of Lexical Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wallace, M. J. (1982). *Teaching vocabulary*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Limited.
- Weinstein, C. E. (1988). *Elaboration skills as a learning strategy*. New York: Academic Press.
- Williams, M., & Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd.
- Wray, A. (2002). *Formulic language and lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Authors

Behdokht Mall-Amiri is Assistant Professor of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran. She has published several articles in domestic and foreign academic journals. She is specifically interested in research areas related to translation, cognitive and learning styles, motivation, and program evaluation

Raheleh Ganji Kashan holds an MA degree in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch. She has been teaching English in different high schools and language institute, in Tehran for the last thirteen years.

THE EFFECT OF TITLE FAMILIARITY ON IMPROVING IRANIAN YOUNG EFL LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Farahnaz Fathi MA in English Language Teaching (the Corresponding Author)
*English Department, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, University of Tabriz,
Tabriz, Iran*
Farahnaz.fathi110@gmail.com

Elnaz Shoari (PhD. Candidate)
Department of ELT, College of Humanities, Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
Elnaz.Shoari@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

*The process of oral communication involves two integral parts: listening and speaking. It is not possible to develop listening skill just through hearing what is spoken. Active listening yields in understanding of what is spoken. Listening is not a single process; series of processes are included in it. In most of the cases we are not fully aware of the processes through which we perceive our first languages, but when it comes to second or foreign language learning we notice this complexity of the processes (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 1995, as cited in Schmidt, 1990). Consequently this study aimed at investigating the role of title familiarity on improving listening comprehension. For this reason the researcher worked on 60 language learners from one of the institutes of Ghazvin. For the purposes of this study, 60 young EFL learners were divided into two groups. At the beginning of the program the researcher conducted a language proficiency test (**Cambridge Mover Tests**) in order to assure the comparability of both groups. Before the treatment, both groups were administered a listening pretest. The experimental group (n=30) were taught the listening materials through some information about the materials while control group learnt the same ones through traditional instruction, that is they just listened to the materials then they were to answer the relevant questions. After the program, the post-test and delayed post-test were administered to the groups. The data analyzed through t-test. Results indicated that providing learners with additional information on listening tasks had a significantly positive effect on listening comprehension of young EFL learners. So teachers may be able to consider the results actively in relation to improve the learners' listening comprehension on a daily basis.*

KEYWORDS: Listening comprehension, Title Familiarity, Traditional Listening Instruction

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the fact that the role of listening in English as Foreign Language and English as Second Language environments has been clarified, neither learners and nor teachers are of an exact knowledge of how to develop this important skill (Wolrin and coakley, 1996). It can be said that listening received less attention in comparison with other skills in research area. It can be said that less attention has been given to listening while comparing with other skills in research area, based on recent research on listening comprehension the significant role of the non-linguistic knowledge on listening comprehension has been emphasized. It was reported that learners perceive the meaning of a text through making use of background information or “schema”. According to different types of knowledge of which is used in comprehension (linguistic/non-linguistic) there would be top-down or bottom-up processing during listening comprehension (Buck, 2001). Generally speaking listening skills are important parts of literacy. As children get older, they learn through listening. Vocabulary is of great role in listening comprehension. Oral language skills develop as children listen to those around them and these skills are the basis of reading and other literacy skills. Most part of a child’s vocabulary develops while children listen to adults and other children around them. Children learn as many as 13,000 words by the time they are six, long before they are competent readers just through listening (Bonk, 2000). Research indicates that we spend 80% of our daily workings communicating, and based on research 45% of that time is spent listening. Although, listening is the most important and primary skill in all areas of language use, most of people are poor listeners. It is found that immediately after listening to ten-minute material the average understand half of what was said, and within 48 hours that drops off another 50% to a final 25% level of effectiveness. It can be said that people comprehend only one-quarter of what was said. It should be found that why we are such inefficient listeners? Firstly, actually we have never been taught how to listen. In schools people are taught speaking, reading and writing skills. Secondly most of us are busy talking and thinking about what to say next that actually we miss out on many important points to learn about new ideas, points..., It is evident that the major part of listening process is asking questions and really listening to answers (Lawson, 2007).

There are supports that can be provided by parents to enhance listening comprehension as follows:

- “Talk with children. Conversation is a great teacher. To converse, it’s necessary to listen to what the other person says. Conversation also teaches the pleasure of being social, which supports successful learning later.
- Read to children. When children listen to stories they practice listening carefully. Adults can ask questions about the book like, “Where did they plant the seed?” or “What happened first?” to evaluate children’s listening skills.
- Play listening games. Games like “Grandma’s Trunk” and “Simon Says” are great for boosting listening skills.
- Listen. When you listen to children you teach them that listening is important and that helps them want to learn to listen well.

- Encourage children to ask questions when they don't understand something that's said or read to them. Listen carefully to their questions and try to make the information clearer" (Higgins, 1995, p.41).

Listening strategies are those procedures, techniques or activities that are directly act on the comprehension and recall of listening material. Listening strategies can be recognized by how the listener processes the input. *Top-down strategies* are listener oriented. The listener makes use of background knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, the type of text, and the language. This background knowledge activates a set of imaginations that help the listener to inference what is heard and guess what will come next. Top-down strategies include

- listening for the main idea
- predicting
- drawing inferences
- summarizing

Bottom-up strategies are text oriented the listener relies on the language in the message, that is, the combination of sounds, words, and grammar that creates meaning. Bottom-up strategies include

- listening for specific details
- recognizing cognates
- recognizing word-order patterns

Strategic listeners also use *meta- cognitive strategies* to plan, monitor, and evaluate their listening. They make planning by deciding which listening strategies would serve best results in a particular situation. They monitor the process of listening comprehension and the effectiveness of the selected strategies. They evaluate through determining whether they gain their listening comprehension goals and that whether the combination of listening strategies selected was an effective one(Hayati,2009).

Listening for Meaning

To extract meaning from a listening material, students must go through four basic steps:

1-Firstly understand the aim of listening. Activate background information of the topic in order to predict or anticipate content and identify appropriate listening strategies.

2-Paying attention to the points of listening input that are more relevant to the identified aim and ignore the rest. This selectivity helps students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short-term memory in order to recognize it.

3-Select top-down and bottom-up strategies that are appropriate to the listening task and use them flexibly and interactively. Students' comprehension improves and their confidence increases when they use top-down and bottom-up strategies simultaneously to construct meaning.

4-Checking comprehension during listening and when the listening task is over. Monitoring comprehension aids students detect inconsistencies and comprehension failures, directing them to use alternate strategies (Tsui & Fullilove, 1998: 432).

What is included in listening?

“Speech perception (e.g., sound discrimination, recognize stress patterns, intonation, pauses, etc.)

Word recognition (e.g., recognizes the sound pattern as a word, locate the word in the lexicon, retrieve lexical, grammatical and semantic information about the word, etc.)

Sentence processing (parsing; e.g., detect sentence constituents, building a structure frame, etc.)

construct the literal meaning of the sentence (select the relevant meaning in case of ambiguous word)

hold the information in short-term memory

recognize cohesive devices in discourse

infer the implied meaning and intention (speech act)

predict what is to be said

Decide how to respond” (Morley, 1991, p.82).

Undoubtedly there are factors of which affect the process of learning as follows:

Bottom-up

Top-down

A: Listener Factors

General

1 Experience/practice in listening to the target language: use of the media (cinema, TV, radio, etc.)

2 General intelligence

3 General background knowledge of the world

More specific

4 Physical and educational

4.1 age/sex

4.2 home background, size of family

4.3 educational background and type of school

4.4 physical health and alertness

5 Intellectual

5.1 knowledge of the target language in its various aspects: phonology, lexis, syntax, and cohesion

5.2 powers of analysis and selection: ability to distinguish between main and supporting points

5.3 knowledge of the specific topic or subject

5.4 memories (short term and long term)

6 Psychological

6.1 motivation and sense of purpose while listening

6.2 attitude of the listener to the speaker

6.3 attitude of the listener to the message: level of interest

6.4 listener's powers of attention and concentration

B: Speaker Factors

1. Language ability of the speaker: native speaker - beginner-level non-native Speaker
- 2 Speaker's production: pronunciation, accent, variation, voice, etc.
- 3 Speed of delivery
- 4 Prestige and personality of the speaker

C: Factors in the Material and Medium

- 1 The language used to convey the message: phonological features, including Stress, intonation, weak forms (especially in conversation), lexis, syntax, Cohesion, etc.
- 2 Difficulty of content and concepts, especially if the material is abstract, abstruse, highly specialized or technical, esoteric, lengthy, or poorly organized.
- 3 Acoustic environments: noise and interference.
- 4 Amount of support provided by gestures, visuals, etc.

Teachers' Selections Factor

Practice/exposure/experience/opportunity Speaker's clarity, pronunciation, accent, etc.
Acoustic environment: noise, interference Motivation to understand Knowledge of target language further specified as : phonology, stress, intonation vocabulary syntax (especially when complex) ability to interpret cues Familiarity with topic/subject matter Interference from mother tongue Speed of delivery Interest in the subject Attitude to the speaker Classroom conditions/alertness Knowledge of speaker and intentions.

Students' Selections Factor

Practice opportunities Educational level and background General ability in English/difficulty of the English used Vocabulary/idiom Ability to attend and concentrate Speaker's production: voice, clarity, etc. Speed of delivery Motivation and attitude Content of text/familiarity TV viewing habits Environment, noise, etc. Family background Radio listening habits Interest Reading habits Note-taking ability
Sex of the listener Memory General intelligence (Boyle, 1984).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Among the factors affecting listening comprehension there are various factors within which there is also dialect familiarity as reported by Major et al. (2005), English as a second language (ESL) listeners scored lower on listening comprehension tests when hearing ethnic and international dialects of English than when hearing standard American English. According to Eisenstein & Berkowitz (1981) Standard English was more intelligible for advanced beginners and high intermediate-level learners than working-class New Yorkese or foreign-accented English. According to Tauroza and Luk (1997), some learners perform more successfully in comprehending standard varieties while others achieve greater comprehension of L1-accented varieties is explained by the influence of dialect familiarity. Learners understand the language of which they are exposed as fully as possible are of standard varieties. Recently so much attention

has been given to foreign language listening comprehension, although (Celce-Murcia, 2001, Rost, 2002). Tsou (2005) studied the effects of cultural familiarity on foreign language learning. Tsou administered an anthropology process together with task-oriented approach to administer the cultural lesson. It was proved that when culture-familiar lessons were used in EFL instruction, language proficiency enhanced significantly. During listening or reading people focus on the most essential words that is they skim the unrelated and unimportant ones. Ervin (1992) also has administered a study to see that whether or not listeners would understand the materials of which are culturally familiar to them better than those are not. There were two classes, one of which was Scottish and the other one was Texan, all have listened to a same culture passage and answered to a set of questions. This was repeated twice based on their cultures. As it was reported through T-test, there was no significant difference between same and other culture for the Texan group, while the Scottish group scored significantly high in same culture than the other culture. Genc and Bada (2005) also conducted a study on the effect of culture in language learning and teaching. Students of Cukurava University in Turkey were participants of this study. The results of this study have indicated that cultural awareness is very important and when can be raised; the listening comprehension also would increase significantly. Tehrani & Dastjerdi (2012) also studied the relationship between prior knowledge and EFL learners' listening comprehension. They found that it will be useful to help learners to build a mental framework to facilitate their comprehension, and that pre-listening supports including cultural information would be an essential part of listening comprehension. They also have found that since listening is a multidirectional process, there are many factors which affect it. Thus students would understand that for comprehending successfully, they must consider the text as a whole and as a result they are to activate their background information, rather than focusing on every single word in discourse. Basavand and Sadeghi (2014) studied on the effect of cultural knowledge on listening comprehension. Generally the results proved that having cultural information is of significant role in comprehending listening materials. All of these findings are supported by Ausubel's (1968) statement: learning would be effective when it is gained with meaningful materials of which connect the new comings to what learners already know. This must be in a manner of which the new knowledge is fixed into the prior ones. The new information is to be matched with its cognitive structure. Undoubtedly in listening and reading background knowledge is of an important role in comprehending a spoken or written text.

According to Stevens (1982), mental background is one of the widely accepted parameters in listening comprehension. Listening like reading not only involves decoding the materials but also constructing them. It means that we will be able to understand what we hear and what we listen only if the relevant information was activated. Most of the language learners don't perceive what they listen, because of not having the shared knowledge (not being able to activate relevant information) and sometimes and sometimes because of not being able to notice the words correctly. Hensen and Jensen (1995) also worked on the effect of prior study of lecture topics on listening comprehension. They found that the role of background knowledge is more evident in technical lectures than in non-technical ones. Keshavarz and Babaei (2001), also studied the role of background information in listening comprehension and have found no significant difference on the effect of giving information and activating the schema on listening comprehension of the participants. Mueller (1980) conducted a study on the role of prior knowledge in listening

comprehension. This study was performed at different levels of German students. It was found that the participants who received information before listening scored higher than those didn't receive any information. Long (1990) also studied the effect of background knowledge on L2 listening comprehension of ESL students of Spanish. Participants were given two passages-one familiar and other one unfamiliar. Although the English summaries had more correct idea units for the familiar topics, no significant differences have been reported between the familiar and unfamiliar passages for the recognition measure. Othman and Vanatha (2010), also conducted a study on the role of topic familiarity in listening comprehension. They worked on 34 intermediate students who were majors was business studies at a private institution. Based on the findings of their studies topics familiarity has an influence in listening comprehension. The scores of post-test were significantly higher than that of pre-test. Gabhard (2000) states there is close relationship between the background knowledge and real world experiences and the kind of the expectations we have. This knowledge is of great importance when we consider the language processing problems of learners. So listening doesn't mean just identifying the linguistic features of the text but also pairing speech to what the listener already knows about the subject. He then adds that the process of listening comprehension would occur only if the listener can place what she/he listens in a context. When the listener knows something about the listening material thus comprehension is more likely to occur. Sadighi and Zare (2006), investigated the impact of background knowledge on listening comprehension. They reported meaningful difference in participants' post-test scores. Their post-test scores were very higher than pre-test. Salahshuri (2011), also worked on the role of background knowledge in foreign language listening comprehension. He reported that the participants regardless of their levels scored higher on the familiar passages. Cultural schema when involves familiarity, helps readers to reform the reading materials. This resulted from the fact that there is encoding decoding process during reading. The readers based on their background reconstruct the reading materials (Erten and Razz, 2009).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

- 1- Does Title familiarity have any effect on Iranian EFL learners listening comprehension?
- 2- Does Title familiarity result in improving the listening comprehension?

Null hypothesis1: There are no significant differences in the effect of Title familiarity on Iranian EFL learners listening comprehension.

Alternative hypothesis1: There are significant differences in the effect of Title familiarity on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension.

Null hypothesis2: There are no significant differences in the effect of Title familiarity on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension.

Alternative hypothesis2: There are significant differences in the effect of Title familiarity on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the study

The design of the study is quasi-experimental, that is there was not random assignment. The Independent variable of the study was providing title relevant information and the dependent variable was EFL listening comprehension.

Participants

A total of 60 language learners with an age range of 15-18 participated in this program of which lasted for one academic semester. All the participants were from Persian background. They were selected from 7 classes. The participants were students of the one of the high institutes of Ghazvin Iran.

Instruments

In this study the researcher made use of following materials:

Pre-test of which was administered on participants listening skill was listening test which its material was Jack C, Richards' book called Tactics for Listening which were chosen from the source book of the institute. The test consisted of 4 listening passages that included 5 short listening comprehension texts followed by 5 multiple- choice questions for each of them in order to evaluate the participants' performance.

The post test of which was conducted at the end of the program was 20 multiple- choice test which were followed 4 new listening passage included 5 short listening comprehension texts from the same source book and delayed posttest was given after one month after the first posttest.

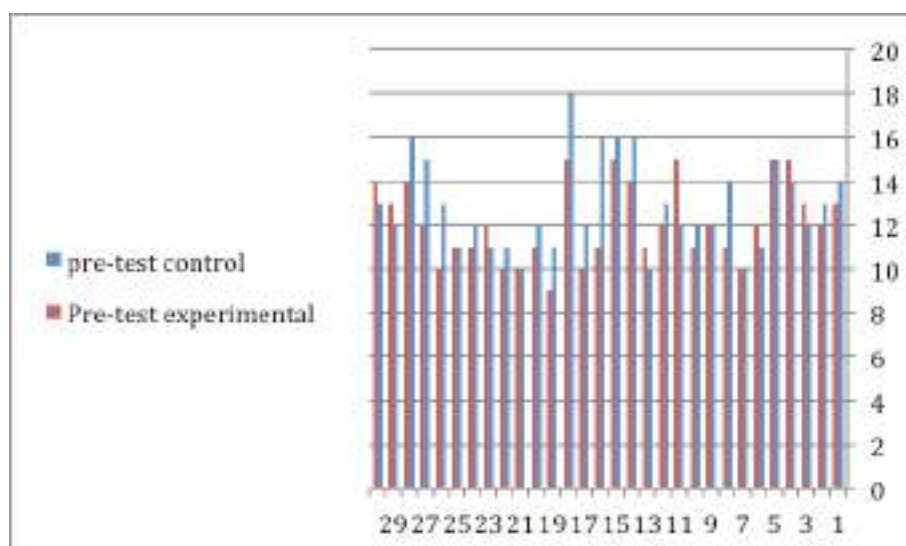
Procedures

Before starting the program one language proficiency test was conducted on learners' skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, for assuring their proficiency level. After that one pre-test was administered for proving the comparability of both groups. Then the researcher started the program. The researcher taught listening materials in Experimental group through providing them with information about title and for instance about the jobs of the speakers and their names as generally as possible, the researcher tried to made use of standard dialects of English in order to control the possible effect of variation of dialects on comprehension. Since the researcher herself is not a native speaker of English she provided learners with culturally related information when it was possible, but because the researcher didn't experience the target culture it can be said that cultural information can be considered as more general information. But in control group learners just listened to the same materials by themselves and then answered the relevant questions. After 18 sessions, one post-test was administered to both groups. The collected data was analyzed via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

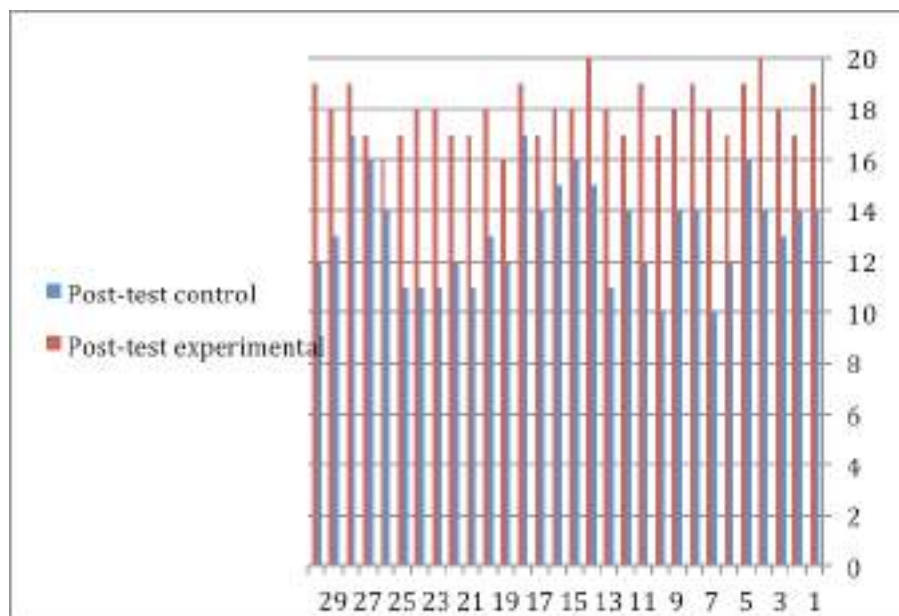
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study there was just one research question, because the first one was that of loading but the answer is: Yes familiarity affects the process of listening comprehension. As a result the

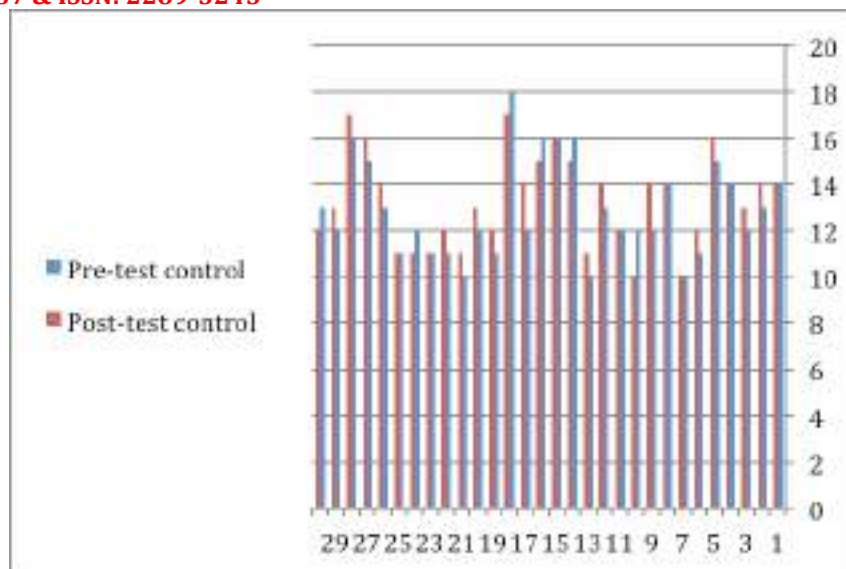
researcher aimed at finding answer to the second question, as it evident in the following figure both groups were approximately at same level at the beginning of the study:



After administering the program the researcher conducted a post-test of which there were meaningful changes in experimental group as given in the following figure:



The mean of control group in pre-test was 12.9 while in post-test was 13.2 as it is evident there was no meaningful improvement, it is also given in the following figure:



In experimental group mean of pre-test was 12.13 while in post-test was 17.93, thus there was meaningful changes in post-test scores in this group. The gathered data was analyzed by SPSS as is given in the following table:

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test Equality of Variances							95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2- tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Differences	Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances Assumed	0.608	.439	-1.35	58	.891	-.08000	.59245	-1.2711	1.1113
	Equal variances not Assumed			-1.35	57.085	.891	-.08000	.59245	-1.2711	1.1119
Posttest	Equal variances Assumed	1.116	.296	-7.613	58	.000	-4.76000	.62545	-6.0171	-3.50286
	Equal variances not Assumed			-7.613	51.907	.000	-4.76000	.62545	-6.0171	-3.49812

Based on Leven test for equality of variances in this table, Sig. (2-tailed) for both groups is 0.891. It means, there is no significant difference in means of both groups in pretests and confidence interval of the difference proved the results. According to the Leven test, there is a significant difference in means of both groups in the posttests since the p value is ($P > 0.05$) (means of experimental group improved so much and the difference of post tests is meaningful) consequently the positive effect of familiarity on listening comprehension has been proved. Also the group statistics are as follows:

Group Statistics

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre test	control	30	12.9999	1.94446	.38867
	Experi.	30	12.1333	2.23677	.44721
Post test	control	30	13.2400	1.74877	.34775
	Experi.	30	17.9333	2.57808	.51962

The findings of this study have indicated that providing learners with relevant and important information is of key role in listening comprehension. Anderson & Lynch (2000), has reported that when learners are given essential information, the process of learning would be facilitated. The results of this study are in agreement with those of which found positive supports for the effects of providing information in listening comprehension, for example that of Anderson & Lynch (2000), Markham and Latham (1987), Ockey (2007) Schmidt-Rinehart, (1995), Jonsen and Hasen (1995), Sadighi and Zare (2006) and Salahshuri (2011) Babaei (2001) and Aidinlou *et al.*, (2012).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of the title familiarity on improving listening comprehension in order to develop listening skill through hearing what is spoken and listening activities by providing additional information on listening tasks. The results of this study indicated that listening comprehension can be enhanced by preparing appropriate instructions. So when learners are given information on listening activities there is no such a burden on memory in the process of understanding what is spoken, that is, it might be concluded that cognitive load was lowered significantly. Teachers have to re-check their methods and techniques. The educators are to know that they must put emphasis on the listening processes rather than the listening test results. The other point that should be taken in to account is that background information that students bring with them to classrooms helps them to perform the listening task more successfully, thus when is not in active form, educators are to activate it, & when there is no enough information, should be provided by teachers. Teachers' responsibilities are more than just providing learners with linguistic knowledge. Learners will be able to use target language as effectively as possible in required situations. Title familiarity is an essential factor in the comprehension of unfamiliar texts.

Implication and Limitation of Study

The most important implication of the current study for the language classes specifically foreign language classes in schools has to do with the type of activities which are related to participants'

knowledge about what they heard to support learners' performance in listening comprehension. The key point is that the learner's knowledge and information toward key units and words in texts should be enhanced. Another point pertains to the type of listening texts and instructions used in classrooms. The other factor contributing to the cycle of study is selection of materials according to the learners' proficiency level, their background, activities and instructions during session's processes that should be related to the aim of study. In addition to all these, language teachers and syllabus writers are supposed to incorporate a range of information related activities and change the weight of listening lessons from testing listening into teaching listening so that they could support language learners to enhance their listening performance and listening comprehension. To put the same point in a different way, the data and results clarify fundamental concepts specifically for the teachers who may be able to consider the results actively in relation to what they do in the classroom on a daily basis. Like all studies, the present study suffered from some shortcomings. To start with, the time span in this study was not sufficient for learners to concentrate well enough on the listening comprehension instruction by regarding title familiarity to help them transfer processed information responding the questions. Additionally, the study didn't take the various ages of learners into account, and learners with a limited age range took part in this study.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (2000). *Listening*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Basavand, F., & Sadeghi, B. (2014). The impact of cultural knowledge on listening comprehension, *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 5(4), 103-111.
- Bonk, W. J. (2000). Second language lexical knowledge and listening comprehension, *International Journal of Listening Comprehension*, 14, 14-31.
- Boyle, J. P. (1984). Factors affecting listening comprehension, *ELT Journal*, 38 (1), 34-38.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing Listening*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Cele-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.). Boston. MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Eisenstein, M., & Berkowitz, D. (1981). The effect of phonological variation on adult learner comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 4, 75-80.
- Erten, I.H., & Razi, S. (2009). The effects of cultural familiarity on reading comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 21 (1), 66-77.
- Ervin, B.K. (1992). Does knowledge of culture and instruction using thematic units affect listening comprehension. *Reading Psychology Journal*, 12, 43-61.
- Gebhard, J. (2000). *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language: A Teacher Selfdevelopment and methodology Guide*. United States of America: The University of Michigan Press.
- Genc, B., & Bada, E. (2005). Culture in language learning and teaching. *The Reading Matrix*, 5(1), 73-84.
- Hayati, A. M. (2009). The impact of cultural knowledge on listening comprehension of EFL learners, *Journal of English language teaching*, 2(3), 144-152.

- Hansen, C., & Jensen, C. (1994). Evaluating lecture comprehension. In J. Flowerdew (Ed.), *Academic listening: Research perspectives* (pp. 241- 268). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Higgins, J.M.D. (1995). *Facilitating listening in second language classrooms through the manipulation of temporal variables*, Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury.
- Keshavarz, M. H., & Babai, E. (2001). Incompatibility of schema with input in listening comprehension. *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 27 (1), 57- 83.
- Lawson, K. (2007). *The importance of listening*, Lawson Consulting.
- Long, D. R. (1990). What you don't know can't help you: An exploratory study of background knowledge and second language listening comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 65-80.
- Major, R., Fitzmaurice, S., Bunta, F., & Balsubramian, C. (2005). Testing the effects of regional, ethnic, and international dialects of English on listening comprehension. *Language Learning*, 55, 37-69.
- Morley, J. (1991). Listening comprehension in second/foreign language instruction. In M. Celce-Murcia (Eds.), *Teaching English as a Second Language* (pp. 81-106). Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Mueller, G. A. (1980). Visual contextual cues and listening comprehension: An experiment. *Modern Language Journal*, 64, 335-340.
- Othman, J., & Vanathas, C. (2010). Topic familiarity and its influence on listening comprehension, *Journal of English Teacher*, XXXIV, 19-32.
- Rost, M. (2002). *Teaching and researching listening*. London, UK: Longman.
- Sadeghi, F., & Zare, S. (2006). Is listening comprehension influenced by the background of the learners? A case study of Iranian EFL learners, *International Journal of scientific & Engineering Research*, 3(10), 1-10.
- Salahshuri, S. (2011). The role of background knowledge in foreign language listening comprehension, *Theory and practice in language studies*, 1(10), 1446-1451.
- Schmidt, R. W. (1990). The Role of Consciousness in Second Language Learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 129-157.
- Schmidt-Rinehart, B. (1994). The Effects of Topic Familiarity on Second Language Listening Comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78 (2), 179-198
- Stevens, K.C. (1982). Can we improve reading by teaching background information? *Journal of Reading*, January, 326-329.
- Tehrani, A. R., & Dastjerdi, H. V. (2012). The pedagogical impact of discourse markers in the lecture
- Tauroza, S., & Luk, J. (1997). Accent and second language listening comprehension. *RELJ Journal*, 28, 54-71.
- Tsou, W. (2005). The effects of cultural instruction on foreign language learning. *RELJ Journal*, 36(1), 39-57.
- Tsui, A.B.M., & Fullilove, J. (1998). Bottom-up or top-down processing as a discriminator of L2 listening performance, *Applied Linguistics*, 19(4), 387-409.
- Wolvin, A., & Coakley, C. G. (1996). *Listening* (5th ed), Boston: McGraw-Hill.

A BRIDGE IS NOT A HOME: GENDER-BASED INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION IN SUZAN-LORI PARKS'S *IN THE BLOOD*

Prof. Hana Khalief Ghani (Ph.D)

Department of Translation, College of Arts, Al-Mustansiriyah University
h.horizons2013@gmail.com (Corresponding Author)

Istbriq Talib Joodi

English Department, College of Education for Women, Baghdad University

ABSTRACT

*In spite of the big strides in the field of granting black people in the United States of America their rights since the abolition of slavery, race-and gender-based discriminatory practices are still prevalent. The paper aims at exploring the gender-based discrimination against a homeless black mother who is oppressed and exploited by the very institutions that are originally established to help her. It is divided into three sections. Section one deals with the questions of race and gender in contemporary America. Section two deals with the various forms of gender-based discrimination in Suzan-Lori Parks's *In the Blood* while section three states the main conclusions of the study. It is concluded that unlike black men, black women are oppressed not only because of their race and class, but also because of their gender. Also, Parks wants to emphasize that unlike in the past, forms of discrimination in contemporary America are less clear and direct.*

KEYWORDS: Parks, racial discrimination, gender, *In the Blood*.

SUZAN-LORI PARKS: THE QUESTION OF RACE AND GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA

'I dont think the world likes women much'
(Suzan-Lori Parks,4-68)

Suzan-Lori Parks (1963-) was twenty one years old when she began writing for the theater. Her first two attempts of writing, *The Sinner Place* (1984) and *Betting on the Dust Commander* (1987) failed, but the third play she wrote, *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom* (1989), won the Obie Award for best new off-Broadway play, followed by another Obie Award for *Venus* in 1996. This means that Parks "comes to the [American] stage when the discourse on race appears most vulnerable to change"(Goto,2007.p.107). Historically speaking, Civil Rights Movement in the United States of America has made big strides from its inception in the late 1950s until the mid-1980s in its fight for equality. However, "Does that mean racism no longer exists?" asks Goto in his thought provoking article "Digging Out of the Pigeonhole: African-American Representation in the Plays of Suzan-Lori Parks." The answer to this question, Parks

seems to concur with Goto, is 'absolutely not.' For both of them, this only means that Black people

must look harder and longer into [their] language, history, and movements to extract that mold of racism harming [America's] democratic potential. The extraction requires new tools – new ways of seeing, acting, and speaking that may seem unconventional, if not outright strange.(Ibid)

This is what Parks is bent on doing in her plays. Using the stage as her medium, Parks creates new ways for African-Americans to express and represent an identity that goes beyond the idea of essential blackness and oppression. This new kind of representation challenges the oversimplified discourse on difference, which critics and audiences seem to expect and demand from African-American playwrights. In fact, Parks often disagrees with the critics who repeatedly read her African-American characters as unilaterally oppressed. This kind of reading, in Parks's viewpoint, is outrageously simplified and conventional. Meticulously surveying the representation of the black people on the American stage, Parks thoughtfully wonders: "Can a Black person be onstage and be other than oppressed? For the Black writer, are there Dramas other than race dramas? Does Black life consist of issues other than race issues?"(Parks, 1995, p.21). In the light of these questions, it is crystal clear that race and racial oppression constitute the common denominator in the historical as well as the daily experience of the black people. In other words, race is inescapable and inevitable factor in the formation of the black experience.

This experience acquires new dimensions when race joins forces with gender in the case of black women. In her seminal essay, "Elements of Style" (2008,p.8), Parks explains "I am an African American Woman-this is the form I take, my content predicates this form, and this form is inseparable from my content. No way could I be me otherwise." This sheds light on the centrality of these two elements, i.e., being black and woman to Parks's theatrical enterprise. These two elements, Parks contends, contribute to doubly 'otherized', 'inferiorized' and 'marginalized' the black women not only within the white-dominated society, but also within black communities. This makes the use of a black feminist approach that "embodies the realization that the politics of sex as well as the politics of race and class are crucially interlocking factors in the works" of Parks an "absolute necessity" if a full understanding of her plays is to be achieved (Lewis, 2012, p.119).

Parks's plays, in fact, reveal a deep interest in discussing the roles gender and race play in a black woman's life. In relation to this, Dixon(2001, p.219) points out Parks's tendency to "treat her characters' racegender, like other characteristics, as emblematic." Her main concern is not the discussion of racegender-based ideas per se. Rather; she is more interested in showing the role these elements play in deepening the already existing gap(s) between the Afro-American women and the representatives of the dominant white society.

At the center of this racegender discourse in relation to the representation of black women is the question of the status of the female body which occupies a central place in "so many [contemporary] social and political controversies"(Sanchez-Palencia & Cuder, 2012, 142-143). Sanchez-Palencia and Cuder remark the complexities involved in the representation of women's

bodies on stage mainly because they constitute a "part of a complicated system of patriarchal referents"(Ibid) that tend to either objectify or mystify them.

Parks usually criticizes the stereotypical representations of the female body in her plays. However, in none this criticism is as clear and strong as in *Venus* (1996) which "can be regarded as the master narrative through which black women continue to be constructed"(Lewis, Looking Forward, 2012, p.161). Parks dramatizes the sensational story of Saartjie Baartman, *The Venus Hottentot*, a 19th century South African woman whose aberrant anatomy (the abnormal protuberance of her buttocks and genitalia scientifically termed as *steatopygia*) made her the object of sexualized glory, ethnographic documentation, imperialist practices and market commodification as she was exhibited naked in the freak shows of London and Paris inspiring both horror and fascination(Sanchez-Palencia & Cuder, 2012,p.143).

Parks, however, is not interested in digging into the history of Baartman's journey from the colonized and exoticized Africa to the colonizing Europe. Rather, she tends in *Venus* to focus on her own contemporary culture "evidencing that the former modes of physical and psychic colonization persist under different forms"(Ibid, 144). Keizer illustrates this phenomenon with instances of the hyper-exploitation of black female bodies in American consumer culture, like the proliferation of buttock-enhancing jeans, pants and surgery, or the fascination with the backsides of Beyoncé, J.Lo, Rihanna and other black divas, which bespeak a utilization of black body stereotypes to signify a hot, wild, appealing female sexuality. This means that the image of the black woman is equated to her sexual parts and is exploited within popular culture(Qtd in Ibid, pp.143-144). This image, more often than not, conforms to "a racialized and gendered system of representation and signification"(Martin, 2014, p.54).

In another essay entitled "An Equation for Black People Onstage,"(1995) Parks discusses the nature of the Black-White relationship on the American stage. She laments that "The bulk of relationships Black people are engaged in onstage is the relationship between the black and the White Other." Since the "use of the White in the dramatic equation is ...too often seen as the only way of exploring ... Blackness," this equation reduces Blackness, Parks contends, "to merely a state of 'non-whiteness'." This means that the lives of black people consist of nothing save "a series of reactions and responses to the White ruling class"(p.19) Parks firmly rejects these widely spread negative attitudes and misconceptions about the black and suggestively talks about the existence of "many ways of defining Blackness and ...of presenting Blackness onstage"(Ibid).

In her plays, Parks makes serious attempts at "construct[ing] a new African-American identity in which individuals are no longer solely defined as victims of oppression and racism, instead they are portrayed as real humans with their own virtues and vices"(Vanmarsnille,2009,pp.7-8). To construct this new African-American identity, Parks employs a number of dramatic strategies. The first strategy is to probe beneath the apparently glittering crust of the history of the United States of America. In his article, "Digging the Fo'-fathers: Suzan- Lori Parks's Histories," Thompson (2007,167) confirms that the phrase "Digging the Fo'- fathers "gets "at the primary activity of Parks's plays." He further adds that "the resurrection and remembering of histories...are both the form and content of Parks's operating theatre"(Ibid.). The aim of writing

these 'histories' is not to present the life of stately or heroic figures, but to "locate the ancestral burial ground, dig for bones, find the bones, hear the bones sing, write it down"(Parks qtd in Geis, 2008,19). This process of digging and excavating the past aims at filling the empty 'spaces,' 'holes' and 'absences' of history as Parks calls them (Qtd in Thompson, 2007, p.167) In looking for these 'absences', Parks is intent on discussing some of the contemporary gendered and racial discourses relevant to the treatment of Afro-American women.

The second strategy Parks uses is related to the language. In fact, Parks distinguishes herself from her contemporaries when she invents her own approach to using language and pauses, which becomes a signature quality to her work. She becomes well known for her formula of 'rep and rev' repetition and revision. Do it again; do it differently. This term is first coined by Gates, he calls it "repetition and revision, or repetition with a signal difference" which Parks then further paces down to 'rep and rev'(1988, p.xxiv).

In her play *In the Blood*, Parks uses language with different denotations and connotations for most characters. Characters that are poorly educated use less complex words and syntax. While the more educated characters use a more formal language. In his article *In the Blood*, Krasner (2000, pp.565-566) reports that Hester uses "language symbolizing her life beneath, below, and beyond the gaze of society." In the same vein, Berkman comments on the special use of language in the play. He points out that

Throughout *In the Blood*, four-letter 'S' words, each with sharp emotional impact, proliferate like babies: Soda and slut fast link to slow, to sack, soup, shoe, soap, sell and – most devastating of all, yet with Hester able to spot only the 'A' in it – spay. (2007, p.63)

Parks also uses a certain type of punctuation such as altering the ordinary punctuation with using intervals of silence which she refers to as "dramatic pause" by repeating the characters' names for emphasis. She is not telling her tales through words only but with sounds. As a result of using such technique of doubling characters, naming her characters with words that bear meanings of their traits, and uses a series of soliloquy-like "confessions", the play has reaped tremendous success. Parks's writings are always imbued with posing and answering questions regarding race and gender problems.

As the following section will reveal, *In The Blood* tackles many themes relevant to the status of Afro-American women in contemporary America like gender discrimination, society's oppression, violence, and sexual harassment. In a satirical style, Parks explains how society blames and punishes those who are mainly created by the neglect of its own institutions and organizations.

Gender-based Institutional Discrimination in Parks's In The Blood

In 1999, the year in which *In the Blood* premiered at the Joseph Papp Public Theatre's New York Shakespeare Festival, the United States Census Bureau reported that 39% of single black mothers (nearly 1.5 million families) were living below the federally established poverty line. The Bureau also reported that while the poverty rate for African Americans as a group dropped to a record low that year, "the poverty rate for Blacks in 1999 [23.6%] was still about three times

the poverty rate for White non-Hispanics (7.7 percent)"(Qtd in Larson, 2008, p.91). Besides being poverty-stricken, Hester la Negritta, the protagonist of the play, is a homeless mother of five fatherless children. In a 1987 national study, Martha Burt found that 9 percent of the homeless people were single women, and another 9 percent were women accompanied by their children. The single black women form 47 percent of the total number of homeless women (Glasser & Bridgman,1999,p.20). Glasser believes that the number of homeless single black women might be greater because unlike homeless men "a characteristic survival strategy of homeless women [in general] is to keep hidden from view"(Qtd in Ibid) So, black women suffer invisibility not only in the theatre, but also in many public spheres. No doubt, living on the streets or under the bridges, as in the case of Hester, involves great dangers for the homeless women for "once on the streets they are... at great risk of violence"(Ibid., p.57) Those women might seek help and protection from individuals, institutions and governmental bodies whose duty is to help them and alleviate their suffering. Unfortunately, these same institutions sometimes become an essential factor in exploiting, harassing, and aggravating the already critical living conditions of those women. Hester is an example of a homeless black woman who is abused, brow beaten and oppressed by the very persons who are supposed to redress her problems.

To explore the impact of poverty and homelessness and their implications for the various systems at work in contemporary America, Parks blends the bleak story of Hester with Nathaniel Hawthorne's dark romance *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), in her first "Red Letter Play," *In the Blood*(For more information about Parks's other Red Letter Play, *Fucking A*, see Jefferson, 1999).

In the Blood tells the story of Hester and her five children—all of whom are doubled with an adult character in the play. Each of these adult characters, male and female, confesses to a sexual fascination for Hester as well as to sexually exploiting her in some ways. The Doctor (the middle son, Trouble) and the welfare lady (aka "Welfare" and the oldest daughter Bully) are also trying to sterilize Hester, while her white "friend" Amiga Gringa (the youngest daughter, Beauty) steals from her. Reverend D (the youngest son, Baby), her most recent lover, refuses to acknowledge her out of fear that it will damage his ministry and his status in the community, and her first lover Chili (doubled with the oldest son Jabber) finally returns after years of absence only to reject Hester when he discovers the children she conceived with others during their separation. Throughout the play, Hester's health deteriorates, and she eventually has visions of Armageddon. Her circumstances, coupled with the trauma of hearing Jabber call her a "slut," drive her to beat Jabber to death, and she uses the blood of her murdered son to write an "A"—scarlet by nature—on the ground next to his body (Larson,2008, p.91).

As she did in *Venus* (1996), Parks presents us with a woman "who has been famously romanticized and mystified" and asks us to "consider her again through the lens of our cruel and continuing histories of oppression"(Geis, 2004, p.140). Yet, Parks's substantial revision of Hester Prynne and *The Scarlet Letter* also shows that time, and thus history, have only become more malignant for America's present-day Hesters, especially if they are black and poor. Indeed, time and history have only complicated Hester's plight. New oppressions compound the old and

ultimately leave Hester without hope or escape and make her like Hawthorne's Hester a social outcast(Ibid).

In addition to that, Hester La Negrita is marked by the letter 'A'. It is the only letter she knows of the English alphabet. However, the mark is also symbolic; it speaks to Hester's social and possibly political illiteracy, her lack of critical knowledge which helps to keep her in her position at the periphery of society. This can be seen in the ways in which the various people and institutions in her life exploit and oppress her. In this way Parks's play considers the social and cultural, and economic environment and the various influences which shape Hester's lived experiences (Keene, 2012,p.10).

Similar to Greek classic tragedy, Parks begins her play with prologue and ends it with epilogue ; the actors become a kind of chorus that circles Hester like vultures. In the prologue, Parks sets the tone for the play that is to follow, a severe assault on the political, medical, capitalistic, and religious systems that define the American ideal. Besides all the action of the play occurs out-of-doors, because Hester is never allowed inside literally or symbolically, and that indicates the unity of place. Parks designates the place for the play as " Here" and the time as "Now", which refers to the poverty of the whole atmosphere of Hester's life. Significantly Hester's home is under a bridge, a place that alienates her from civilized society.

Hester is victimized by her race, gender, her naïveté, intense longing to be a good mother, and economic status. Her allegedly best friend, Amiga Gringa, is friendly only as long as Hester has something for her to take. The medical profession wants only to stop her from procreating, even as it takes advantage of her and her dire conditions. The government, through the Welfare Lady, has little time for Hester and offers her work for which she is unprepared. Formalized religion represents for her only another form of oppression and subjugation. Her true love and the father of her eldest son, Jabber, cannot abide the burden that loving her brings(Williams, 2009, 799).

As a result, Hester falls outside the realm of the accepted social parameters. The guidelines which police and protect the lives of those who fit into the dictates of the social order, do not apply to her . Consequently, women, similar to Hester, whose livelihood is dependent upon assistance from the government, often, are monitored around issues which most people would consider personal, and thus not subject to public ridicule. These women are scrutinized harshly around practices deemed as overly sexual or irresponsible; practices, which according to society, are a burden to their pockets and a detriment to the social morale(Keene, 2012, p.52). In the Prologue to the play, this message is conveyed by words spewed from the collective voices of the people who represent society at large and are named by Parks as ALL: "SHE KNOWS SHES A NO COUNT/SHIFTLESS/HOPELESS/BAD NEWS/BURDEN TO SOCIETY...WOMAN GOT 5 BASTARDS/AND NOT A PENNY TO HER NAME/SOMETHINGS GOTTA BE DONE TO STOP THIS SORT OF THING"(Parks, 2000,p.31) These informative statements said by All explain, in clear-cut terms to what extent Hester is cornered and oppressed by people around her.

Society not only alienates Hester, but also rudely invades and intrudes in whatever small personal spaces she owns. On her "practice place" the word "SLUT" is scribbled by some bad boys; an action that makes the seed of anger against society gradually grows inside Hester, although she doesn't exactly know the meaning of the word but she prefers her "place clean". Jabber, her eldest son, tries to remove this word. Although he teaches his mother how to read and write, she is very slow. She asks him about the meaning of the word because the letters of the word 'Slut' are "mysterious" to her. The only letter she knows is "A". Jabber refuses to read the insulting word in order not to hurt his mother's feelings. Hester with bitterness predicts the bad meaning of this word but she knows that she is obliged to live with it:

HESTER: We know who writ it up there. It was them bad boys writing on my home. And in my practice place. Do they write on they own homes? I dont think so. They come under the bridge and write things they dont write nowhere else. A mean ugly word, I'll bet. A word to hurt our feelings. And because we aint lucky we gotta live with it.(1, 35)

Thus in this cruel society that only perceives Hester as "SLUT," "HUSSY", and a "BURDEN TO SOCIETY", and shows no mercy or sympathy for her, Hester struggles to find help for herself and for her five children by any means available. She is a model for motherhood. She starves herself so her children can eat, she goes without sleep in her attempt to provide them with their needs. She calls them "treasures" and "joys" that give meaning to her life. She helps her Children to enjoy their meals by telling them that the soup has everything they love in it. Also she helps them to sleep by telling them stories. This is the 'black mother figure' who is always presented historically in literature as someone who, "at all costs, nurtures, protects, self-sacrifices" and cares for her children. In contrast to the mainstream culture that stigmatizes Afro-American woman as mindless, crude and expendable (Kolin, 2010, p.11).

Since the contents of *In the Blood* hinge upon matters that affect the social realities of women, specifically, Afro-American women: reproductive rights, hyper-sexuality, gender roles, and single motherhood which are shaped by race, class and gender among other things (Keene,2012, p.56), Parks chooses to discuss these issues through a series of dramatic confrontations between Hester and the representatives of the American society. Each of those representatives makes a confession that exposes the hypocrisy and duplicity of his declared claims and declarations.

Hester's first confrontation with the System that oppresses her takes place in her meeting with Amiga Gringa who is supposed to be her 'white' friend. Amiga claims to share in Hester's oppression, but actually she participates in it. She always steals from Hester every chance she gets. She steals food and money from poor Hester. When Hester gives her a watch and asks her to sell it, she cheats her and never gives her all the money back. Amiga wants Hester to make use of her reproductive ability. She dishonestly wants to make Hester sell her own babies in return for money. In this way, she contributes to commodifying and dehumanizing the motherhood experience. The 'womb' as the most essential part in the woman's reproductive system is thus turned into a factory machine subject to the economic principle of supply and demand.

Larson (2008, p.97) argues that Parks introduces Amiga to "reinforce the growing modern separation between black and white women." Amiga's whiteness, Larson adds, allows her the privilege to reject unjust labor demands. Having sold her white children, Amiga does not have the stigma of being a begging unwed mother like Hester, who admits: "no one gonna give money to me with me carrying Baby around"(1-46) As such, Amiga will either find legitimate work with a living wage or will make more money from her illegal/illicit activities than Hester, allowing for at least the possibility that Amiga's poverty is not permanent or systematic (Ibid).

In her confession ,Gringa states that she is better than Hester, thanks to her "white womb" that makes her more valuable. People desire her white children, she can sell them without feeling guilty. On the contrary, Hester's black womb lacks value and proves itself a threat to society. Gringa's main concern is to get the cash by selling "the fruit of [her]white womb"(5, 77). Moreover, she criticizes Hester for accepting the sewing job offered by the Welfare lady, which she considers beneath her. She calls it "chump work" that leads to nothing and enslaves the worker. Instead of helping Hester, Gringa makes things harder and dimmer for her.

As a result of poor nutrition, poverty, and the weight of societal ridicule, Hester feels ill. She has a stomach ache and she ought to see a doctor. The doctor who is supposed to hold a human job, should take care of his patients, and looks after them, plays a very different role with Hester. He joins forces with Gringa in treating Hester in an inhuman manner by examining her in the street , like a mechanic, and looking up into "her privates". The Doctor claims that the "Higher Up" – the federal Medicare system- is pressuring him to 'spay' her to end her fertility. The Doctor wants to remove her womanly parts in order to prevent her from begetting more children. He exploits Hester sexually and manipulates her body to satisfy his desires. In so doing, he contributes to subverting her womanhood, motherhood, and humanism just to keep his own position high.

This scenario mimics the historical truth of the sterilization of Afro- American women. Jennifer Nelson notes that while white middle class feminists were fighting for the right to abortion, Afro-American women and women of color were fighting for reproductive freedom, "the freedom to have as well as not to have children"(Qtd in Keene, 2012,p.58). Feminist organizations such as the Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse (CARASA) argue "that a woman's income and economic assets determined [her] ability to control [her] reproduction in a capitalist society"(Ibid). Consequently, because women of color are disproportionately low income or working class and because women are the bearers of children, the intersections of race, class and gender are elements which work together to repress them.

Through The Doctor's confession, Parks manages to criticize the stereotypical images of black female "bodies as possessions, as objects of desire, and as bloody biological battlefields"(Thompson,2007,p.181). In his confession, the Doctor narrates his sexual encounter with Hester. However, he blames not himself but Hester who, he claims, tries to seduce him and not the other way around. He perceives himself a victim to her seduction because "She gave herself to me in a way that I had never experienced, even with women I've paid,...What could I do? I couldn't help it" (2, 58-59) .Combined with Reverend D's description of illegitimate babies who are born out of wedlock as "The ultimate disaster of modern times,"(3-60) these lines

contain a clear reference to the prevalence of prostitution in modern American society. The play itself bears witness to the prevalence of this problem as most of the characters engage in various forms of illicit, unlawful and extramarital relationships.

In a gender-stratified society, in which sex, sexuality and the body are socially constructed, J. Lowman notes: "prostitution represents the pole of a system of sexual stratification and must be resisted as the quintessential form of men's exploitation of women... Prostitution is the raw end [sic] of patriarchy"(Qtd in Hatty, 2014, p.71). According to V. Jenness, prostitutes are often viewed as "social misfits, sexual slaves, victims of pimps and drug addiction, and tools of organized crime". Moreover, harassment, abuse and violence are integral to prostitution. In fact, the evidence indicates that prostitute women are subjected to frequent acts of verbal abuse and physical violence, including sexual assault, and are stigmatised as 'whores' or 'hookers'(See *ibid*, 72-75).

In accordance with this, N. J. Davis holds the view that prostitution is a type of gender victimisation or a paradigmatic case of sexism according to Hatty. Carole Pateman maintains that prostitution is inherent in the 'sexual contract' that exists in patriarchal society. In prostitution, men buy the sexual body of the woman, a far more significant purchase than that which occurs between employer and employee in capitalist society (*Ibid.*, p.73).

Research conducted on women who work as prostitutes indicates that poverty plays a major role in drawing women into prostitution. The structural inequalities associated with a highly stratified labor market, in which women earn only a fraction of men's wages, render prostitution an attractive alternative to impoverishment. However, it is possible to argue that women who are disadvantaged through their membership of marginal groups or disadvantaged backgrounds are candidates for prostitution (See *Ibid*).

Unquestionably, the various points raised in the above argument concerning prostitution are very well reflected in the case of Hester. Because of the vicious cycles of poverty, ignorance, and discrimination, Hester is compelled to offer sexual services to male partners who exploit her. She is stigmatized as a 'slut' and 'hussy' and is subject to various forms of verbal abuse and sexual harassment. Like many other poor and disempowered black women, Hester prostitutes herself to earn living. Hester's sexuality, indeed, seems to be her only significant source of earning income, but unfortunately, theater critic Sarah Wilkinson explains, her "sexual acts are paradoxically both Hester's saving grace and her downfall, her only way to acquire money and the reason why she has none"(Qtd in Larson,2008,p.105). Moreover, Hester sexual activities, Keene (2012,p.63) observes, help only to reinforce the stereotypical image of Afro-American women as hyper-sexualized and sensual.

Hester's next confrontation comes through the political system in the form of the Welfare Lady, who, like all others before her, views Hester as a resource, taking advantage of her dire situation to find profit. Welfare does, however, offer Hester a way to secure financial assistance asking her to name the deadbeat fathers of her treasures, giving the government an opportunity to access their salaries and gain income for both herself and her children. Hester is unwilling to take this

step, mainly because she does not wish to bring harm to Chilli, her soul mate, her first and only love, who is the father of her eldest child, Jabber.

Like the Doctor who represents the medical system that takes much and gives less to Hester, the Welfare Lady, who represents the Welfare system in society does the same. Although the Welfare Lady maintains that "I walk the line between us and them between our kind and their kind," (4,69) she and her husband exploit Hester and use her as "little puppet" for their pleasure. As a matter of fact, the Welfare Lady cares for Hester just because it is her job to care: "I care because it is my job to care. I am paid to stretch out these hands, Hester. Stretch out these hands. To you"(4,65).

The problem with the Welfare Lady is that she is only interested in showing off, even when she offers Hester the sewing job; she gives her the fabric without teaching her how to sew it. She does it not for the sake of offering a real honest help, but to do her job only. She never lets Hester speak; she just obliges her to do the work:

WELFARE: Needles, thread and the pattern, in this bag. Take the cloth. Sew it. If you do a good job therell be more work. Have it sewn by tomorrow morning, yll get a bonus.(4, 68)

Moreover the Welfare Lady blames Hester for running from the shelter she argues:

We at Welfare are at the end of our rope with you, Hester. We put you in a job and you quit. We put you in a shelter and you walk. We put you in school and you drop out ...We build bridges you burn them. We sew safety nets, harder, good strong safety nets and you slip through the weave.(4,64)

But Hester claims that she has been harassed by all people there. Instead of helping her and her children the social helping agenesis are interfering in her life through their representative who systematically exploits her. She reports "The shelter hassles me. Always prying in my business. Stealing my shit. Touching my kids"(4,65).

As a result , Hester loses trust in such deceptive system that claims deep concern for those who are in need, but in fact it does not. In fact, instead of encouraging Hester and her children to be good members of society, the Welfare Lady blames them for being poor people and she scorns them , in her confession, she criticizes Hester and claims such type of woman inferior to her because of the sins she commits.

The Welfare Lady's confession utilizes language that invokes historical discourses around race and racism. When she states 'I walk the line,' W.E.B. Du Bois's claim of the problem of the color line for the twentieth century emerges (Qtd in Keene, 2012, p.63). The reference to 'our kind' and 'their kind' mimics the dialogue of racial divisions. This difference in kind, in spite of The Welfare Lady herself being a black woman is sufficient in expressing racial ideas of separation. It also speaks to the divisions which can exist within racial groups, as influenced by social

ideologies and class distinctions. This can be seen in the dissimilarities that The Welfare Lady notes, between herself and Hester:

It was my first threesome
And it wont happen again.
I should emphasize that
She is a low-class person.
What I mean by that is that we have absolutely nothing uncommon.
As her caseworker I realize that maintenance of the system depends on a well-
drawn boundary line
and all parties respecting that boundary.
And I am, after all,
I am a married woman. (4-71)

The Welfare Lady's treatment of Hester, the welfare mother, translates the public attitudes towards these mothers and helps to perpetuate the stereotypical images of women on welfare "lazy, hyper-sexual, irresponsible and social leeches." Consequently, it is quite natural, David Zucchino argues in "Myth of the Welfare Queen: A Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalist's Portrait of Women on the Line", that women on welfare (particularly black women) become "a class of women ... despised by mainstream America"(Ibid,p.48).

The religious institution that is represented by Reverend D. also participates in Hester's oppression. He makes adultery with her and is a father to her newly-born Baby, but he displaces his shame onto her and expresses his hatred for what she has done. In turn, Hester prepares a strategy to secure him; she never gives his name to the Welfare Lady who insists on knowing the baby's father's name although she has already given names of her other four children's fathers.

Hester takes Amiga's advice to take Baby's picture and go to his father to ask help. Hester goes to Reverend D. who is "On his soap-box preaching to no one in particular "(3,59), she covers her face by the baby's photo, he sees her but doesn't recognize her:

REVEREND D.: Do you know the father?
HESTER: Yes.
REVEREND D.: You must go to him and say "Mister, here is your child!"
HESTER: Mister here is your child!
REVEREND D.: "You are wrong to deny what God has made!"
HESTER: You are wrong to deny what God has, made!
REVEREND D.: "He has nothing but love for you and reaches out his hands every
day crying wheres daddy?"
HESTER: Wheres daddy?
REVEREND D.: "Wont you answer those cries?"
HESTER: Wont you answer those cries? (3,60)

Reverend D. seems to make his own trap. As he speaks, Hester repeats all his words back to him. Hester who owns all his tapes and armed by his immediate words "Go, to him. Plead with him. Show him this sweet face and yours. He cannot deny you "lowers the picture of her baby to show him her face, only to have all words flee. When the words resume, the Reverend denies Hester and claims that he has never seen her before: "Me, someone you've never even met", he rushes to call a taxi for her, he stays explosive with hollow promises of help:

HESTER: He's talking now. Not much but some. He's a good boy.

REVEREND D.: I am going to send one of my people over to your home tomorrow. They're marvelous, the people who work with me. They'll put you in touch with all sorts of agencies that can help you. Get some food in that stomach of yours. Get you some sleep. (3,61-62)

By using such confrontational dialogue between Hester and Reverend D., Parks clearly presents a poignant satire directed at the doubled-faced representatives of religion as an institution. She satirizes their hypocrisy and meanness. Reverend D. says something but does another. In his preaching he gives a powerful speech about how to help those who are in need. But in reality, he does nothing to improve Hester's life. In his confession, he bares himself to the audience:

In all my days in the gutter I never hurt anyone.
I never held hate for anyone.
And now the hate I have for her
and her hunger
and the hate I have for her hunger.
God pulled me up.
Now God, though her, wants to drag me down
and sit me at the table
at the head of the table of her fatherless house.(6, 85)

Reverend D. joins forces with the other influential figures in Hester's life; i.e., the Doctor, Amiga Gringa, and the Welfare Lady, to marginalize, oppress and forsake Hester and her children. Thus, he is as liable as them in aggravating her plight that leads to her tragic fate. Reverend D's treatment of Hester does not only mark the systems of race, class or gender as inherent issues, his character functions more as an institution or a system, similar to Capitalism, which promises a reward, but often fails to deliver (Keene,2012,p.64).

Hester's long journey of suffering and desperation culminates in the fatal blow she receives from Chilli, Jabber's father. In a form of nostalgic feeling, he returns to Hester after 13 years of absence. He justifies his own irresponsibility towards Hester and his son in his confession "We was Young" by claiming:

We was young
and we didn't think
we didn't think that nothing we could do would hurt us

nothing we did would come back to haunt us

.....

we were Death Defying

we were Hot Lunatics

careless as all get out (7-98)

This points at the dangers involved in the practice of unguarded sex. Chilli's irresponsible decision to leave Hester to pursue his life elsewhere sheds light on the inequality in man-woman sexual relation as she is to bear the consequences of rearing socially unacceptable fruit of this relation; i.e., illegitimate children and of being stigmatized as 'unmarried' and 'single welfare mother.'

Through Hester's contact with Chilli, the questions of gender roles and gendered stratification of society are vividly presented and intensely debated. Chilli maintains the same traditional and patriarchal position that views women as secondary and subordinate to men and confines them to the private sphere of housekeeping and child rearing. He is ready to return to her on condition that he

would still retain [his] rights to [his] manhood... I would rule the roost. I would call the shots. The whole roost and every single shot. I've proven myself as a success. You've not done that. It only makes sense that I would be in charge. (7-95)

At this point in the play Chilli does not know that Hester has four other children. When he finds out, the circumstances of Hester's new engagement instantly switches. Chilli recoils from his marriage proposal and tells Hester that they cannot be together. He takes back his wedding gifts: the ring, veil, and dress and leaves. The image of a single mother with five children, four of which are not his own is a deterrent for Chilli and his dream of marriage; Hester herself understands how this could be a barrier, as exemplified by her reaction to Chilli's question of who are the other four children. Hester's response is "*the neighbors kids*" (Italics mine) (7-96). Though only a momentary denial of her children, it exemplifies the disparaging connotations associated with an unmarried woman with multiple children. The notion of having too many children has had a negative impact on Hester's life. However, not necessarily due to her condition, but more so, by what the people around her perceive that to mean. The men in Hester's life, past and present, are as culpable for the situation in which Hester finds herself as she is (Keene, 2012, p.57).

Hester's desperation and hopelessness make her see a vision, which personifies a bad omen. The vision as she describes it is like an eclipse: "It was a big dark thing. Blocking the sun out. Like the hand of fate. The hand of fate with its five fingers coming down on me" (6,82). Toward the end of the play this vision becomes true.

In her last confrontation with the Reverend D., he calls Hester "slut" and threatens to crush her under foot. By doing so Reverend D. shows himself as a priest without any religious ethics. Jabber who wakes up, overhears Reverend D. and recalls that this label –slut– was written in his

mother's practice place. He asks his mother to define the appellation for him, but she refuses, he says that he has lied to her when he pretended that he could not know how to read that word at that time. But in fact he knows how to read it and knows what it means as well. Jabber repeats this word one time too many. Hester, in a desperate effort to refuse this identification, takes up the club Trouble brought earlier in the play and brutally beats her son to death:

HESTER /JABBER /HESTER/ JABBER

She quickly raises her club and hits him once. Brutally. He cries out and falls down dead. His cry wakes Bully, Trouble and Beauty. They look on. Hester beats Jabber's body again and again and again. Trouble and Bully back away. Beauty stands there watching. Jabber is dead and bloody. Hester looks up from her deed to see Beauty who runs off. Hester stands there alone. Wet with her sons blood. Grief stricken, she cradles his body. Her hands wet with blood, she writes an A on the ground.(8,103-104)

With her son's blood, Hester shaping her last 'A'. Her farewell to her son is a sorrowful boast: "Looks good, Jabber, don't it? Dont it, huh?" Schafer (2001, p.193)maintains "It is Hester final attempt to write her own story and claim her own identity rather than accept that offered by a society that will condemn her."

Hester can do nothing to stand against her fate represented symbolically by the hand that blocks out the sun with its five fingers. In the last confession, Hester focuses not on the killing but on what she has done. She calls her children "mistakes" rather than "treasures". She states that she should have had "a whole army full" of those "Bad mannered Bad mouthed Bad Bad Bastards!" (8-106)

In the final scene of the play which Parks calls 'The Prison Door', the same title of the opening scene in Hawthorn's *Scarlet Letter*, the chorus appears. They frame Hester's tragic downfall. All her accusers close in on her, blaming her for her lack of education, for her sexuality, for her lack of husband, and her poverty. She is accused of failing to get further than the first letter of the alphabet, and forced sterilization awaits her to put an end to her mistakes. The choice of the scene's title is very suggestive and apt as Hester is trapped and imprisoned in various forms of psychological and emotional deprivation, social alienation, and financial insecurity.

Parks manages to present her protagonist as a victim of society that seeks to exploit the black female body. She explains through her protagonist how systemic racism , ongoing racial stereotypes, mapped across the black female body ; and societal complicity create the unfortunate life of her protagonist. Harry J. Elam Jr. suggests that Hester La Negrita is a victim , but also tragically complicit in her own oppression. He argues: "Hester's tale offers a poignant, contradictory conjunction of suffering and survival, institutional neglect, and individual abuse"(Qtd in Larson,2008,p.105). Although the hypocritical society institutions are all responsible for what she is suffering from, she herself is to blame, in part for her own catastrophe and her social exclusion.

In an interview, Parks claims, "I just write tragedy and devastation. It's like bleeding, like when they used to bleed folks. The play creates a wound that is actually the first stage in the healing process"(Spring Theater,2001). This wound is what Parks hopes to heal by reconfiguring the literary canon. In the apt words of Jefferson(1999,p.2), we will "Leave 'In The Blood' feeling pity and terror . And because it is a work of art, you will leave thrilled, even comforted by its mastery".

CONCLUSION

Parks addresses the audience at the end of the twentieth century. In *In the Blood*, she manages to present an image of a black woman who is brutally victimized by the social system in a society that has no sympathy for those who are socially outcast. Hester La Negrita, the protagonist, is oppressed by Reverend D. and the Welfare Lady, who are Afro- Americans, as well as by the Doctor and Amiga Gringa, who are whites. So the issue is not who is black and who is white, but it is who is responsible for what she suffers from. Till she reaches a convention that " I dont think the world likes women much" (4,68),she believes that all bad things happen to her because of her race and gender which force her to resort to violent acts of destroying herself and her own family. Parks focuses on the important role race and gender play in making large number of young black women illiterate and unemployed; a fact that leads to their marginalization and impoverishment.

This situation makes Hester more like Euripides's *Medea* (431 BCE), killing out of spite and vengeance against a world that has unfairly branded her a slut. They are neglected and maltreated by the same social institutions created to provide care and compassion to the poor.

In The Blood, Parks seems to suggest that whereas seventy years ago acts of discrimination were overt and widespread, persistent racial inequality in employment, housing, and a wide range of other social domains has renewed interest in the possible role of discrimination. In fact, unlike in the pre-Civil Rights era, when racial prejudice and discrimination were overt and widespread, today discrimination is less readily identifiable and clear.

REFERENCES

- Berkman, L.(2007)."Language as Protagonist in *In the Blood*. In K. J. Wetmore. J. & A. Smith-Howard,(Eds.), *Suzan-Lori Parks: A Case book*. New York: Routledge.
- Dixon, K. D. (2001). Uh tiny land mass just outside my vocabulary: Expression of creative nomadism and contemporary African American playwrights. In H. Elam Jr. & D. Krasner(Eds.). *African American performance and theatre history: A Critical reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gates, H. L. (1988). *The signifying monkey: A Theory of African- American literary criticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Geis, D. R. (2004). Hawthorne's Hester as a red-lettered black woman: Suzan-Lori Parks's *In the blood and Fucking A*. *American drama and theatre*, 16(2).

- Geis, D. R. (2008). *Introduction: Under the piano and all that jazz: Biography, influences, themes, style*. Retrieved March, 10, 2015 from www.press.umich.edu/pdf/9780472099467-intro.pdf
- Glasser, I., & R. Bridgman. (1999). *Braving the street: The anthropology of homelessness*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Goto, A. J. (2007). Digging out of the pigeonhole: African-American representation in the plays of Suzan-Lori Parks. In K. J. Wetmore. J. & A. Smith-Howard, (Eds.). *Suzan-Lori Parks: A Case book*. New York: Routledge.
- Hatty, S. E. (2014). The desired object: Prostitution in Canada, United States and Australia. New South Wales: Charles Stuart University. Retrieved March, 25, 2015 from www.aic.gov.au/media_library/publications/proceedings/14/hatty.pdf
- Jefferson, M. (1999, 23 November). The Scarlet Letter: Alive and Bitter in the inner city. *New York Times*. Retrieved January, 15, 2015 from <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/23/arts/theater-review-the-scarlet-letter-alive-and-bitter-in-the-inner-city.html?src=pm&pagewanted=1>
- Larson, J. (2008). The revisionary aesthetic of Suzan-Lori Parks: Hear the bones sing, write it down, PhD. diss., University of North Carolina U.P.
- Lewis, S. F. (2012). Everything I know about being femme I learned from Sula or toward a black feminist criticism. *Trans-Scripts* 2.
- Lewis, S. F. (2012). *Looking forward to the past: Black women's sexual agency in 'Neo' cultural productions*. Ph.D. diss., University of Washington.
- Keene, T. (2012). Theory, praxis and transformation: The dramatic writing of Suzan Lori Parks as liberatory critical pedagogy. M.A. thesis, University of Louisville.
- Kolin, P. C. (Ed.). (2010). *Suzan Lori Parks: Essay on the plays and other works*. New York: McFarland & Company.
- Krasner, D. (Summer 2000). In the Blood. *Theater Journal*, 52(4).
- Martin, K. (2014). The aesthetic which is not one: The feminist (un)aesthetic in the works of Caryl Churchill and Suzan Lori-Parks. M.A thesis. University of South Carolina.
- Parks, Suzan-Lori. (1995). An equation for black people onstage. In *The America play and other works*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.
- Parks, Suzan-Lori. (2008). Element of style. Retrieved January 20, 2015 from umassvenus.weebly.com/uploads/1/3/6/6/.../parks_elements_of_style.pdf.
- Parks, Suzan-Lori. (March 2000). In The Blood. *American Theater*. 17(3), 31-109. All subsequent quotation are from this source.
- Sanchez-Palenci, C., & Eva G. C. (2012). She'd make a splendid freak': Female bodies on the American stage. Universidad de Sevilla, Revista de Estudios Norteamericanos, (16) Spain: Seville. Retrieved March 15, 2015 from institucional.us.es/revistas/estudios/16/art_9.pdf.
- Schafer, C. (2001). Staging a new literary history: Suzan Lori Park's Venus, In the Blood, and Fucking A. *Comparative Drama*. 42(2).

Spring theater/A Roundtable talking shop (Which Takes in the World). (2001, 25 February). *New York Times*.2(16).Retrieved January 10, 2015 from www.nytimes.com/.../theater/spring-theater-a-roundtable-talking-shop-w

Thompson, D.(2007). Digging the fo'-fathers: Suzan-Lori Parks's histories. In P. C. Kolin(Ed.).*Contemporary African American women playwrights: A casebook*. University of Southern Mississippi.

Vanmarsnille, L.(2009). A portrait of the remarkable African-American playwright Suzan-Lori Parks: Arriving at a new aesthetics. M.A thesis. Ghent: Ghent University.

Williams,T.(2009). *Masterplots II: African American literature. Rev. Ed.* New Jersey: Salem Press.

THE COMPARATIVE EFFECT OF TASK COMPLEXITY, RECASTS AND RECASTS PLUS TASK COMPLEXITY ON THE ORAL ACCURACY OF EFL LEARNERS

Hamideh Dehghan Nasiri

Islamic Azad University Central Tehran Branch Faculty of Foreign Language
Hamideh.dn@gmail.com

Dr. Behdokht Mall- Amiri

Islamic Azad University Central Tehran Branch Faculty of Foreign Language
bmallamiri@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to comparatively investigate the effect of recast, task complexity and recast plus task complexity on the Iranian advanced English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' Oral accuracy. To that aim, three groups of learners, a total of 90 female EFL learners, were assigned to three experimental groups to receive the treatments each: task complexity, recasts, and task complexity plus recasts. The homogeneity of the three groups of learners in terms of general proficiency as well as their oral accuracy was checked at the outset, and finally the learners were interviewed to compare their oral accuracy with a posttest. The data obtained from TOEFL were analyzed and one way ANOVA was employed to assure homogeneity of learners regarding language proficiency and oral accuracy scores on the pre-test. The research came to the conclusion that both recast and task complexity led to the enhancement of learners' oral accuracy while the combination of recasts and task complexity seems to have contributed to less positive impact. Based on the findings of the present study, the following implications could be arrived at: 1. teachers may decide to employ recasts and task complexity in their classes more than before 2. Teachers may start reflecting and investigating different underlying constructs for the concept of recasts and task complexity in their classroom 3. Material developers may consider the inclusion of task types which foster the use of recasts in the classroom more than before.

KEYWORDS: task complexity, recast, oral accuracy

INTRODUCTION

Researchers (Long, 1985, Dulay, & Burt, 1973) in second language learning and teaching have been searching for the ways for dealing with errors. For example, when the focus is on meaning, the emphasis is placed on fluency rather than accuracy (Long, 1985). Thus, this results in a compromise on accuracy, which may be fossilized in the learner's interlanguage. In the same context, the language classrooms have used corrective feedbacks with the aim of focusing on form and meaning techniques. As Chastain (1998, cited in Gholizade, 2013) States: "Learning requires feedback. Otherwise, the learners have no means of judging the extent and

appropriateness of their learning. Consequently, many studies in second language acquisition have focused on the effect of corrective feedback on the quality of learning". (p. 418). Even today, in spite of the plethora of research that has been conducted on the subject, the question of what constitutes the most effective instructional approach remains controversial. One of the fundamental issues underlying the debate has been and continues to be what should serve as the starting point in determining the content of second language teaching. In line with the argument SLA researchers have shown an increased interest in exploring analytic approaches to syllabus design for the past decade and one type of analytic syllabus employing task as a unit of analysis has received particular attention (Long, 1985; Long & Crookers, 1992; Skehan, 1998; Skehan & Foster, 2001). Meanwhile research suggests that, in order to achieve native-like proficiency, output needs to be supplemented by consistent corrective feedback. According to Doughty (2001): "Implicit strategies of corrective feedback are receiving increasing attention from SLA researchers, and this is due to their possibility of directing learners' peripheral attention to form without diverting their focal attention from meaning"(Doughty, 2001, cited in Leeman, 2003, p.19).

Of all the implicit corrective strategies, such as clarification requests, comprehension check, and repetition seek, recasts seem to hold special promise. Recasts are generally described as the teacher's or more advanced speaker's reformulation of "all or part of a learner's utterance, thus providing relevant morph syntactic information that was obligatory but was either missing or wrongly supplied, in the learner's rendition, while retaining its central meaning"(Long, Inagaki, & Ortega, 1998, p.358). Recasts involve the teacher's reformulation of all or part of the student's utterance, minus the error, as shown in example (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). To recast an error, an interlocutor will repeat the error back to the learner in a corrected form. Recasts are used both by teachers in formal educational settings and by interlocutors in naturalistic language acquisition.

Research to date suggests that recasts can facilitate L2 development, but their efficacy is a function of several internal and external variables one of them being task variables. For example, Robinson (2001) suggests that, "task complexity increases the cognitive demands of tasks"(p.287), and it may influence the efficacy of recasts. According to Robinson (2001, 2003), some tasks, depending on their attentional demands, may be more effective in inducing learners to notice recasts than others. Along the same lines, a study conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1997) is an important research project on corrective feedback, culminating in the identification of seven types of corrective feedback, one of which is recast. In the same context, the following study seeks to find out the effect of recasts, task complexity and task complexity plus recasts on the Iranian EFL learners oral accuracy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

Is there any significant difference between the impact of recast and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy?

Is there any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy?

Is there any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy?

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Iran. A thorough description of the participants, procedure, and instrumentation carried out for this study are presented in this section.

Participants

The participants were 90 female EFL learners at upper-intermediate level who were assigned to three experimental groups. They were studying in Safir language institute. They were homogenized using a TOEFL. Initially 120 students took the test, students standing at one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as the participants. After the administration of the test participants were selected and they were divided into three groups of 30 members.

Instruments

The following instruments were applied in this study:

TOEFL Test

The TOEFL test included reading, structure and speaking sections. It was taken from sources including Baron's TOEFL (10th edition, 2008). There were two sections (reading-50 items, and structure-40 items) on this test which took a total of about ninety minutes to complete. There was also a speaking section which comprised 6 tasks which involve expressing an opinion on a familiar topic. This test was piloted on a group of 10 students having the same level of proficiency as those who took part in the study. The test was applied in order to have a homogenized group at general level of English and also scores achieved at speaking section were analyzed in terms of the participant's oral accuracy prior to treatments.

Course book

The course book which was utilized for the purpose of instruction in this study was "Total English" (by Will Moreton, 2011) comprising 12 units, 3 of which is taught per-term (42 hours). This book consists of the following:

- Extensive speaking, pronunciation and vocabulary sections
- Thorough grammar sections with clear examples and practice
- Comprehensive listening activities with scripts
- Contemporary, engaging reading materials taken from authentic sources
- Writing Banks with the chance to practice different writing styles
- And finally, the Review and Practice pages after each unit bring all the learning activities together.

It was used the institute's routine and was the main course of attention during the whole 21 sessions of the term. There was a focus on the speaking section of this book.

Procedure

In order to meet the criterion of the study the following procedure was followed:

Treatments

Initially, TOEFL was piloted on a 10-member group to make sure it was appropriate for the group in question. After the administration of TOEFL to the subjects of the study out of 120 ninety participants were chosen based on the normal histogram of the TOEFL. That is to say participants with scores lying between one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen for the purposes of the study. The participants were divided to three groups. Then an oral interview test was conducted to assure the homogeneity of the participants regarding oral accuracy. One way ANOVA was employed to probe any significant differences between the means of the groups with regard to oral accuracy. The participants in our three groups started to receive one of the three treatments each. In experimental group I, students received recasts with a special focus on certain lexicon and structures. That is, the participants in this group consistently received recasts from the researcher when they produced erroneous sentences. The recasts were typically of the simple isolated declarative type; that is, they targeted a single error and were provided with falling intonation, without added emphasis on the targeted feature (Kim & Han, 2007; Lyster, 1998). A small number of recasts were also provided, albeit randomly, in response to other ill-formed structure and lexicon. The two conditions namely "watch-and-tell" and "watch-then-tell" were used for classifying the complex tasks. The rationale for these conditions was based on the research finding conducted by Skehan and Foster (1999). "Comparing the learners' performance under these two conditions, Skehan and Foster observed that the watch-then-tell condition led to greater complexity than watch- and-tell" (Skehan and Foster, 1999, cited in Révész, 2009, p.18).

The tasks in this group were of simple ones which had a watch-and tell condition. That is, the learners had to watch the films and to simultaneously narrate what they saw in the film. They also could resort to note-taking to retrieve the information. The films included the following themes: a trip to Europe, history of Iran, whale in the sea. These topics were selected due to the structural elements these films covered. In addition, the language of the films was suitable for upper-intermediate level. Initially, the learners in all three groups were introduced to the task. To this end, they were given warm-up activities on the topics of the films. Subjects were encouraged to elaborate on what they knew about these topics and share them with their classmates. After each task, the learners reviewed the task and once again referred to the film to check how they had performed on the task. Experimental group 2 received no recasts and had to perform a complex task. This group was required to perform with a watch-and-then-tell and – contextual support conditions. That is, the learners watched some videos and then had to narrate the story shown in the video while having no access to the videos or notes. Experimental group 3 was exposed to both complex tasks and recasts which were the same as those used in groups 1 and group 2. Overall, 10 sessions were held and in each session forty five minutes was devoted to the administration of the treatment.

Oral Interview Tasks

Oral interview tasks were used both as the pretest of oral accuracy and also as the post test of oral accuracy. The pretest and posttest employed oral production tasks: the three experimental groups were asked to take part in an interview in which each student was asked the same set of questions. The topics included: motivation for learning English, the job they will select in the future, the favorite sport, and five advantages of internet. All interviews were tape-recorded and two raters rated the oral accuracy of the interviewees. Inter-rater measurement was applied in order to insure reliability of scores. Accuracy was measured in terms of error-free T-units as follows:

All the main clauses plus subordinate clauses attached to or embedded in them were counted as T-units. Only those T-units that contained no grammatical, syntactic, lexical, and errors were counted as error-free T-units (Arent, 2003; Storch, 2009). (E.g. in the following text there are two error-free T-units)

1-Since young children tend to connect short main clauses with 'and,' they tend to use relatively few words/**T-unit**. But as they mature, they begin to use a range of appositives, prepositional phrases, and dependent clauses that increase the number of words/**T-unit**.

2-I walked west and I come to a house. (An error-free T-unite and a T-unit with error).

To measure accuracy, the number of error free T-units is divided by the total number of t-units (Arent, 2003; Storch, 2009). The result is multiplied by 100 to obtain the percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing the hypotheses

Three hypotheses were put forward for the following study as follows:

There is not any significant difference between the impact of recast and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy.

There is not any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy.

There is not any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy.

A one-way analysis of variances was run to compare the three groups' means on the posttest of oral accuracy in order to investigate our three research questions. Before discussing the results it should be mentioned that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's $F(2, 87) = 2.28, P > .05$) (Table 1).

Table 1: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.288	2	87	.111

As displayed in Table 2, the recast ($M = 35.35$, $SD = 5.06$) had the highest mean on the posttest of oral accuracy. This was followed by task complexity ($M = 33.75$, $SD = 6.64$) and recast plus task complexity ($M = 27.15$, $SD = 4.25$) groups.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics, Posttest of oral accuracy by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Recast	30	35.35	5.060	1.132	32.98	37.72	25	40
Task complexity	30	33.75	6.640	1.485	30.64	36.86	20	40
Recast plus task complexity	30	27.15	4.258	.952	25.16	29.14	19	35

Based on the results displayed in Table 3 ($F(2, 87) = 12.90$, $P < .05$, $\omega^2 = .28$ representing a large effect size) it can be concluded that there were significant differences between the means of the three groups on the posttest of oral accuracy.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA, Posttest of oral accuracy by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	755.733	2	377.867	12.906	.000
Within Groups	1668.850	87	29.278		
Total	2424.583	89			

The F-value of 12.90 indicated significant difference between the three groups' means on the posttest of oral accuracy; however, the post-hoc Scheffe's tests should be run to compare the groups two by two in order to investigate the research questions. Based on the results displayed in Table 4, it can be concluded that;

A: The recast group ($M = 33.75$) significantly outperformed the recast plus task complexity ($M = 27.15$) group on the posttest of oral accuracy ($MD = 6.60$, $p < .05$). Thus the first null-hypothesis as there is not any significant difference between the impact of recast and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy **was rejected**.

Table 4: Multiple Comparisons; Post-Hoc Scheffe's Tests

Dependent Variable	(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Posttest Oral accuracy	recast	Task complexity	1.600	1.711	.648	-2.70	5.90
		Recast plus task complexity	8.200*	1.711	.000	3.90	12.50
	Task complexity	Recast plus task complexity	6.600*	1.711	.001	2.30	10.90

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

B: The task complexity group ($M = 35.35$) significantly outperformed the recast plus task complexity ($M = 27.15$) group on the posttest of oral accuracy ($MD = 8.20$, $p < .05$). Thus the second null-hypothesis as there is not any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and task complexity plus recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy **was rejected**.

C: There was not any significant difference between the task complexity ($M = 33.75$) and recast ($M = 35.35$) groups means on the posttest of oral accuracy ($MD = 1.60$, $p > .05$). Thus the third null-hypothesis as there is not any significant difference between the impact of task complexity and recast on EFL learners' oral accuracy **was supported**.

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to investigate the comparative effect of recast, task complexity and recast plus task complexity on Iranian advanced EFL learners' oral accuracy. The results of one way ANOVA indicated that both the recast group and task complexity group outperformed the recast plus task complexity group on the post test of oral accuracy.

As pointed out earlier recasts according to Long et al. (1998) refer to a speaker's reformulations of "all or part of a learner's utterance, thus providing relevant morph syntactic information that was obligatory but was either missing or wrongly supplied, in a learner's rendition, while retaining its central meaning" and task complexity as Robinson (2001) maintains refers to the "attentional, memory, reasoning, and other information processing demands imposed by the structure of the task on the language learner" (p.29). On the other hand, the study revealed that there was not any significant difference between the effect of task complexity and recast on the learner's oral accuracy.

In a nutshell, the study came to the conclusion that both recast and task complexity led to the enhancement of learners' oral accuracy while the combination of recasts and task complexity seems to have caused less positive impact. The fact that recasts have contributed to the enhancement of oral accuracy in this study corroborates the results of many studies conducted in which recasts have been used (Egi, 2010; Ammar, 2008; Long, 2007; Robinson, 2005a, 2003a 2001a, Braid, 2002; Havranek, 2002; Ayoun, 2001).

Regarding the finding that task complexity has also led to the betterment of oral accuracy in this study, this result confirms the findings and views of many scholars who are in favor of task complexity (Nelson, 2011; Michel, M. Kuiken, F. & Vedder, I. 2007; Larsen-Freeman, D. 1997; Fotos, S.S., 1994; Long, M. H. & Crookes, G. 1992).

Respecting the finding that recasts and task complexity have approximately led to an equal degree of improvement in terms of oral accuracy it could be concluded that both types of treatments have possibly activated the same constructs which underpin the cognitive ability of the learners with respect to oral accuracy. In other words both types of treatment although different on the surface may have not a striking disparity when it has come to the acquisition of grammar hence the improvements in both groups.

With respect to the fact that a combination of recasts and task complexity has led to a lesser degree of positive effect on learners oral accuracy could probably have its roots in the amount of demand it has placed on the shoulders of the learners. That is to say both task complexity and recasts may have contributed to a sort of confusion on the parts of the learners.

CONCLUSION

In this study the researcher attempted to investigate the impact of recasts, task complexity and recast plus task complexity on the oral accuracy of Iranian advanced learners. The study came to the following conclusions: both recast and task complexity led to the enhancement of learners' oral accuracy while the combination of recasts and task complexity seems to have caused less positive impact.

Firstly the results of the study revealed that both the recast group and task complexity group outperformed the recast plus task complexity group on the post test of oral accuracy. Moreover it was found out that there was not any significant difference between the effect of task complexity and recast on the learner's oral accuracy. These findings remind us of the nature of recasts and task complexity. That is to say the results help shed more light on the impact of task complexity and recast. The fact recasts and task complexity have approximately led to an equal degree of improvement in terms of oral accuracy, it could be concluded that both types of treatment although different on the surface may have not been very different when it has come to the acquisition of grammar hence the improvements in both groups.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of the present study, the following implications regarding the impact of recasts, task complexity and recasts plus task complexity on learners' oral accuracy could be arrived at:

- Overall, by employment of recasts and task complexity teachers can help enhance the oral accuracy of their learners. That is to say based on the results of the present study teachers may decide to employ recasts and task complexity in their classes more than before.
- Awareness of teachers might be developed regarding the question that why task complexity and recasts led to an enhancement regarding the oral accuracy but a combination of these two was not very fruitful. In this respect, as pointed out earlier, it could be concluded that both types of treatments may have possibly activated the same constructs which underpin the cognitive ability of the learners with respect to oral accuracy. As a consequence teachers may start reflecting and investigating different underlying constructs for the concept of recasts and task complexity in their classroom. This may, in turn, lead to the enhancement of and could be considered as one of the components of the reflective repertoire that teachers hold.
- Material developers may consider the inclusion of task types which foster the use of recasts in the classroom more than before especially when it comes to the requirements and objectives of the courses and may likewise decide to consider more factors while constructing the syllabus.

- Last but not least, teacher educators may draw upon the results of the study while discussing the impact of recasts and task complexity or a combination of these two on oral accuracy.

Limitations

- The subjects of this study were all female learners aging between 19 to 30.
- The present study focused on the skill of speaking, only.
- The participants of the study were advanced learners of English.

REFERENCES

- Aljaafreh, A., & Lantolf, J.P. (1994). Negative feedback as regulation and second language learning in the zone of proximal development. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(4), 465–483.
- Ammar, A., & Spada, N. (2006). One size fits all? Recasts, prompts and L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(4), 543-574.
- Ammar, A. (2008). Prompts and recasts: Differential effects on second language morphosyntax. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 183-210.
- Anderson, J. (1983). *The architecture of cognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Arent, R. (2003). Promoting revision and development in L2 writing through a combination-based curriculum. *The www.ccsenet.org/elt English Language Teaching*, 3 (4), December 201014 ISSN 1916-4742 E-ISSN 1916-4750 Korean TESOL Journal, 6(1), 1 – 26.
- Ayoun, D. (2001). The role of negative and positive feedback in the second language acquisition of the passé composé and the imparfait. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(2), 226–243.
- Braidi, S.M. (2002). Reexamining the role of recasts in native-speaker/nonnative-speaker interactions. *Language Learning*, 52(1), 1–42.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching (5th ed.)*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- Chaudron, C. (1986). Teachers' priorities in correcting learners' errors in French immersion classes. In R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to learn: Conversation in second language acquisition* (pp. 64-84). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Doughty, C. J. (2003). Instructed SLA: Constraints, compensation, and enhancement. In C. J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 256-310). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Doughty, C. J. (2001). Cognitive underpinnings of focus on form. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 206 – 257). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Doughty, C., & Varela, E. (1998). Communicative focus on form. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 114–138). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dulay, H.C., & Burt, M.K. (1973). Should we teach children syntax? *Language Learning*, 23(2), 245–258.
- Egi, T. (2010). Uptake, modified output, and learner perceptions of recasts: Learner responses as language awareness. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94, 1-21.

- Ellis, R.(1993). The structural syllabus and second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27, 91–113.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis , R . (1995). Interpretation tasks for grammar teaching . *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 87 – 103 .
- Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., & Loewen, S. (2001). Learner uptake in communicative ESL lessons. *Language Learning*, 51, 281-318.
- Ellis, N.C. (2005). ‘At the interface: Dynamic interactions of explicit and implicit language knowledge’, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 27, 305–352.
- Ellis, R., Loewen, S., & Erlam, R. (2006). Implicit and explicit corrective feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28(2), 339-368.
- Ellis, R., & Sheen, Y. (2006). Reexamining the role of recasts in second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 575-600.
- Fotos, S.S. (1994). Integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use through grammar consciousness-raising tasks. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(2), 323–351.
- Gass, S.M., Mackey, A., & Ross-Feldman, L. (2005). Task-based interactions in classroom and laboratory settings. *Language Learning*, 55, 575-611.
- Gilabert, R. (2007). Effects of manipulating task complexity on self-repairs during L2 oral production. *IRAL*, 45, 215-240.
- Havranek, G. (2002). When is corrective feedback most likely to succeed? *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37(3–4), 255–270.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J.B. Pride & J. Holmes(Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1997). From semantic to syntactic processing: How can we promote it in the immersion classroom? In Johnson, R. K., and Swain, M. (Eds.) *Immersion education: International perspectives* (pp. 284-309). NY:Cambridge University Press.
- Krashen, S. (1981). The "fundamental pedagogical principle" in second language teaching. *Studia Linguistica*, 35(1–2), 50–70.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1997) Chaos/complexity science and second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics* 18, 141–165.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principals in language teaching*. (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Leeman, J. (2003). Recasts and second language development: Beyond negative evidence. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 25(1), 37–63.
- Long, M. H. (1985). A role for instruction in second language acquisition: task-based language teaching. In K. Hytenstam and M. Pienemann (Eds.), *Modeling and assessing second language acquisition* (pp.77-99).Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Long , M. H . (2007). Recasts: The story so far . In M. H. Long (Ed.), *Problems in SLA* (pp. 75 – 116). Mahwah, NJ : Erlbaum .
- Long, M. H. & Crookes, G. (1992). Three approaches to task-based syllabus design, *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(1), 27-56.
- Long, M.H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W.C. Ritchie & T.K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413–468). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

- Long, M., Inagaki, S., & Ortega, L. (1998). The role of implicit negative feedback in SLA: Models and recasts in Japanese and Spanish. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82, 358-371.
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1995, October). *Getting learners to notice: Negotiation of form as negative evidence*. Paper presented at Second Language Research Forum '95, Cornell University, New York.
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19, 37, 66.
- Mackey, A., & Goo, J. (2007). Interaction research in SLA: A meta-analysis and research synthesis. In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition: A series of empirical studies* (pp. 407 – 452). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mackey, A., & Philp, J. (1998). Conversational interaction and second language development: Recasts, responses, and red herrings? *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(3), 338–356.
- Michel, M. Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2007). The influence of complexity in monologic versus dialogic tasks in Dutch L2. *IRAL*, 45, 241-259.
- Morris, F., & Tarone, E. (2003). Impact of classroom dynamics on the effectiveness of recasts in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 53, 325-368.
- Nelson, C. (2011). The complexity of language learning, *International Journal of Instruction*, 4 (2).
- Nelson, K. E., Denninger, M., Bonvillian, J. D., Kaplan, B., & Baker, N. (1984). Maternal input adjustments and non-adjustments as related to children's advances and to language acquisition theories. In A. D. Pellegrini & T. D.
- Nuevo, A. (2006). *Task Complexity and Interaction: L2 Learning Opportunities and Development*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Washington, DC: Georgetown University.
- Nicholas, H., Lightbown, M., & Spada, N. (2001). Recasts as feedback to language learners. *Language Learning*, 51(4), 719–758. Yawkey (Eds.), *The development of oral and written language in social contexts* (pp. 31-6). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2001). *Teaching Language in Context* (third edition). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Panova, I., & Lyster, R. (2002). Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36, 573-595.
- Révész, A. (2009). Task complexity, focus on form, and second language development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 31, 437–470.
- Rezaei et al (2011) Corrective Feedback in SLA: Classroom Practice and Future Directions, *International Journal of English Linguistics*.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T.S. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Robinson, P. (2001a). Task complexity, task difficulty, and task production: exploring interactions in a componential framework. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 27-57.
- Robinson, P., & Gilabert, R. (2007). Task complexity, the Cognition Hypothesis and second language learning and performance. *RAL* 45, 161-176.

- Russell, V. (2009). Corrective feedback, over a decade of research since Lyster and Ranta (1997): Where do we stand today? *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*.
- Sato, M. (2011). Constitution of form-orientation: Contributions of context and explicit knowledge to learning from recasts. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 14 (1), 1–28.
- Savignon, S. J. (1972). *Communicative competence: An experiment in foreign language teaching*. Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development.
- Sheen, Y. (2006). Exploring the relationship between characteristics of recasts and learner uptake. *Language Teaching Research*, 10, 361-392.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3 – 32). New York : Cambridge University Press .
- Skehan, P., & Foster, P. (2001). Cognition and tasks. In ' *Cognition and second language instruction*'. 144-155
- Skehan, P. (1998a). Task-based instruction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 268-286.
- Storch, N. (2009). The impact of studying in a second language medium university and the development of L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 103–118.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235-252). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Terrell, T. (1977). A natural approach to second language acquisition and learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 61, 325–337.
- Van Lier, R., & Wagemans J. (1997). *Perceptual grouping measured by color assimilation: Regularity versus Proximity*. *Acta Psychologica*,
- Van Lier, R. (2000). Separate features versus one principle: A comment on Shimaya (1997). *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 26, 412-417.

STUDENTS' ERRORS IN TRANSLATING TEXTS FROM PERSIAN TO ENGLISH

Mahsa Ardeshiri

*School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)*

Noorizah Mohd Noor

*School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)*

Rosniah Mustaffa

*School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)*

Intan Safinaz Zainudin

*School of Language Studies and Linguistics
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)*

ABSTRACT

In the present day, translation and translation studies have expanded in most countries and there are professional translators all around the world. However, some parts of languages and thoughts cannot be translated easily due to the diversity of parts of speech in different countries. (Na Pham, 2005; Yarmohammadi, 2010; Dodd, 1999). This study aims to shed light on the problems which students face in translating from Persian to English. An error analysis approach to identify linguistic translation errors was used to discover students' main problems. Thirty English Language Translation students were selected through purposive sampling. A Persian - English translation task was administered to collect the corpus for analysis. All the students' translations were analyzed to identify linguistic problems. Three lecturers were interviewed for their understanding of the causes of students' errors in translation. It was found that mainly syntactic errors occurred in their translations. Considering the students' errors and categorizing errors devise appropriate translation teaching techniques. Moreover, being aware of students' causes of errors is suitable for the translation teachers to improve their tasks.

KEYWORDS: Translation; errors in translation; error analysis; linguistic errors; syntactic errors

INTRODUCTION

The need for effective and efficient use of information and knowledge in developing countries such as Iran is obvious as access to the latest information is only possible with a good command of English or with good translations. English is the most important foreign language in Iran's education system (Chalak & Kassaian, 2010). In recent years, the B.A programmes in Iranian universities have introduced English translation courses that teach translation strategies, theories of translation, interpretation, translation of simple prose texts and translation of different types of texts (literary, news, political). English Language Translation students must undergo 4 years of study in language proficiency, linguistics, and all the theories of translation and strategies of translation of texts in various fields such as literature, economics, politics and religion.

Translation training is often run by language departments and is spread over two and a half years, starting from the second semester of year 3 and ending in year 4. The problem is that very few of these graduates qualify as good translators. According to Rahimy (2003), many studies find that most of the graduates are just incapable of presenting a meaningful translation of different text types. Hence, much of the translated work in Iran, such as translation of Persian literary texts into English, is poor and quite unintelligible. Specifically, in some cases, the sense of the main message in the second language (SL) is actually omitted. Khanmohammad's (2012) study suggests that most students have basic problems in comprehending the original text. She points out that if translation students have problems understanding the second language or target language (TL) culture, they would be unable to transfer the culture-specific items accurately. She also notes that students transfer pragmatic sense through literal translation, thus failing to convey an accurate translation. The main purpose of this study is to understand students' errors in translation from Persian to English, and to seek explanations for these errors.

Many researchers all over the world have tried to understand translation errors through error analysis such as Stewart (2008); Na Pham (2005) from Vietnamese to English; Dodds (1999) from Italian to English (Coskun, 1997; Seguinot, 1990). However, none have focused only on syntactic errors in detail. Iranian researchers have also studied students' errors in translation but not in detail (Golestany, 2010; Jamalimanesh, 2009; Khodabandeh, 2007; Riazi and Razmjoo, 2004). As Kiraly (1995) indicated: "Error analysis should help translation teachers understand the problems (linguistic, cultural, textual, production) that occur during the process of a translator's training". The findings of this study may contribute to research in translation studies on other language pairs or combinations, and may also help translators and TEFL students majoring in translation studies to improve in their translation.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

In the Iranian context, Riazi (2004) found that errors occurred when there are simple substitutions of one syntactically correct structure for another which is equally syntactically correct, even if semantically incorrect. Coskun (1997) explored another dimension of translation problems. The result of his study showed that students made errors both in comprehension and production due to miscomprehension of the source text. Besides that, the students only translated the surface structure.

In another study on error analysis in translation, Khodabandeh (2007) revealed that the students' difficulties were mainly with grammar, as well as with discourse and vocabulary. Another study analysing linguistic errors showed that Iranian students attempting English translation sometimes find foreign journalistic text-types harder than domestic ones to translate (Rahimy, 2003). The study reported in this paper aims to explore the category of errors among Iranian English Language Translation students in order to discover the causes of their errors. It also aims to find out the most common errors found in these students' translation.

Errors and Error Analysis in Translation

Errors occur when the learner's knowledge of the rules of the target language is incomplete. Errors are considered to be systematic, governed by rules and also regarded as rule-governed when they follow the rules of the learner's interlanguage (Keshavarz, 2011). According to Abbasi and Karimnia (2011) it is essential that teachers be able to adjust their teaching plan to work more effectively by identifying learners' errors. Moreover, recognizing errors can provide valuable information for teachers about how much the learner has learned and what kinds of problems s/he has in the study of language.

According to Pym (2010), translation errors may be attributed to different causes and located at different levels (language, pragmatics, culture). He defines three kinds of errors in translation: slips, systematic errors and skill-related errors. Slips occur when the students can repair the errors when they are pointed out to them. Systematic errors are the surface sentence-grammar errors, and the third type involves the skill or ability to use the language, rather than the knowledge of language. The possible reason for making these errors is that the language learner has not mastered those aspects of grammar yet, or the use of idioms is not culturally appropriate.

According to Richards et al. (1993: 96), "EA may be carried out in order to: a) find out how well someone knows the language, b) find out how a person learns a language, and c) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning". EA is used to analyse the actual errors produced by foreign language learners and an attempt is made to explain the causes of the errors. Various techniques are available for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting language learners' errors (Khodabandeh, 2007). According to Seguinot (1990), errors indicate the quality of a translation and are also windows into the translation process itself. Translation errors provide two kinds of information: an indication of how information about language might be organized in the brain and an insight into the developmental process that takes place in translator training (Na Pham, 2005).

Error analysis models for translation in previous studies focused on language competence, grammatical rules, spelling and phrases which are the subcategories of linguistics, and rarely focus on text meaning (Golestany, 2009; Jamalimanesh, 2009; Khodabandeh, 2007; Stewart, 2008; Na Pham, 2005; Riazi and Razmjoo, 2004; Dodds, 1999; Coskun, 1997 and Seguinot, 1990). This study adapted Na Pham's (2005) Error Analysis Model (figure 1) to explore linguistic translation errors. Linguistic translation errors based on Na Pham's framework are categorized as morphological errors, grammatical errors, syntactic errors, collocational errors and inappropriate word form errors. By analysing linguistic translation errors using Na Pham's error

analysis model, this study seeks to gain a better understanding of students' linguistic errors in translation.

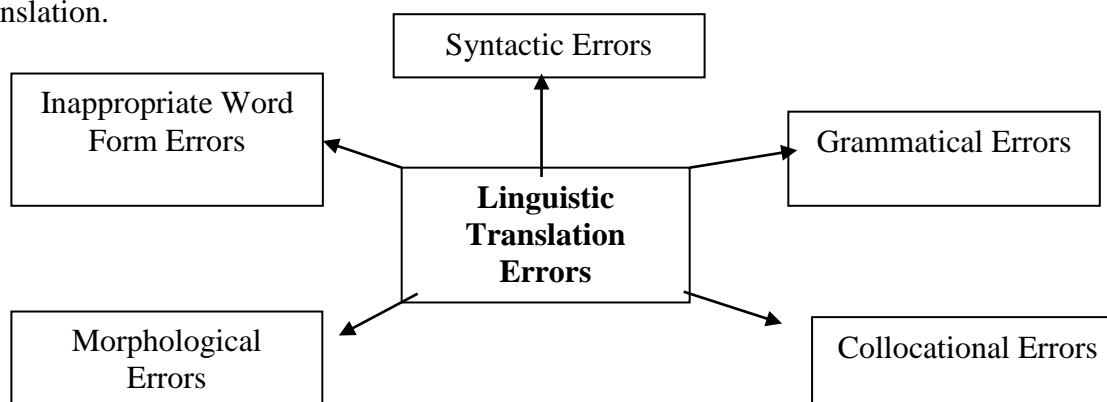


Figure 1: Na Pham (2005) model for linguistic translation errors

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the most common types of error found in the students' translation pieces from Persian to English?
- 2) What are the plausible explanations for students making these errors in their translation from Persian to English?

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design was employed to find out the English language translation students' errors in translation. Using purposeful sampling, 30 final year English Language Translation students who had completed 3 years of academic instruction and had attended the entire translation studies programme from the Department of English Language Translation of Shiraz Islamic Azad University of Iran were selected. The criteria for selection were that the subjects: 1) should have a similar educational background and 2) must be easily accessible. In addition, three lecturers, two male and one female, each with more than 10 years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language as well as translation studies, were interviewed for their explanations of the causes of students' errors.

Translation Task

Subjects were asked to translate one text from Persian to English. The source text was selected by the 3 professors of translation courses in Iran. The selected text of 167 words was extracted from "Translation Skills from Experts and Professional Points of View in Translation" by Janzadeh (2008:162) which was introduced by the professors of translation in Iran universities and which is also taught in universities. It contains several literary texts and short stories translated from Persian to English and vice versa. The text, translated by a translation expert with more than 20 years of experience, has been used for more than 5 years in English language translation courses in Iran universities. Thus the content of the book was deemed appropriate for the students who are familiar with it.

While asking the lecturers for help with selecting an appropriate text from the book, the author explained the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem and the framework of the study.

They had taught the book for more than five years and they were asked to make sure that the students had not worked on this text before. The text was a short story about a man who wants to sell his old horse.

A checklist was designed to ensure that the task would enable the elicitation of useful information to answer the research questions of this qualitative study. The checklist, adapted from Zailin Shah's (2004) criteria for selection of literary texts for the literature classroom, consisted of criteria for ensuring the validity of the literary text. Zailin Shah (2004) advised taking into account some factors related to the text and the readers, such as: the difficulty level of the language, the complexity of vocabulary, the length of the text, the subject matter, the prior knowledge of learners, and their interest level. The checklist used a Likert scale from 1 to 4: 1 (poor), 2 (fair), 3 (average), 4 (good). Lecturers were asked to indicate their preference for the text by ticking any number from 1 to 4. An additional space was provided below the checklist for lecturers to offer other suggestions. The checklist was approved by the same three lecturers who were asked to assess the validity of the text.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the interview sessions with the teachers, the researcher arranged a meeting with each of the three lecturers to explain to them the topic, the statement of the problem and the aim of the research. The interview sessions with the lecturers were conducted in their respective rooms. They were asked to answer 3 core questions about the students' most frequent errors and also students' causes of errors in translation. One week after interviewing the lecturers, the translation task was administered to the students in the form of a class activity. All 30 students in the three translation classes (10 students from each class) performed the task in the regular class time. In order that the students took the task seriously, the researcher asked the lecturers to consider using the translation task score to count towards their final score. Subjects were free to use any dictionaries they liked. In a regular translation exam, the students would require 110 minutes to translate this text. In this study, participants were given 120 minutes to translate the text from Persian to English to ensure that they could complete the task and that the pressure of time would not cause them to make more errors. After they translated the text, the students were interviewed about the causes of their errors. Interviews with students were conducted to collect data about the insights or perspectives of research participants.

Data Analysis

The translations of the 30 students in the sample were collected and analysed. Errors were underlined and classified in terms of their sources, using Na Pham's taxonomy. Based on Na Pham's (2005) translation error analysis, a table was designed to count the number of errors identified in each category. Following Creswell's (2008) suggestion, the frequency and percentage of errors were calculated manually. Students' translations were compared to the published translation of the source text and analysed by the researcher. Errors were coded and classified. All the errors were categorized and noted down directly on the students' translations. Students' translations were compared with the original source text and the published translation of the ST. The researcher underlined and coded each student's translation piece based on the

category and subcategory of errors. The codes were classified and the results presented in a table. The percentages of each category of errors were displayed in separate tables.

For the purpose of analysis, the researcher first transcribed and translated the lecturers' and students' interviews from Persian to English. To ensure the accuracy of the translation, a Persian-English bilingual colleague checked the transcribed texts. Secondly, the transcriptions of the lecturers' and students' interviews were carefully read for the purpose of coding the data which was done with the assistance of an expert with more than 5 years of experience in analysing qualitative research and data analysis in the English Department of Islamic Azad University of Shiraz, Iran. Thirdly, the researcher made a list of all the code words and also grouped together similar codes, removing redundant codes to reduce the list of codes. The themes were identified by examining the codes that the participants discussed more frequently. In other words, the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss 1967) formed the foundation for data analysis in this study. The researcher began the process with open coding, by examining the interview transcripts, looking for categories of errors and causes of errors, and highlighting the category of errors, followed by naming and coding the categories based on the conceptual framework of the study. In the next step the researcher compared the categories for similarities and differences. Similar categories were then combined into new categories. A category would be considered saturated when no new codes could be added. Eventually, some categories emerged as more significant than others. The codes were classified and categorized in a table and each category of errors was presented in a separate table. Finally, by quantifying the codes and displaying the results by percentage in separate tables for each category, the themes emerged more clearly.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study is concerned with examining the most common linguistic errors in students' translation using Na Pham's (2005) framework for analysing errors. The data was analysed during the interviews with the lecturers and students and with reference to the standard translation of the text in the book. As mentioned earlier, linguistic translation errors occur when the focus is on the language structure (Nord, 1997). Occasionally, the translator's low proficiency in either the SL or TL could be the source of linguistic translation errors (Nord 1997). In text analysis, linguistic translation errors are divided into five subcategories: morphological errors, grammatical errors, syntactic errors, inappropriate word form errors and collocational errors. Table 1 shows the distribution of linguistic translation errors.

Table 1: Distribution of linguistic translation errors

Linguistic translation errors	Frequency	Percentage
Morphological errors	140	23.89 %
Grammatical errors	67	11.43%
Syntactic errors	252	42.66 %
Collocational errors	70	11.94 %
Inappropriate word form	73	12.45%
Total	586	100 %

As shown in table 1, syntactic errors accounted for 252 errors in students' translation. Therefore, syntactic errors were the most frequent errors (42%) of all the linguistic translation errors. Morphological errors (140) were the next most frequent type of errors comprising 23% of the total number of linguistic translation errors identified. These were followed by inappropriate word form errors (12%), collocational errors (11.94 %), and finally grammatical errors (11.43%). This paper will focus on syntactic errors, the most common type of linguistic errors found in the students' translations. The following sections will present the results and findings of each subcategory of syntactic errors.

Syntactic Errors

Syntactic errors are made at three levels: phrase, clause and sentence. In this study, the definitions of phrase, clause and sentence are taken from Merriam Webster's Online Dictionary, [http:// www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com). Table 2 presents the frequencies and percentages of the subcategories of syntactic errors.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of subcategories of syntactic errors

Type of syntactic errors	Frequency	Percentage
Phrase structure	84	33.33 %
Clause structure	122	48.41 %
Sentence structure	46	18.25 %
Total	252	100 %

As depicted in table 2, errors at clause structure level were the most frequent type of errors in students' translations. Altogether, 122 errors were found at the level of clause structure, comprising 48% of all the syntactic errors. Errors at the level of Phrase structure were the next most frequent type of errors; 84 errors accounting for 33% of the syntactic errors. Students made far fewer errors in sentence structure, about 18%. The following sections discuss each of these subcategories of syntactic errors.

Phrase Structure

Some examples from the data are:

1. Addition of unnecessary words, or of an unnecessary phrase:

Example: *He gave the remainder price credit.*

Proposed translation of the source text: He promised to pay me in full when we met again.

Example: the word 'price' is not considered a wrong insertion. It is redundant and unnecessary, and may cause ambiguity.

2. Inappropriate noun phrase construction or inappropriate verb phrase construction

Example: *He paid the half of price in cash and he accepted to give old donkey for other half of price.*

Proposed translation of the source text: He paid me down one half of the money, and then offered me a half-starved ass in payment of the remainder

Example: *He said, it () exhausted and fagged.*

Proposed translation of the source text: He said that it was old.

3. Inappropriate phrase construction.

Example: *I accepted the prices with no bargaining.*

Proposed translation of the source text: I threw him the bridle and saddle into the bargain.

Example: *I sold my horse with inclination.*

Proposed translation of the source text: I immediately exhibited my horse for sale at the market

4. Incomplete phrase. Students cannot complete the phrase or leave it unfinished.

Example: *In my opinion it has many faulty.*

Proposed translation of the source text: a horse dealer, to whom I showed it, made out so clearly that it was full of defects.

5. Non parallel combination refers to two phrases within a sentence not being parallel.

Example: *He was more confused than me.*

Proposed translation of the source text: and he seemed as surprised

Clause Structure

1. Addition of unnecessary word. This error occurs when the students add one extra word to the phrase. In the following example, the students wrote the extra word 'account',

Example: *He agreed that the other half would be paid on credit account.*

Proposed translation of the source text: he promised to pay me in full when we met again.

2. Addition of a verb to the clause (not the sentence), which repeats the meaning of another verb.

Example: *It seemed that my horse didn't have had any good points.*

Proposed translation of the source text: it seemed to have every quality that a horse ought not to have.

3. Inappropriate clause construction: a construction that is not constructed according to the standard syntax of clauses in English. There are two types:

a. The student may choose a structure which does not match the intended meaning of the original (although the word order of the structure is correct). Example (3a) shows this error.

Example 3a: *I would win the deal even if I'd sold it for free.*

Proposed translation of the source text: I thought myself in luck if I got anything at all for it.

b. The student decides to use the correct structure, but apply the wrong word order within the sentence. Example (3b) shows this error.

Example 3b: *Anything which is bad that a horse shouldn't my horse have.*

Proposed translation of the source text: it seemed to have every quality that a horse ought not to have.

4. Incomplete clause. A clause is considered to be incomplete when the subject or main verb is missing.

Example 4: *I was give to understand on the way that (it) is so fast.*

Proposed translation of the source text: I had proved it to be a good beast, from the rate at which I had travelled.

5. Omission of the relative pronoun linking one clause to another.

Example: *It was me () would make a good deal.*

Proposed translation of the source text: I thought myself in luck if I got anything at all for it.

Sentence Structure

Incomplete sentence. If the main verb and other parts of speech in the sentence are deleted, but the subject is not, the result is an incomplete sentence. Sometimes an omitted verb causes a sentence to be incomplete.

Example: *Anything which is bad that a horse shouldn't have my horse ().*

Proposed translation of the source text: it seemed to have every quality that a horse ought not to have.

Factors Contributing to Students' Errors

In the first stage of the study, students' errors in translation were identified according to Na Pham's (2005) taxonomy. In the second stage, the author sought explanations for these errors. Three lecturers were interviewed for their views on the reasons for students' errors in translation. The following reasons were given by the lecturers and students:

(a) Students had poor reading comprehension skills. Even after four years of instruction, they had difficulty grasping the main idea of a text. They also had problems comprehending Persian literary texts, making it even more difficult to translate literary texts accurately.

(b) Students were unable to translate compound sentences. More often than not, they confused the relative clause with the main clause, thus altering the focus of attention in the sentence.

(c) Students did not have enough practice, as they only learned English in the class without continuing to practice it at home.

(d) The many grammatical errors in their translation affected the communication of the main ideas of the source text.”

(c) Students were also careless about conveying the author’s main message.

(e) Students relied solely on the dictionary to translate, but they had poor dictionary skills.

(f) The main cause of students’ errors in their translation was that they did not read of the entire text first. Right from the beginning of the translation task, they tried to translate it sentence by sentence without considering the global meaning of the text.

(g) Another cause of students’ errors was that they did not revise their translation.

(h) The students did not consider the structure of the target text and most of the time they translated the source text literally.

(i) The most important reason was that the lecturers in Iran universities are trained in Teaching English as a Second Language, Literature or Linguistics, and rarely have any expertise in translation studies.

j) Lack of practice with certain linguistic structures prevented students from writing grammatically correct English sentences, although they may have known the rules very well.

k) Students seemed unable to apply their knowledge of English acquired in grammar or syntax classes to the translation process.

l) There was interference of the Persian language (of the source text).

m) Students’ generally had a low level of linguistic competence, and were unable to distinguish between similar words or structures in English.

The findings of the analysis of the students’ translation reveal a low level of skills in translation despite 4 years of instruction. The analysis of the translation texts reveals that syntactic errors comprised 42% of the errors among all categories of errors. (table 2). This result is similar to Na Pham’s (2005) findings in his analysis of students’ errors from Vietnamese to English. The results of the text analysis and interviews with lecturers showed poor awareness of grammar among ELT students. The students’ errors in the frequency list (table 2) for each sub-category of errors show that these were fossilized errors. This became especially clear from the results of the error analysis. This could be due to several reasons. Firstly, the students might lack practice in using certain linguistic structures. Two of the lecturers interviewed said that the students had poor linguistic competence and were unable to distinguish between similar words or structures in English. The students also seemed to be unaware that different situations called for different structures. Secondly, it was quite possible that the students were just not considering the wide choice of the strategies they had been taught in the translation programme. Two of the lecturers pointed out that students had been taught how to translate different types of texts from different fields such as politics, religion, economics, and literature.

CONCLUSION

Generally, the findings revealed that English Language Translation students may have problems comprehending the source language texts in Persian because of the complexity of the sentences and the differences between Persian structure and English structure. A similar observation was made by Na Pham (2005), Khodabandeh (2009) and Kussmual (1995) in their error analysis of students' translation.

Considering the differences between the structures of the source text and the target text, the lecturers' knowledge in both languages is important in improving students' translation by providing them with more input and strategies in translation. For that reason, lecturers who are not experts in translation studies should practice on translation and work on improving themselves before they can teach the translation courses in Iran. According to Bell (1994), a good translation teacher is the one who can comprehend what translation is and how it occurs. He added that a translation lecturer should be good in translation theory, transfer procedure and translation methodology. Adding Persian reading courses, English and Persian grammar courses in translation programme may increase students' ability in translation. Finally, students should be screened in proficiency both in English and Persian language before they are accepted in translation programme. The findings of this study is limited to the translated texts from Persian to English. Moreover, no generalization is possible due to the nature of the subjects under study.

REFERENCES

- Abbasi, M., & Karimnia A. (2011). An Analysis of Grammatical Errors among Iranian Translation Students: Insights from Interlanguage Theory. *European Journal of Social Science* (25) 4. Retrieved February 20, 2012 from http://www.europeanjournalofsocialsciences.com/ISSUES/EJSS_25_4_07.pdf
- Bell, T. R. (1994). *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. London: Longman
- Chalak, A., & Kassaian. Z. (2010). Motivation and attitudes of Iranian undergraduate EFL students towards learning English. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* 10(2). Retrieved March 20, 2011 from [http://www.ukm.my/ppbl/Gema/GEMA%2010\(2\)%202010/pp%2037_56.pdf](http://www.ukm.my/ppbl/Gema/GEMA%2010(2)%202010/pp%2037_56.pdf).
- Coskun, M. (1997). Ceviri metinlerinde yuzey yapi—derin yapi hatalari. In Na, P.P. Q 2005. Errors in the translation of topic-comment structures of Vietnamese into English. *Asian EFL Journal* 7(3).
- Cresswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper saddle River. NJ: Merrill.
- Dodds, J. M. (1999). Friends, false friends and foes or back to basics in L1 to SECOND LANGUAGE. In G.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Aldine Publishing Company, Hawthorne, NY.
- Golestani, G. (2010). The problems of the third person pronoun in translation [on-line]. Available at: [http:// www.translationdirectory.com/articles/article1631.php](http://www.translationdirectory.com/articles/article1631.php)

- Jamalimanesh, A. R. (2009). Electronic sources: A glance at the ailing system of teaching translation in Iranian universities. Retrieved December 30, 2013 from <http://www.translationdirectory.com/articles/article2044.php>
- Janzadeh, A. (2008). *Translation skill from experts and professional points of view in translation*. Janzadeh: Tehran, Iran.
- Keshavarz, M. H. (2011). *Contrastive analysis and error analysis*. Tehran: Rahnama Publication. Tehran, Iran.
- Khanmohammad, H. (2012). Islamic Azad University of Tehran, Iran. Interview, on 2nd of January.
- Khodabandeh, F. (2007). Analysis of students' errors: The case of headlines. *The Asian ESP Online Journal* 3(1). Retrieved December 14, 2010 from http://www.asian-esp-journal.com/April_2007_fk.php
- Kussmaul, P. (1995). *Training the translator*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Na, P.P. Q (2005). Errors in the translation of topic-comment structures of Vietnamese into English. *Asian EFL Journal* 7(3).
- Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Pym, A. (2010). Translation error analysis and the interface with language teaching. In C. Dollerup & A. Logdegaard (eds.), *Teaching translation & interpreting: Training, talent & experience - Papers from the 1st language international conference - Elsinore, Denmark 31 May-2 June 1991 - Copenhagen studies in translation*, (pp 279- 288) Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Rahimy, R. (2003). Translation of journalistic texts: A study on the problems of Iranian students of Translation. *Translation Studies Quarterly* 1(2).
- Riazi, A.M. & Razmjoo, L. (2004). Developing some guidelines for a change in the program of English translation in Iranian universities, *Journal of social sciences & humanities of Shiraz University*. 21(1), 28-39.
- Richards, J., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1993). *Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*. Essex: Longman.
- Seguinot, C. (1990). Interpreting errors in translation. *META* 35(1).
- Stewart, D. (2008). Vocational translation training into a foreign language. *inTRAlinea Online Journal* 10. Retrieved February 12, 2011 from http://www.intralinea.it/volumes/eng_more.php?id=673_0_2_0.
- Yarmohammadi, L. (2010). Azad University of Shiraz, Iran. Interview, on 1 June.
- Zailin Shah, Y. (2004). Cultural Familiarity in Literary Texts: Consideration for Textselection. Retrived Jun 6, 2015 from http://umpir.ump.edu.my/926/1/11_zailinmi_cultural.pdf

L2 TEACHERS' AND LEARNERS' BELIEFS ABOUT GRAMMAR

Faezeh Ahmadi

*Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
ahmadi.fh@gmail.com*

Sajad Shafiee

*Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sharekord, Iran
shafiee.sajad@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at exploring teachers' and learners' beliefs about grammar teaching and learning in language institutes in Isfahan. To this end, two questionnaires were adapted and used to elicit teachers' and learners' beliefs about grammar teaching and learning. Thirty-five English language teachers and 200 learners of English who were randomly selected from different institutes in Iran, were asked to fill out teachers' belief questionnaire and learners' belief questionnaire respectively. Such descriptive statistics as frequency and percentage were utilized to perform data analysis and make comparisons. The results revealed that there were some differences between teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding error-correction and testing procedures in the classroom. However, their beliefs about the other factors under investigation, e.g., definition of grammar, and the importance of teaching/learning grammar, were not dissimilar. The results of this study would be beneficial to both teachers and learners who are engaged in the process of teaching and learning grammar.

KEYWORDS: Teachers' beliefs, Learners' beliefs, Grammar teaching, Grammar learning

INTRODUCTION

Language teacher cognition, defined by Borg (2003a, p. 81) as “what teachers know, believe, and think,” has come into focus for over three decades varying into different areas such as teacher education, grammar teaching, and classroom research. Influenced by advances in research, teaching has been recognized as a thoughtful profession and teachers' thinking came to be viewed as a major factor in educational settings. As Borg suggests, “teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” (p. 81). Studies have indicated that teachers' belief systems—the information, attitude, values, theories, and assumptions about teaching and learning—have a great impact on their instructional practices, all of which have provided the fact that teachers' comments and actions in the class are derived from their beliefs (Borg, 2003b; Ng & Farrell, 2003). In fact, it has been revealed that teachers have complicated beliefs about learners and classroom activities which form an organized set of rules (Berliner, 1987; Borg, 1998; Burns, 1992; Shavelson & Stern, 1981). Teachers and scholars have also studied ESL and EFL teachers' knowledge and beliefs in second and foreign language teaching (Freeman & Richards, 1996; Li & Walsh, 2011; Sanchez, 2010).

The studies of second language acquisition had been the main source of knowledge about grammar teaching for over 30 years. Grammar instruction has remained in demand in the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning and the degree of attention to grammar has increased in the history of language teaching. Thus, in the light of teacher cognition research in the field of second language and foreign language, the teaching of grammar has attracted substantial attention. There have been a number of studies in the area of teacher beliefs and teaching grammar in second/foreign language (Hinkel & Fotos, 2008; Kaçar & Zengin, 2013; Wach, 2013). Farrell (1999) examined the pre-service teachers' beliefs and proposed that these beliefs may not change. By the same token, in-service teachers' beliefs were investigated by Richards, Gallo, and Renandya (2001). The findings revealed that communicative approach was preferred by many of teachers in language learning, while some of them were interested in direct grammar teaching.

Whereas different teachers have different beliefs and can create various theoretical belief systems, some controversial issues including the proper lesson plans, methods, techniques and materials for teaching and the effect of these on teachers and learners' belief systems are raised here. As a result, different beliefs of teachers and learners in the field of language teaching can negatively impact on the effectiveness of classroom programs and instructional practices. In spite of the fact that there is a considerable care in the area of language teachers' and learners' beliefs, there have not been many studies focusing on the beliefs of language teachers and learners about teaching and learning grammar especially in English language institutes of Iranian. Therefore, it would be beneficial to uncover layers of teachers' belief systems and find out whether there is a mismatch between the teachers' and learners' beliefs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of grammar teaching has been open to debate in teaching foreign and second languages (Burgess & Etherington, 2002). Teaching of formal grammar in language programs has always had the mixture of good and bad experiences based on various theories and thinking. For instance, grammar teaching was once discouraged and most people disapproved of teaching it (see Ball, Kenny, & Gardiner, 1990). Before that time, it was disputed that teaching explicit grammar was not a useful way of developing practical communication skills. Most methods and approaches were against grammar teaching during the 1970s and 1980s. The centrality of grammar was challenged and its role as a part of teaching plans and curricula was ignored. Once again in the 1990s, grammar played a leading part in language teaching classes and people became interested in grammar instruction.

Views on grammar instruction lie between two extremes: At one extreme there are those who support explicit or formal grammar instruction; at the opposite extreme, there are those who ignore grammar teaching. According to Stern (1991), those teachers who are against grammar teaching have explained that grammar instruction is not useful for L2 learners' competence. Terrell's (1991) view about the role of grammar instruction is that if learners are able to use

grammatical structures on a discrete-point grammar exam, it does not mean that they are capable of using this knowledge in daily conversation.

However, a number of studies have positive views about grammar teaching. Baleghizadeh and Farshchi (2009) claim that grammar is one of the most important aspects of language by which learners expect to communicate well. Wu (2007) affirms that grammar is the main part of L2 instruction and stated that grammar improves learners' writing, reading, and listening skills altogether.

One of the dimensions of teacher cognition which has recently come into favor in ELT is teacher beliefs. Research on teachers' beliefs within the field of language teacher education has been admitted as a central issue in the early 1990s and recent years much work has been devoted to the development of teachers' beliefs. Johnson (1994) has proposed that teachers' beliefs cannot be defined easily since they are not something to be observed. What is obvious is that teacher beliefs comprise assumptions that influence their teaching. Research on teachers' beliefs and practices has examined a number of issues, e.g. the nature of grammar teaching or thinking and actions of experienced teachers (see Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver, & Thwaite, 2001), which may affect the beliefs and practices of EFL teachers (Allen, 2002). Nazari and Allahyar (2012) remarked that teachers' practical and pedagogical knowledge exert an influence on their teaching techniques and move them towards adopting certain grammar teaching procedures.

Researchers in the field of teaching and learning have viewed teaching as a linear process which relates teachers' behavior to learners' achievement (Cochran, Smith, & Lytle, 1990). To have effective teaching practices, a good decision making is needed to improve students' learning. Teachers make many decisions for the improvement of learners' learning. Some decisions are made, say, for preparing lesson plans and some of them are made during the activities and interactions with learners.

Concerning language learners' beliefs, many research studies have been conducted within SLL/FLL contexts (Alanen, 2003; Barcelos, 2003; Dufva, 2003; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004; Kalaja, 2003). With regard to language learners' beliefs, some studies have been carried out firstly by Gardner (for an overview see Gardner, 1979; Gardner et al, 2004). Since the 1980s, such cognitive variables as language learners' beliefs have come into focus.

The concept of learners' beliefs has been the focus of many research studies and a great interest for many scholars. Teachers can gain better understanding of learners' expectations and satisfaction with their language classes by having the knowledge of learners' beliefs (Horwitz, 1988). Riley (1996) claims that learners' language learning fall under the influence of learners' beliefs. Growing evidence also suggests that learners' beliefs not only influence their approaches to language learning, but also affect the way they respond to teaching activities. Learners may show dissatisfaction if they are encountered with the situations in which teaching methods differ from their thinking about the way of teaching. Thus, the knowledge of language learners' beliefs is vital in order to take appropriate approaches and to improve language instruction (Horwitz, 1999; Sakui & Gaies, 1999; Yang, 1999; Zarate, Gohard-Radenkovic, Lussier, & Pens, 2004).

There are many factors including learner wants and syllabus expectations to which teachers refer for shaping their views within the process of teaching and learning. However, learners' and teachers' experiences have a powerful impact on their views about grammar teaching. Considering the need for congruence between teachers' and learners' belief, Berry (1997) conducted a research in which there were 372 undergraduate learners and 10 teachers in Hong Kong. The researcher used a 50-item questionnaire to measure the knowledge of grammatical terminology, and found "wide discrepancies between the learners in terms of their knowledge of metalinguistic terminology and between this and the teachers' estimation of it" which can cause problems in the classroom (p. 143). In the same vein, researchers like Kumaravadivelu (1991) stated that a similarity between teachers' and learners' beliefs result in effective teaching and learning. In contrast, a disagreement between teachers' and learners' ideas affects learning negatively.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Here in this study, teachers' and learners' beliefs and the process of grammar teaching and learning were examined. Thus, an attempt was made to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are teachers' beliefs about teaching grammar in language institutes?
- 2) What are learners' beliefs about learning grammar in language institutes?
- 3) What are the differences between teachers' beliefs and learners' beliefs about presenting grammar in language institutes?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Two groups of participants took part in this research: EFL teachers and learners. Both teachers and learners were randomly selected from different English language institutes in Isfahan, namely Nikan, Paya, Naazh, Setak, Sanato Madan, Safir, Kaaj, Daneshjou, Roshd, Azadeh, and Fardaye Behtar. The teachers who participated in the study had Masters and Bachelor degrees in different branches of English language. Out of 35 language teachers who were asked to complete the questionnaire, 30 teachers (13 males and 17 females) returned their questionnaires. Moreover, 200 students who participated in this study were randomly selected from all the above-mentioned English language institutes. However, 187 student questionnaires were returned.

Instruments

Two different questionnaires were adapted from different sources including Horwitz (1987), Farrell (2005), Borg (1999), and Burgess and Etherington (2002): one of them sought English language institute teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching and learning and the other elicited language institute learners' beliefs (see Appendix A & B). Each questionnaire used in this study consisted of two parts. The first part was about teachers' and learners' bio-data and their background, while the second part concerned with their beliefs about grammar and its teaching and learning in English language institute courses. It should be mentioned that learners' questionnaires were carefully and precisely translated into Persian, so that the participants could

fully understand the questions and answer them easily. The validity of the questionnaires was confirmed by three experts and their reliability was computed by cronbach's alpha. The reliability of teachers' questionnaire and learners' questionnaire were .80 and .88, respectively.

Procedures

The questionnaires were distributed among English language teachers, a few of whom answered the questionnaire after or between their class times. Other teachers were assigned a time for returning it during one week. So the questionnaires were collected during the spring and the summer semesters of 2014. Out of 35 distributed questionnaires, 30 were returned. Learners' questionnaires were also gathered after being distributed among the students of English language classes with the time limit of 20 minutes for each class. Out of 200 distributed questionnaires, 187 were completely answered and returned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained through the questionnaires answered by the teachers and learners were interpreted to assess their beliefs. The following accounts, which are based on the tables supplemented in the Appendixes, present the results of teachers' and learners' beliefs about grammar teaching and learning in language institute classes.

Teachers' Beliefs about the Grammar Teaching

Item 7 which demonstrated the importance of teaching grammar in language institute courses, had the highest percentage (7.0%) of the alternative 5. However, item 25, concerning the teaching approach category, and items 40 and 42 of the teaching techniques category had the least percentage (.5%) in this choice. In alternative 4, item 9, which related to the importance of grammar, and item 12, which related to reasons for teaching grammar, were the most frequently selected items by teachers with the percentage of 10.2, and the least percentage belonged to item 41 of the teaching techniques category (1.1%). Items 7, 8, and 9, referring to the importance of grammar, and item 11, which indicated practical reasons, with the percentage of .5, were among the least selected items of alternative 3; however, item 17, referring to the future occupation reason, had the highest percentage (6.4%).

The highest percentage of the alternative 2 belonged to item 42 of the teaching techniques category (8.6%). Item 19, which related to the learners' proficiency level, item 22, which referred to the decontextualized approach, item 23, which indicated the contextualized approach, item 29, which belonged to the student correction, and item 34, which demonstrated testing grammar at discourse level, had the lowest percentage (.5%) of this choice.

In the last alternative, the highest percentage belonged to item 8, referring to the importance of teaching grammar (7.5%), and the lowest one belonged to item 10, relating again to the importance of grammar, item 17, concerning future occupation, item 21, which presented implicit grammar teaching, item 22, which represented decontextualized teaching approach, item 28 and 31, which related to teacher-correction, and finally item 29, concerning student correction (.5%).

Learners' Beliefs about the Grammar Learning

Item 24, which was related to the correction category, had the highest percentage (59.4%) of alternative 5. On the other hand, item 26, which related to the same category, had the lowest percentage (2.1%) of this choice. Concerning alternative 4, item 2, concerning the definition of grammar, with the percentage of 51.3, and item 8, relating to the importance of grammar, with the percentage of 8.0 were the most and the least frequently selected items, respectively. The lowest percentage of alternative 3 belonged to item 24, which indicated teacher-correction (4.3%), and the highest one belonged to item 13, which presented reading skill as a reason for learning grammar (32.7%). In case of alternative 2, item 8, which showed the importance of grammar, with the percentage of 43.9 was the most preferred one, and item 1, which referred to the structural definition of grammar, with the percentage of 1.6 was the least frequently chosen item. It is clear from alternative 1 that item 37, which indicated use of learning aid techniques, had the highest percentage (57.8%). Items 3, and 5, which referred to the definition of grammar, items 10 and 14, which respectively related to writing and language development as the reasons for learning grammar, items 22, and 23 of learning approach category, item 28, which related to the teacher-correction, and finally item 29, which referred to the teacher-feedback, were among the least frequently selected items. Regarding the third research question of the study, the following descriptions are presented.

The Difference between Teachers' and Learners' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching and Learning

The similar items of teachers' questionnaire and learners' questionnaire consisted of 35 items including all 7 categories. The table in appendix F indicated that the highest mean (4.47) belonged to teacher-correction of learner group. It should also be mentioned that there were only 5 categories in which the means were above 4. These categories were definition of grammar in which the highest mean belonged to the learner group (item 1) and showed the learners' preference for structural definition of grammar (4.42); importance of grammar with the highest mean of 4.40 of teacher group (item 7); reasons for teaching/learning grammar with the highest mean of 4.33 of the teacher group (item 10) indicating practical reasons; teaching/learning approach with the mean of 4.19 of the learner group (item 15) relating to decontextualized approach; and correction with the mean of 4.47 of the learner group (item 19) which indicated teacher-correction. The table also represented that the two lowest means belonged to item 29, relating to using teaching/learning aids (1.84) for the learner group, and item 8, referring to the importance of teaching/learning grammar (1.56) for the teacher group.

Discussion

The items in the survey aimed to elicit teachers' and learners' beliefs about the grammar role in language teaching and learning. The items of the first category were asked for reaction to different views about the definition of grammar indicating that teachers and learners had structural view towards the definition of grammar. Regarding the structural view as crucial to the area of teaching and learning, it could be inferred that this kind of view made educators feel important about the structures and forms of the sentences rather than other aspects of a language as having a pragmatic role or a communicative one. This finding was in line with Swan's (2005)

view towards the grammar definition who perceived grammar as a set of rules in which the words can help learners with what to say in order to speak a language.

In this study, both teachers and learners had strong beliefs about the importance of grammar in language institutes. The reason might be that grammar has been conceived of as one of the most important concepts in human communication by which people express their thoughts and ideas they want to share. Thus, some researchers reported positive attitudes towards the importance of teaching grammar and its central role in language teaching (Batstone, 1994; Debata, 2013). On the contrary, in a study conducted by Loewen, et al. (2009), learners reacted negatively to studying grammar. They commented that spending time on grammar was a tedious job because numerous rules had to be memorized and learnt. Their finding is not congruent with the findings of the current study concerning the importance of teaching/learning grammar. The reason for this discrepancy could probably be attributed to the lack of usefulness of English outside the classroom and the way teachers teach grammar to the learners in their context.

Concerning the reason for teaching and learning grammar in language institutes, both teachers and learners believed that it was writing which could be considered as a compelling reason for teaching and learning grammar. Learners also felt an urgent need to improve their communication ability, self-confidence, and language development, which made it essential to learn grammar. They believed that if they did not know grammar well, they would not be able to speak and communicate appropriately. The explanation for this idea could be that without the help of grammar instruction, learners cannot use English accurately. Hence, focusing on grammatical concepts is essential for meaningful communication and assists learners in writing intelligibly. The findings supported the view of Tajzadeh, Khodabandehlou, and Jahandar (2013) who considered writing as a significant factor in learning grammar, and declared that learning the grammatical rules was required to write a foreign language accurately.

In the case of teaching/learning approach, teachers believed that learners' proficiency level in English language influenced teachers' decisions to provide learners with specific presentation of the grammatical rules. The reason may probably be the importance of instructional support provided by teachers at different proficiency levels, i.e. specific grammatical rules would be presented based on the language learners' proficiency level. Liu (2013) in his study revealed that in order to have a full understanding of the concepts of specific grammatical points, it would be a good idea to change the method of introducing the grammatical items as the proficiency level of the learners increases. On the contrary, learners valued learning the grammatical items at the sentence-level. The basis for this belief might be the variety of structures, vocabularies, and lack of explicitness within a text which make it incomprehensible for learners. This finding is in line with the survey carried out by Baleghizadeh and Farshchi (2009) who found that learning grammar within the texts was too difficult for their learners because its presentation in the texts was time-consuming and difficult.

As for the error correction, teachers preferred self-correction and peer-correction, while learners had strong beliefs in teacher-correction. The root of this type of belief could be that learners considered their teachers as knowledgeable authorities who can provide them with the best

possible type of feedback. In addition, the reason could be attributed to the assumption that most learners believed that teacher correction facilitates their learning and makes them improve and develop language awareness. Kavaliauskiene and Anusienė (2012) reported that learners' positive view on teacher-correction was connected with the importance of learning to speak English correctly. Likewise, some researchers had negative attitudes towards error-correction and believed that classroom time should not be devoted to such matters (Krashen, 1999; Semke, 1984; Terrell, 1977).

Another issue surveyed in this study was how to test grammar in language institutes. Results showed a degree of significant difference between teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding testing grammar in language institutes. They indicated that teachers strongly believed to have grammar test items at discourse-level, while learners preferred to have them at sentence-level. With regard to learners' point of view towards testing grammar at sentence-level, it could be noted that the texts may make comprehension and responding to test items hard for learners as a result of various structures and complicated grammatical features appearing in a text, while grammar structures practice out of context is not functional from teachers' viewpoint. The idea of decontextualized testing is in contradiction to Freeman's (2009) view who holds that testing grammar at sentence-level does not assess whether test takers can use grammar correctly in real-life situations.

In applying teaching/learning techniques, teachers and learners rarely used pictures, teaching devices, tables, figures, charts, songs, music, and games for their grammar teaching and learning. They agreed with contextualized and real life activities more frequently and used form-focused practice techniques more often than not. The justification might be that using student-centered activities provide a chance for learners to express themselves and enjoy learning. The finding supported Bowen's (2005) idea suggesting that contextualized task such as authentic reading texts would be challenging for learners to practice the grammatical points within a text, and fully comprehend the structures.

CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to explore teachers' and learners' beliefs about grammar teaching/learning in language institute courses. Moreover, it dealt with a comparison of teachers' and learners' beliefs about teaching/learning grammar. To this end, two questionnaires were adapted to elicit teachers' and learners' beliefs towards grammar teaching/learning. The participants of the study were initially 35 English language teachers and 200 learners, who were randomly selected from different English language institutes in Isfahan. The findings of this study indicated that teachers' and learners' beliefs were, to a large extent, similar towards teaching and learning grammar in language institute courses. It further revealed that from among 7 categories of beliefs about grammar teaching in English language institute courses, teachers and learners differ in their beliefs about error-correction and testing procedures.

It is concluded that the match between teachers' and learners' beliefs in different aspects of grammar teaching/learning can lead to the effective language teaching/learning strategies. This congruence further encourages them to take a balanced approach in order to fulfil their

requirements. Conversely, the divergence between teachers' and learners' attitudes make them fail to progress and achieve their goals. Thus, the mismatches should be identified for a better communication between teachers and learners in order for their expectations to be met. This research tried to extract teachers' and learners' beliefs without keeping factors of age, gender, and proficiency level under control, which could have influenced the result of the study.

REFERENCES

- Alanen, R. (2003). A sociocultural approach to young language learners' beliefs about language learning. In P. Kalaja, & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 55-85). Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Allen, L. Q. (2002). Teachers' pedagogical beliefs and the standards for foreign language learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 35(5), 518-529.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Farshchi, S. (2009). An exploration of teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar in Iranian high schools and private language institutes. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 52, 18-38.
- Ball, S. J., Kenny, A., & Gardiner, D. (1990). Literacy, politics and the teaching of English. In I. F. Goodson and P. Medway (Eds.), *Bringing English to order*. Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Barcelos, A. M. F. (2003). Teachers' and students' beliefs within a Deweyan framework: Conflict and influence. In P. Kalaja, & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.) *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 131-152). Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Batstone, R. (1994). *Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Berliner, D. C. (1987). Ways of thinking about students and classrooms by more and less experienced teachers. In J. Caldehead (Ed.), *Exploring teachers' thinking* (pp. 60-83). London: Cassell. Educational Limited.
- Berry, R. (1997). Teachers' awareness of learners' knowledge: The case of metalinguistic terminology. *Language Awareness*, 6 (2), 136-146.
- Borg, S. (1998). Teachers' pedagogical systems and grammar teaching: A qualitative study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32, 9-38.
- Borg, S. (1999). Studying teacher cognition in second language grammar teaching. *System*, 27, 19-31.
- Borg, S. (2003a). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, 36, 81-109.
- Borg, S. (2003b). Teacher cognition in grammar teaching: A literature review. *Language Awareness*, 12, 96-108.
- Bowen, T. (2005) *Exploiting Texts for Grammar Practice*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
- Breen, M. P., Hird, B., Milton, M., Oliver, R., & Thwaite, A. (2001). Making sense of language teaching: Teachers' principles and classroom practices. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 470-501.
- Burgees, J., & Etherington, S. (2002). Focus on grammatical form: Explicit or implicit? *System*, 30, 433-458.
- Burns, A. (1992). Teacher beliefs and their influence on classroom practice. *Prospect*, 7, 56-66.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S.L. (1990). Research on teaching and teacher research: The issues that divide. *Educational Researcher*, 19, 2-11.

- Debata, P. K. (2013). The importance of grammar in English language teaching: A reassessment. *Language in India*, 13(5), 482-486.
- Dufva, H. (2003). Beliefs in dialogue: A Bakhtinian view. In P. Kalaja & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 131-152). Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (1999). The reflective assignment: Unlocking pre-service teachers' beliefs on grammar teaching. *RELC Journal*, 30, 1-17.
- Farrell, T.S.C. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers*: New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, D. (2009). Teaching and testing grammar. In Long, M., Doughty, C. (Eds.), *Handbook of language teaching and testing* (pp. 518-542). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (1996). *Teacher learning in language teaching*. New York: CUP.
- Gardner, R. C. (1979). Social psychological aspect of second language acquisition. In H. Giles & R. St. Clair (Eds.), *Language and social psychology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Gardner, R. C., Masgoret, A. M., Tennant, J., & Mihic, L. (2004). Integrative motivation: Changes during a yearlong intermediate level language course. *Language Learning*, 54, 1-34.
- Hinkel, E., & Fotos, S. (2008). *New perspectives on grammar teaching in second language classrooms*. ESL and Applied Linguistics Professional Series: Taylor and Francis eLibrary.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning*, (pp.119-129), Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Horwitz, E.K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *Modern Language Journal*, 72 (3), 283-294.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning: A review of BALLI studies. *System*, 27, 557-576.
- Johnson, K. (1994). The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of pre-service English as a second language teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10 (4), 439-452.
- Kaçar, I. G., & Zengin, B. (2013). Perceptions of pre-service teachers of English towards grammar teaching in the Turkish context. *The Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 8(3), 50-80.
- Kalaja, P., (2003). Research on students' beliefs about SLA within a discursive approach. In P. Kalaja & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 131-152). Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Kavaliauskienė, G., & Anusienė, L. (2012). Case study: Learner attitudes towards the correction of mistakes. *Social Technologies*, 2(1), 88-101.
- Krashen, S. (1999). Seeking a role for grammar: A review of some recent studies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 32, 245-257.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1991). Language learning tasks: Teacher intention and learner interpretation. *ELT Journal* 45 (2), 98-107.
- Li, L., & Walsh, S. (2011). Seeing is believing: Looking at EFL teachers' beliefs through classroom interaction. *Classroom Discourse*, 2(1), 39-57.
- Liu, D. (2013). *Describing and explaining grammar and vocabulary in ELT*. London: Routledge.

- Loewen, S., Li, S., FEI, F., Thompson, A., Nakatsukasa, K., Ahn, S., & Chen, X. (2009). Second language learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction. *The Modern Language Journal*, 93, 91-104.
- Nazari, A., & Allahyar, N. (2012). Grammar teaching revisited: EFL teachers between grammar abstinence and formal grammar teaching. *Australian Journal of Teachers Education*, 37(2), 73-87.
- Ng, E. K. J., & Farrell, T. S. C. (2003). Do teachers' beliefs of grammar teaching match their classroom practices? A Singapore case study. In D. Deterding, A. Brown & Low E. L. (Eds.), *English in Singapore: Research on Grammar*. Singapore, (pp. 128-137): McGraw Hill, 128-137.
- Richards, J. C., Gallo, P. B., & Renandya, W. A. (2001). Exploring teachers' beliefs and the processes of change. *PAC Journal*, 1 (1), 41-58.
- Riley, R. (1996, November). *BATs and BALLs: Beliefs about talk and beliefs about language learning*. Proceedings of the International Conference Autonomy 2000: The Development of Learning Independence in Language Learning, Bangkok.
- Sakui, K., & Gaies, J. (1999). Investigating Japanese learners' beliefs about language Learning. *System*, 27, 473-492.
- Sanchez, H. S. (2010). *An investigation into the relationships among experience, teacher cognition, context, and classroom practice in EFL grammar teaching in Argentina*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick, Centre for Applied Linguistics.
- Semke, H. D. (1984). Effects of the red pen. *Foreign Language Annals*, 17, 195-202.
- Shavelson, R. J., & Stern, P. (1981). Research on teachers' pedagogical thoughts, judgments, decisions, and behavior. *Review of Educational Research*, 51 (4), 445-498.
- Stern, S.L. (1991). An integrated approach to literature in ESL/EFL. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 328-346). New York: Newbury House.
- Swan, M. (2005). *Grammar*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tajzadeh, P., Khodabandehlou, M., & Jahandar, S. (2013). The effect of grammar instruction on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing ability. *Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences*, 3(3), 251-256.
- Terrell, T. D. (1977). A natural approach to second language acquisition and learning. *Modern Language Journal*, 61, 325-337.
- Terrell, T. D. (1991). The role of grammar instruction in a communicative approach. *Modern Language Journal*, 75, 52-63.
- Wach, A. (2013). Teachers' beliefs about EFL grammar learning and teaching. In E. Piechurska-Kuciel, & E. Szyman'ska-Czaplak (Eds.), *Language in cognition and affect, second language learning and teaching* (pp. 295-311). Berlin: Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg.
- Wu, C. H. (2007). *Spoken grammaticality and EFL teacher candidates: Measuring the effects of an explicit grammar teaching method on the oral grammatical performance of teacher candidates*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University.
- Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy Use. *System*, 27, 515-535.

Zarate, G., Gohard-Radenkovic, A., Lussier, D., & Pens, H. (2004). (Eds.). *Cultural mediation and language learning and teaching*. Kapfenberg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Appendix A Teachers' Belief Questionnaire

Dear colleagues,

Our goal in this research is to study teachers' beliefs about teaching grammar in language institutes courses and your participation will definitely help us achieve the purpose. Please kindly spare a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Gender: ☐ male ☐ female
2. Age:
3. Academic major:
4. Highest academic qualifications:
☐ Master's degree ☐ doctorate ☐ other; please specify
5. Teaching Experience:
6. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

A : Definition of grammar :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Grammar is a set of structures and rules of a language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Grammar is concerned with using the correct tenses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Grammar means to produce language structures accurately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Grammar helps better understand different meanings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Grammar means the appropriate use of language in different situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Grammar facilitates communication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B : The importance of teaching grammar in language institute courses :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7. Grammar is important and has to be taught in language institute courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It is not needed to teach grammar to learners because they've already had it in high school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. It is good to dedicate some time to teaching grammar in language institute classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Grammar should be the main part of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

language institute syllabus.					
C : Reasons to teach grammar in language institute courses :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11. Learners need to know the grammar rules for writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Grammar is important to improve learners' communication ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Grammar looks tidy, teachable and easily testable so it's desirable to be taught in language institute courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Teaching grammar gives power to teachers by showing that they know more than the learners do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Learners generally need to understand the grammatical rules of English in order to improve their reading skill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Learners need grammar for future occupation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D : How to teach grammar in language institute courses :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18. Grammatical structures taught depend on learners' needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. The approaches to grammar teaching depend largely on the learners' proficiency level in the English language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Grammar should be taught explicitly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Grammar should be taught implicitly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Teacher should present grammatical rules at sentence level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Teachers should teach grammatical structures not only in discrete sentences but also in texts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Both inductive and deductive approaches should be used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. There is an essential need to provide a large number of complex exercises for learners to master the grammatical structures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E : Error correction and feedback in language institute classes :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree

26. When learners make errors, I correct them and later I explain it to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. When learners make errors, I ignore them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I only correct learners' errors if it interferes with communication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I provide learners with an opportunity to think about their performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. I encourage learners to correct each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. I correct local errors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. I correct global errors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F: How to test grammar in language institute courses.	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
33. I test grammar at sentence level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. I test grammar in context(text or at discourse level)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Grammar is one of the most important parts of language institute exam.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer these questions using “always”, “often”, “usually”, “sometimes”, “never”:

G: How much do you use these techniques to teach grammar in language institute classes?	Always	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Using story-telling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using role-play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using pictures and images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using teaching devices and aids (balls, boxes, dolls and so on)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using tables, figures, charts and diagrams (such as tense tables)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using music, songs and poems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making learners participate in real life tasks in order to develop their grammatical knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using contextualized practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using form-focused practice (such as substitution drills)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B

Learners' Belief Questionnaire

Dear learners,

Our goal in this research is to study learners' beliefs about learning grammar in language institute courses and your participation will definitely help us achieve the purpose. Please kindly spare a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Gender: ☐ male ☐ female
2. Age:
3. Academic major:
4. Highest academic qualifications:
☐ Associate degree ☐ Bachelor's degree
5. Please indicate how far you agree with the following statements:

A : Definition of grammar :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Grammar is a set of structures and rules of a language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Grammar is concerned with using the correct tenses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Grammar means to produce language structures accurately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Grammar helps better understand different meanings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Grammar means the appropriate use of language in different situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Grammar facilitates communication.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B : The importance of learning grammar in language institute courses :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7. Grammar is important and has to be learnt in language institute courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It is not needed to learn grammar because the learners have already learnt it in high school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. It is good to dedicate some time to learning grammar in language institute classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C : learners need grammar :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10. for writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. for improving communication ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. for security and self-confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. for improving their reading skill.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. for language development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. for future occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D : How to learn grammar in language institute courses :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16. Grammar should be clearly and explicitly presented in language institute classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Learners should be presented with grammatical rules at sentence level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Learning grammar should be in reading context in language institute courses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Learners should learn grammatical structures not only in discrete sentences but also in texts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Learners learn grammar better when they start with examples and then identifying the rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Learners learn grammar better when they work on rules in first place and then have some examples.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Frequent practice is a key for learners to improve their grammatical accuracy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Learning reading skills in language courses develops learners' grammatical knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E : Error correction and feedback in language institute classes :	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
24. When I make errors, I expect teacher to correct me and later explain it to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. I expect to have an opportunity to look and evaluate my learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. I like my classmates to correct my errors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. I expect teacher to correct the errors which are important (global errors).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I expect teacher to correct all my errors.(local errors)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Teacher should check if I have understood and learnt the grammar rules under study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Learners should work together and help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

each other to evaluate their learning.					
F: How to test grammar in language institute courses.	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
31. Grammar items should be at sentence level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Grammar items should be in context(text or at discourse level)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer these questions using “always”, “often”, “usually”, “sometimes”, “never”:

G: How much do you use these techniques to learn grammar in language institute classes?	Always	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Memorizing the grammatical rules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning the rules in “story”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning the rules in “role-play”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using pictures and images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using balls, boxes, dolls and other learning devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using tables, figures, charts and diagrams (such as tense tables)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using music, songs and poems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning the rules by playing games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning by participating in real life tasks in order to develop my grammatical knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning by extracting the rules from the passages in the course book and working on them. (contextualized practice)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form-focused practice (such as substitution drills)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF ESP STATUS IN IRAN

Farid Ghaemi

Assistant Professor, Karaj Branch Islamic Azad University, Karaj, Iran
Email: ghaemi@kiaau.ac.ir

Hojat Sarlak

Visiting professor, Shahriyar Branch Islamic Azad University, Shahriyar, Iran
Email: Hojat.Sarlak@shriau-ac.ir

ABSTRACT

Teaching ESP (English for specific purpose) courses is widespread in many countries in the world, and also in Iran. During forty years of ESP courses, numerous studies have been conducted addressing and questioning the effectiveness of such courses and now this is one of the most controversial issues among academics, teachers, textbook writers, and students. Most ESP teachers and content area specialists express their deep dissatisfaction with their performance in ESP courses and such courses are considered as a huge burden on the shoulder of students and teachers. As such, the output is not satisfactory. The present paper is a critical reflection and appraisal of the current ESP (English for specific purposes) status in Iran from both retrospective and introspective perspectives. To do so, the researchers primarily focused on the English background of ESP learners entering universities to highlight the mismatch between ESP goals and language proficiency of the ESP learners (retrospection). Then, they shifted their focus on factors arising out of ESP status itself (introspection). This study indicates that we must consider both background of the ESP learners (language proficiency) and the impact of determining factors on teaching ESP courses in Iran if we want to find a solution to this long-lasting problem. At the end some practical educational implications are proposed for ESP material designers, teachers, and policy makers in ministry of science, research, and technology.

KEYWORDS: ESP, EAP, need analysis, EGP, ESP teacher, content area specialist, teacher education

INTRODUCTION

What is ESP?

The study of language for specific purposes (ESP) has a long and interesting history going back, some would say, as far as Roman and Greek Empires. Since the 1960s, ESP has become a vital and innovative activity within the teaching of English as a foreign or second language movement (Howatt, 1984).

Johnson and Johnson (1998) write the following definition for ESP:

English for specific purpose (ESP) is a broad and diverse field of language teaching. In its earlier manifestations in 1960's, it was particularly associated with the notion of a special language or

register (EAP). Later developments have included a communicative view of language as applied to ESP, recognition of the importance of need analysis procedures, and an increasing focus on appropriate perspectives on language learning and language skills (p-105).

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), ESP must be seen as an approach. ESP is not a particular type of teaching material. Understood properly, it is an approach to language learning, which is based on learner need. The foundation of all ESP is the simple question: why does this learner need to learn a foreign language? From this question will follow a whole host of further questions, some of which will relate to the learners themselves, some to the nature of the language the learners will need to operate, some to the given learning content. However, this whole analysis drives from an initial identified need on the part of the learner to learn a language. ESP then is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning.

Dudley-Evans, Co-editor of the ESP Journal defines ESP in terms of 'absolute' and 'variable' characteristics.

Definition of ESP (Dudley-Evans, 1998):

Absolute Characteristics

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners
2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves
3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems

Critical Features of ESP

1. It is goal directed, i.e. a means rather than an end in itself. This perspective is fundamental to a view that sees language as a "service" rather than a subject studied for its own sake, and has been a powerful influence on most areas of ESP research and practice.
2. It is based on an analysis of learner's needs.

Engaging with Disciplines

Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Joe St. John (1998) proposed three levels of cooperation in order to teach subject-specific works:

- *Cooperation*

Cooperation is the first stage and involves the language teacher taking the initiative in asking questions and gathering information about the student subject course, how English fits into their

course and what the department and students see as priorities. In fact, this is part of the target situation analysis required for needs analysis.

- *Collaboration*

If cooperation largely involves the language teacher taking the initiative and finding out what happens in the subject department, collaboration involves the more direct working together of the two sides, language and subject, to prepare students for particular tasks or courses. In collaboration the language and subject teacher work together outside the classroom.

- *Team-teaching*

The final level of subject-language interaction is the actual working together in the classroom of the subject and language specialists, usually referred to as team – teaching.

Classification of ESP

Historically, such abbreviations as EAP, EOP, EST, and EBT have been used in describing ESP. Robinson (1991) has classified ESP as either English for academic purposes (EAP) or English for occupational purposes (EOP). This classification was based on the experience of the learners and time and age were considered as the most important factors.

Presently, another professional based classification of ESP has been proposed by Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Joe St. John (1998). Here, ESP is divided to EAP and EOP according to discipline or professional area. Based on this model, in EAP, English for science and technology has been the main area, but English for medical purposes and English for legal purposes have always had their places. Recently, the academic study of business, finance, banking, economics, accounting, and numerous other EAP courses especially in master in business administration (MBA) have become established.

English for occupational purposes (EOP) refers to English that is not for academic purposes; it includes professional purposes in administration, medicine, law, and business, and vocational purposes for non-professionals in work or pre-work situations. Therefore, we may distinguish between studying the language and discourse of, for example, medicine for academic purposes, which is designed for medical students, and studying for occupational purposes, which is designed for practicing doctors.

In this introductory section, we focused on English as it is related to academic purposes (EAP). First, we distinguish between English for academic purposes and general English. Then, EAP situations are introduced and subsequently, its situation in Iran is determined. Finally, the prominent skill used in EAP i.e. Reading is elaborated in detail.

English for academic purposes is an educational approach. It is unlike general English courses. It begins with the learners and the situation whereas General English begins with the language. General English tends to teach learners conversational and social genres of the language while EAP courses tend to teach formal, academic genres.

The key determinant of what an EAP course should contain is whether the subject course is taught in English. In this regard there are four types of EAP situation, exemplified here using tertiary level institutions. Some features may also apply to the teaching of English at secondary school level, where, particularly in the senior, immediately pre-university classes, English courses will have EAP component. These four situations are as follows:

Situation 1

EAP in English speaking countries such as UK, USA, Australia where students come from another country in foreign system; for them both general and academic culture may be different; everything around them operates in English.

Situation 2

EAP in ESL situations such as Zimbabwe where education at all levels have been mainly in English; the civil service uses English, but people mostly use their first language in everyday life.

Situation 3

EAP situations where subject courses are taught in the national language e.g. Jordan are among third situation EAP types. In tertiary education, some subjects are taught in L1, but others, such as medicine, engineering, and science, are taught in English.

Situation 4

EAP situations where subject courses are taught in the national language in countries like Brazil are called fourth EAP situation type. In these situation all tertiary level education is taught in the L1; English is the auxiliary language (Tony- Evans & Maggie Jo St John, 1998, p. 34-41).

In this situation, the materials focus on key micro-skills related to overall to overall macro-skill of reading, but also teach certain lexical and grammatical items relevant to the comprehension of undergraduate academic reading texts (Tony- Evans & Maggie Jo St John, 1998, p. 40).

The actual methodology is also fascinating: the classes are taught in national language and this enables the teacher to lead some very detailed discussions about the linguistic structure of the text and the techniques of deducing meaning of the text in a foreign language. In some respects the classes resemble a problem-solving class in applied discourse analysis in detail in workings of an English text (Alderson & Scott, 1992; Scott, 1981a, 1981b). In the study that follows, the focus will be on the fourth situation which exemplifies the current EAP situation in Iran. In our country, EAP has often been referred to as technical English and the courses have focused almost exclusively on reading.

Significance of reading in EAP

To catch up with the changing world, students are supposed to be lifelong learners. Reading is in charge at that point. Supposing that most of the learning processes occur in terms of reading, students should have a meaningful and critical reading process. Without supportive skills of reading comprehension, desired level of learning may not be reached (Yalcin & Sengul, 2004).

At college, reading activities are made to comprehend the academic materials and to learn the conceptual framework. These materials are complex ones with lots of concepts and information. Students are supposed to read and understand the assigned texts before coming to classes on their own. Such a reading process means to read beyond the lines and to think critically (Shelton, 2006).

The role of reading is much more striking in comprehension of EAP texts where a reader is actively involved in using available content knowledge (content schemata) and knowledge of the text structure (formal schemata) to construct the meaning of the text (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Carrel, Devine, & Eskey, 1988; Rumelhart, 1980; Swaffar, 1988).

One of the most important contributions to the approach to reading in EAP was the shift from text as linguistic object (TALO) to text as a vehicle of information (TAVI) (Johns and Davis, 1983). They encapsulated the key principles, that for EAP learners, extracting information accurately and quickly is more significant than language details; that understanding the macrostructures comes before language study; and that application of the information in the text is of paramount importance. Therefore, language knowledge is the medium of comprehension of content knowledge, which is of prime importance.

Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie Jo. St. John (1998) proposed three key stages in designing and teaching a reading course: selection of texts, extracting and recording information, and the use of information that has been gathered.

Selecting texts:

Traditionally, texts have mainly been chosen by institutions and teachers: by institutions through the textbooks available on the market; by the teacher through the textbooks in their resource center and any supplementary material they provide. However, learners and subject specialists also have an important role to play in selecting texts for reading. The texts they supply can become part of a regular course.

The criteria used for selecting texts will relate to key features of both carrier and real content. Key features of carrier content include conceptual level, novelty, value, and interest. The key features of content include significance, relation to objectives, exploitability, clarity, and accessibility.

Once good texts have been selected, activities can be written. These will relate to the overall purpose of reading the text and, so the process begins from using the information gathered.

Using the information that has been gathered:

It is one from which the design of activities begins. Knowing what students would really do with a text, and why is necessary for setting the task that will guide the reading process and determine all the other activities.

The first stage for the EAP teacher is to know what kind of tasks and processing would be associated with particular texts or information.

Extracting and recording information:

With a short document, highlighting the relevant information on the actual text may be an appropriate strategy. With longer or more complex documents, extracting the information and recognizing it and fitting it in with existing knowledge is necessary. Visual representation can be very helpful for this especially for right hemisphere learners. Key graphic representations include lists, columns, tables, matrices, tree diagrams, flow charts, bubble diagrams, and mind maps. Then, there are other two dimensional representations such as concept maps, plans, pictures, and different kinds of graphs. Which type is appropriate depends in part on the type of information.

A RETROSPECTIVE REFLECTION ON ESP IN IRAN

English as an international language and as the international means of general and scientific communication has an EFL status in Iran depriving the learners from a very precious wealth of incidental and semi natural context of learning.

With this background at hand, this language enters the educational system from the second year of junior high school in Iran utilizing mostly a grammar-translation method that, according to Richards and Rodgers (2002), requires quantitative repetitions and substitutions to master grammatical structures that are taught deductively. Vocabulary is pre taught, reading passages are translated on a word-by-word basis, and no attention is paid to the oral form of the language. The EFL Learners have mechanical roles in such a system and are not actively engaged in the process of learning. Moreover, in the absence of enough and proper input and exposure, they are expected to demonstrate a satisfying output. Therefore, these courses are not effective enough and the students who leave the public school system in Iran suffer poor English language proficiency.

Although there has recently been a shift of focus from GTM (grammar translation method) to CLT (communicative language teaching) in our educational system, we cannot expect dramatic changes in short run specially bearing in mind some generations of teachers who have been trained (not educated) in teacher training centers according to GTM. Bearing those historical pitfalls in mind, one must immediately recognize the wide gap between ESP learners' English proficiency level and the academic purpose of ESP. English is a required course for the university students in Iran which emphasizes reading literature.

As mentioned above, in the academic level, there has been a shift of focus with regard to the purpose of ESP from text as linguistic object (TALO) to language as vehicle of information (TAVI). These courses and the related textbooks are designed and developed with this presupposition that learners do not have a difficult time going through the linguistic structures and getting to the content information through reading strategies.

But, as soon as it starts working, it stops working since learners have a hard time handling the linguistic difficulties, let alone content information. This language proficiency level will

automatically lead the ESP teachers toward teaching such courses on a word-by-word translation basis.

This is all but a synopsis of historical accounts of the current EGP (English for general purposes) status in Iran. Therefore, it can be concluded that EGP courses beginning from high school and leading to pre-university do not leave a valuable heritage behind for ESP learners now in the tertiary level.

AN INTROSPECTIVE REFLECTION ON ESP IN IRAN

As teachers, academics, textbook writers, course designers and even students, we cannot sit back and hope that the educational system and policy makers will change the status in near future and it should not be an excuse for us so as not to reflect on ourselves. Therefore, in this section we turn to an introspective reflection of ESP in the academic level.

Need analysis

Belcher (2006) states that ESP specialists assume that there are problems that education can improve and that these problems being unique to specific learners in specific contexts should be addressed carefully with tailored-to-fit instructions. Therefore, first the ESP specialists usually assess the learners' needs and then design and implement specialized curricula in response to the identified needs. It is due to this emphasis on the concept of needs that there are striking differences among curriculum designers, material developers and teachers.

Dudley-Evans and John (1998) believed that needs analysis is the cornerstone of ESP and makes the course purposeful. There are many classifications of needs, objective and subjective, perceived and felt and process oriented and product oriented, to name a few. Dudley-Evans and John (1998) accept that needs analysis is the first step before a course, but at the same time they admit that different situations may alter the way in which needs analysis is actually conducted.

Jordan (1997) states that there are other terms, such as necessities, demands, lacks, likes and deficiencies also proposed for the concept of "needs". According to him, for an EAP needs analysis factors such as the subject of the study, necessary language, study situation and the related study skills, should be considered.

After the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, the then Ministry of Higher Education began to establish uniform discipline-based EAP programs for universities that have led to designing several ESP textbooks for students of medicine, engineering, science, social sciences, humanities and other academic fields (Mohammad, Hashemi, Lamir, Farideh, & Namju, 2011).

As Eslami-Rasekh (2010) mentions the purpose of these programs is to enhance the students' motivation and interest through providing EAP courses that are more related to the learners' needs in special fields of study. However, as Eslami-Rasekh (2010) claims these courses were not designed based on any systematic needs analysis so the program designer's goals do not seem to have been fulfilled.

For ESP, if narrowed down to an Iranian context, the cornerstone of the needs analysis is to understand the wide gap between the ESP goals and the ESP learners' language proficiency. Such understanding will dramatically influence the process of needs analysis. However, the absence of such a perception has led to the present status in which both ESP teachers and ESP learners are the slaves of textbooks. Level adaptation is not met and even in this system the best educated teachers cannot go beyond translation on a word by word basis and students have mechanical roles in a cold, de-motivating context.

EGP or ESP?

EAP courses could generally be divided into two main sections: EGP (English for general purposes or general English) and ESP (English for specific purposes).

Entering universities with that poor language proficiency, students are supposed to study EAP courses (i.e. EGP and ESP). In designing such courses, we must consider students' proficiency level, needs, interests, course and institution level, and availability of recourses.

Zohrabi (2010) states that based on the experience of teaching in EFL situation, students largely need general English rather than specific English. Every year many students enter schools and universities and study the EAP courses (i.e. EGP and ESP) in EFL situations. A great amount of money, resources, time and energy are spent on these courses. However, the end results of such programs are less than satisfactory. Hyland (2002) believes that it is “probably because of gaps in school curricula or the insufficient application of learners themselves” (p. 386). The most important barriers students face in an EFL context like that of Iran are language components (vocabulary and grammar), the four language skills, and appropriate use of language. The ESP students in EFL situations mostly need to acquire general English and harness language in order to deal effectively with the requirements of their subject-specific courses.

Unfortunately, some students, teachers, and administrators assume that General English is not important and cannot develop students' linguistic and communicative competence. They assume that EGP is a general course which can barely teach useful things to the students. However, as Widdowson(1998) emphasizes “simplicity of language is not to be equated with accessibility of meaning” (p. 5). Mainly, EGP should assist students to function effectively in their specific field of study. This branch of ELT is a means to help learners to fulfill their academic requirements (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2000).

Teacher education

The prerequisite to investigating teacher education is to define the role of ESP teachers. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) use the term “practitioner” rather than “teacher” to emphasize that ESP work involves much more than teaching. According to them, ESP practitioner can have several roles: *The ESP practitioner as a teacher, The ESP practitioner as course designer and material provider, The ESP practitioner as researcher, the ESP practitioner as collaborator, and The ESP practitioner as evaluator.*

What reality reveals in an Iranian context is that teacher education is not provided for both ESP teachers and content area specialists and there is no cooperation between these two groups of teachers. In addition to the poor language proficiency of the ESP learners, ESP teachers are not motivated enough to deal with the scientific content information of an academic field of study other than their own field. On the other hand, content area specialists do not have an acceptable command over language and their only choice is translation. As such the output is not satisfactory. One other problem is that ESP teachers barely evaluate and reflect on their own teaching in such a de-motivating context. They (ESP teachers and content area specialists) cannot bridge the gap among ESP learners, ESP textbook designers/writers, and policy makers.

Strategic teaching and the use of reading strategies has no place in such classes. Therefore, we cannot direct students, especially considering their background, to the content information through mere translation of ESP texts.

ESP Materials

The most prominent debate on ESP is concerned with the selection and use of authentic vs. non-authentic, general vs. subject-specific and simple vs. simplified materials. One major problem as posed on an Iranian context is again the lack of need analysis in the process of designing, developing, and writing ESP materials. One other problem is that in the real world teachers barely save any time to research and develop appropriate and useful materials.

Therefore, it is believed that many teachers have become slaves of the published course books available. Gatehouse (2001) notes that “no one ESP text can live up to its name” (p. 10). Clapham (2001) states that finding appropriate materials is indeed difficult and the appropriateness of these materials cannot be determined in advance.

Last but not the least, as Azizfar, Koosha, and Lotfi(2010) state, it is disappointing that researchers have not provided more guidance to enable teachers and administrators to make wiser decisions.

EFL teachers or content area specialists?

Who must teach ESP, EFL teachers or content area specialists? As Maleki (2011) has rightfully stated teaching English for Specific Purposes was and is a controversial issue among EFL teachers and others. The result of his study indicates that EFL teachers are more qualified to teach ESP courses. Our experience as ESP teachers in different universities in Iran shows that in most universities, content area specialists teach the ESP courses and EGP courses are assigned to EFL teachers.

Unfortunately, the only resort of content area specialist is the translation of ESP texts on a word by word basis. They do not have much command over the language, strategic reading, pronunciation, and other critical linguistic features of the text. The historical background of ESP learners makes the situation much more difficult. Here we need a veteran EFL teacher to pave the way for students in the process of reading and comprehension of such texts. An EFL teacher can better disentangle the students from the linguistic difficulties of the text and lead them to the

content information by employing a variety of reading strategies that simplifies the difficulties of the text.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Following those retrospective and prospective reflection on ESP in Iran, some instructional implications are proposed here:

- As long as policy makers in our educational system are reluctant to make some dramatic changes in our educational system, the chronic disease of ESP cannot be cured in Iran. Therefore, the methodology must change. To do so, we must change the methodology of teacher education in teacher training centers focusing on the most recent trends of teaching, post method, and critical reflection. GTM must be eradicated from schools and new materials arising out of such changes must be introduced. All these require volition, investment, and support on the part of ministry of education and ministry of science, research, and technology. If we succeed in doing so, students will enter universities with a rich general English background making the connection between students' language proficiency and the goals of ESP.
- ESP emerged out of the concern with the needs of different groups of learners. English is the medium of communication and people from all walks of life need to learn it to fulfill such needs as exchanging ideas, communicating on the internet and social networks, performing educational and occupational tasks, and reading newspapers, magazines, writing for conference presentation. De-motivation of the learners and inefficiency of the ESP classes may stem from ignoring their needs and expectations by authorities and decision makers. In fact our educational system at tertiary level is suffering from the lack of systematic need analysis. Policy makers, universities, ESP teachers, and material writers must pay attention to the needs of the learners. Dehnad, et al. (2014) recommended that a team consisting of instructors from educational departments, including English language department and students come to some agreements about educational needs, wants, expectations and desires about ESP curriculum of post graduate students. Moreover, ESP teachers must engage in the process of exchanging their ideas about students' needs and expectations with content area specialists. As Benesch (1996, pp. 736) claims, needs analysis is a political and subjective process. Critical needs analysis assumes that institutions are hierarchical and those at the bottom are often entitled to more power than they have. Hashemi, et al. (2011) stipulated that learners, who are at the bottom of the hierarchy in top-down educational systems such as Iran, should be given more power and their voices should be heard in order to facilitate change. Faculty members need to become aware of what their students *need*, versus what the institutions think of as being necessary and take action accordingly.
- As Dora Chostelidou, et al.(2009) has stated the impact of teacher training on optimizing teaching and learning opportunities in the ESP classroom need hardly be argued as the distinct characteristics and the nature of English for Specific Purposes require awareness on the part of the ESP teachers as to the diversified roles and the modern instructional needs assumed of them. Using skills as a framework of ESP, ESP teachers must be provided with the necessary knowledge and tools to deal with their own students' specializations. Most of them are not

specialists in the field and they work with students who know the subject better than the teacher do. A professional teacher is someone who develops the essential skills in understanding, using, and presenting authentic information through various learning strategies and is able to switch from one professional field to another without being obliged to spend months on getting started. Wright et al. (1997) declared that “more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor” (p. 63). Hence, studying and exploring teachers’ personalities, beliefs, and performances is arguably required to discover the efficient options for fostering the learning process. By providing teachers with teacher education programs, the educational system can help them continue their own educations, gain vital skills that they may not have been able to learn while taking college courses, and stay current with new techniques. It is critical for teachers not only to know their material but also to help students in order for them to truly succeed. The purpose of these programs must be educating teachers on the best ways to instruct and motivate students for the best possible outcomes.

- One more practical implication for ESP in an Iranian context is that because of the dearth of adequate exposure to general English, students need more EGP rather than ESP courses. As Zohrabi (2010) has stated, undergraduate students are not provided with general English language for adequate period of time at university, i.e. EGP is only offered during the first or second semester. The students need to be exposed to general English language throughout the whole period of their studies. That is, it is better that EGP course to be offered to the students each semester. When the students obtained enough language proficiency, they could tackle their subject-specific texts more easily.

*Who must teach ESP? EFL teachers or content area specialists? In Iran, most of the ESP courses are taught by content area specialists and the result of the studies conducted by Davoudi-Mobarakeh, et al. (2014) and the observations of the researchers in the present study show that

* Specialists are just vocally active but EFL teachers are ready for a variety of pedagogical movements in the class.

*Specialists have less encouraging students. EFL teachers make more autonomous learners by engaging them in the process of learning. EFL teachers provoke ESP learners background knowledge by frequent warm ups and various strategies and materials.

* Specialist classes are teacher oriented but EFL teacher classes are student centered.

*Specialists are not knowledgeable enough to tackle the linguistic problems posed on texts. ESP teachers just translate.

*As Duddly-Evans (1998) states the EFL teachers need not have a scientific command on the ESP texts.

*More student participation has been reported where EFL teachers run the classes.

* Translation is limited in EFL teacher class, but it is very common in specialist class.

* the use of different learning strategies by EFL teachers motivates and involve the students in the process of learning while a content area specialist can only teach on a word by word translation basis where learners have a mechanical role and are de-motivated.

- The evaluation of ESP materials is closely related to students' motivation and their needs, thus affecting the efficiency of the course. Materials provide a stimulus to learning. Good materials do not teach: they encourage learners to learn (Hutchinson and Waters, 1992, p. 107). Wallace (1992) specifies five determining criteria in order to evaluate the ESP materials:
 - * Adequacy — the materials should be of the appropriate language, age, level.
 - * Motivation — they should present content which is interesting and motivating for students' work. It aims at students' effectiveness, interest and pleasure of work.
 - * Sequence — it is important if there is some relation to previous texts, activities, topics not to miss the sense of a lesson.
 - * Diversity — they should lead to a range of classroom activities, be a vehicle for teaching specific language structure and vocabulary and promote reading strategies.
 - * Acceptability — they should accept different cultural customs or taboos.

To sum up, materials evaluation not only helps an ESP practitioner to adjust the teaching materials to the learners' needs and their level of proficiency, but also keep them motivated. ESP courses have started to be more prevalent particularly in our rapidly developing country in recent decades since Iran has undergone a lot of changes in her national and foreign policy, international trade and economy. Sometimes, it has been observed that students are not motivated to study English. As most of them do need English for their future studies and careers, it should be found out why they do not show enough motivation to learn English. One of the reasons would be that they have to study books which are not compiled for their specific needs.

CONCLUSION

In this study, a critical appraisal of ESP in Iran from both retrospective and prospective perspectives was presented. With regard to the retrospective side, we focused on the general English background of the ESP learners before entering the universities. We concluded that one striking problem students face while reading ESP courses at the academic level was their poor language proficiency they carry with themselves to the university which is not compatible with the goals of ESP. The introspective side of this reflective study focused on five determining yet ignored factors in ESP especially in an Iranian context (need analysis, teacher education, EGP or ESP?, ESP materials, EFL teacher or content area specialist?).

Finally, and based on those introspective and prospective reflections, some educational implications were proposed for policy makers (ministry of education and ministry of science, research, and technology), educational institutions (namely universities), teachers, students, and ESP textbook writers.

REFERENCES

- Azizfar, A., Koosha, M., & Lotfi, A. R. (2010). An analytical evaluation of Iranian high school ELT textbooks from 1970 to the present. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 3, (pp. 36-44). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.010>.

- Belcher, D. D. (2006). English for specific purposes: Teaching to perceived needs and imagined futures in worlds of work, study and everyday life. *TESOL quarterly*, 40(1).<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/40264514>
- Benesch S. (1996). Needs analysis and curriculum development in EAP: an Example of a critical approach. *TESOL QUARTERLY*, 30(4), 723-38.
- Carrel, P. L., Devine, J., & Eskey, D. E. (1988). *Interactive approaches to second language reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chostelidou D. et al. (2009). A record of the training needs of ESP practitioners in vocational education. Selected papers from the 18th ISTAL.
- Davoudi-Mobarakeh, S. et al. (2014). Observation and feedback of content specialists versus general English teachers: suggestions to make optimal English for specific purpose courses. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 13
- Dehnad, A (2014). Postgraduate ESP curriculum: reading and writing needs. *Acta MedicalIranica*, 25 (5).
- Dudley-Evans, T. (2001). Team-teaching in EAP: Changes and adaptations in the Birmingham approach. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 225-238). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dudley-Evans, T., St. John, & M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: a multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Dudley-Evans T., & St John M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific Purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z., & Valizadeh, K. (2004). Classroom activities viewed from different perspectives: Learners' voice vs. teachers' voice. *TESL EJ*, 8(3), 1-13
- Eslami, Z. R. (2010). Teachers' Voice vs. Students' Voice: A Needs Analysis Approach to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in Iran. *English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 2-11
- Gatehouse, K. (2001). *Key issues in English for specific purposes curriculum*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2002). Specificity revisited: How far should we go now? *English for Specific Purposes*, 21, 385-395.
- Hashemi, M. R., Lamir, A. R., & Namju, F. R. (2011). English for B. Sc. Students of physical education in Iran: a study of perception of English needs and effectiveness of ESP textbooks. *Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 1 (2).
- Howatt, A. (2004). *A History of English Language Teaching*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1992), editors. *English for specific purposes*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge university press;
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A Learning-centered Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 145.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1992). *English for specific purposes: a learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2006). English for academic purposes. London: Routledge. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7(10).

- Johns, A. M., & Dudley-Evans, T. (1991, Summer). English for Specific Purposes: International in Scope, Specific in Purpose. *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)*, 25(2), pp. 297-314. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3587465>
- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic purposes: a guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511733062>
- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic purposes: a guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511733062>
- Johns, T., & Davies, F. (1983). Text as a vehicle for information: The classroom use of written texts in teaching Reading in a Foreign Language. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 1, 1-19.
- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic purposes: a guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511733062>.
- Long, M. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Maleki, A. (2006). *ESP teaching: a matter of controversy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Maleki, A. (2005). Medicine or Medical? In: Kiany, G. R., Khayyamdar, M. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference* (vol. 1). SAMT, Tehran, PP. 169-178.
- Maleki, A. (2006). A survey on the Relationship between English Language Proficiency and the Academic Achievement of Iranian EFL Students. *Korea TESOL* 8 (1), 49-57.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2002). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Robinson, P. (1991). *ESP Today: a Practitioner's Guide*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International.
- Robinson, P. C. (1991). *ESP today: A practitioner's guide*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Shelton, E. D. (2006). *A comparison of the awareness of developmental reading students and non-developmental reading students with regards to their use of reading strategies while attempting to read academic materials assigned by their instructors in a college setting*. Unpublished Doctorate Thesis, university of Houston, Graduate Faculty of the College of Education, Houston.
- Soleimani, H., & Shafie Khah, N. (2014). Are ESP textbook satisfying students? A case in Iran. *IJLLALW Volume* 5(2), 1-9
- Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Learning purpose and language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wright, C. (1992). *The benefits of ESP*. Cambridge Language Consultations. Retrieved: September 22, (2009), from: <http://camlang.com/art001.html>
- Wallace, C. (1992). *Reading*. Oxford: OUP.
- Wallace, M. (1991). *Training Foreign Language teachers*. Great Britain: Penguin
- Wallace, M. (2000). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wright, C. 1992 available: <http://www.camlang.com/art001.cfm#1>.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Learning Purpose and Language Use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 14.
- Wright, S. P., Horn, S. P., & Sanders, W. L. (1997). Teacher and classroom context effects on student achievement: Implications for teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personal Evaluation in Education*, 11, 57-67.

Yalcin, S. K., & Sengul, M. (2004). A model proposal prepared for developing reading and comprehension skills. *Journal of National Education*, 164. (<http://yayim.meb.gov.tr>. Date: 18.05.2007, 16:24).

Zohrabi, M. (2010). A new outlook on ESP literacies: general and specific English territories. *Journal of pan-pacific association of applied linguistics*, 14 (2), 165-186.

ON THE EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC SCAFFOLDING VS. NON-ELECTRONIC SCAFFOLDING ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' STRUCTURAL ABILITY

Hossein Alizadeh Zarei

Department of English, Torbat-e-Heydarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University (IAU), Torbat-Heydarieh, Iran

Email: hossein.alizadezarei@gmail.com

Khalil Motallebzadeh

Department of English, Torbat-e-Heydarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University (IAU), Torbat-Heydarieh, Iran

Email: k.motalleb@iautorbat.ac.ir; kmotallebz@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present research study aimed to search the effect of electronic vs. non-electronic scaffolding on learners' structural ability. To conduct this, amongst the various computer tools, email was selected as the channel of communication between the teacher and the learners. The researcher adopted a quasi-experimental approach. The sample of the study consisted of 66 male intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners from Metanat English Language Institute in Bardaskan, Khorasan Razavi, Iran. The scaffolding strategies were used in teaching English grammar for the e-scaffolding group via exchanging e-mails in the fall semester of the year 2014-2015. Also, the same strategies and techniques were taught in non-electronic scaffolding group. But the control group was not gone through these strategies. The standard grammar test was used as pre and post tests to measure any possible differences between the mean scores of the students in electronic, non-electronic scaffolding and control groups. The collected data were analyzed statistically using one-way ANOVA. The study results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the e-scaffolding group's mean scores in the pre-and the posttest compared to the non-electronic scaffolding and control groups. In the light of those results, the study recommended the necessity of implementing strategies and techniques of scaffolding via e-mail exchanging in teaching English grammar.

KEYWORDS: E-scaffolding, non-electronic scaffolding, structural ability

INTRODUCTION

Accuracy along with fluency has always been significant in producing foreign languages, and it cannot be disregarded. To obtain it there exist several approaches and techniques such as inductive learning, deductive learning, implicit, explicit ones or problematizing, pushing, and scaffolding which to me the latter plays a fundamental role in conveying grammar knowledge in the process of teaching which is a necessary element for production skills (speaking and writing).

There should be sufficient support to provide the security to take risks with the language especially in the case of grammar in order to make learners autonomous, responsible and problem solvers. Successful learners are who take the responsibility of their own and have an active role in the process of learning. In fact, it's the very autonomous learning which involves the supporting and facilitating role of the teacher. McLoughlin and Marshall (2000) define scaffolding as a form of assistance provided to learner by a more capable teacher or peer that helps the learners perform a task that would normally not be possible to accomplish by working independently.

Grammar instruction is often regarded as the unattractive component of the language by the language learners. One of the best solutions to change the unattractiveness to attractiveness is creating attractive learning tool that acts as a stimuli for learning a foreign language (Taylor, 1980). The important issue is here that with the rise of the world of digital technologies, attractiveness has been created in various areas of language. That is, providing electronic supports that empower them to cope with more complicated and sophisticated content and skill demands than they could otherwise handle. Among the variety of forms of facilitating language teaching and learning via internet, e-mail has been so far the most popular and useful tool. In Iran, applying e-mail into English writing teaching is still a relatively new field due to the late access to the Internet.

The usage of computers for teaching grammar has not been seen as the same amount of communicative computer assisted language learning, while teaching grammar electronically owns several potential advantages. Computer tools such as e-mailing can provide rich input and explicit grammar explanation. In a study conducted by Ragan, Redwine, Savenye, and McMichael (1993) learning time lessens by 30 percent compared to the conventional instruction group. Furthermore, they revealed that learner interactivity and control over programs as the characteristics of computer instruction generate improved results in achievement.

The goal of this study was to determine whether or not students who are provided with e-scaffolding to practice grammar skills using e-mailing perform differently than students who are provided with traditional opportunities through scaffolding to practice grammar skills. The primary research question posed in this study was whether a difference is created in the acquisition of a specific grammar point for students taught in an electronic instruction versus chalk and talk class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical and empirical support for the study and informing the research methodology is served through the literature review. Careful review of relevant literature has substantiated the need for the current study. Thornbury (2000) says: "Grammar is partly of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Traditionally, grammar has been concerned almost exclusively with analysis at the level of the sentence. Thus, the grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed" (p.1). Maugham (1938) adds, "It is necessary to know grammar, and it is better to write grammatically than not, but it is well to remember that grammar is common speech formulated. Usage is the only test."

The concept of scaffolding draws different meanings among different researchers. Some researchers like McLoughlin and Oliver (1998) think of it as any form of support that students receive. But Orrill and Galloway (2001) restrict it to particular processes, strategies, and techniques that support learners. In this study, scaffolding contains a process that enables a learner to attain an objective, solve a problem, or end with a task that the individual would not be able to do without support from other human beings or tools.

The roots of the term "scaffolding" are attributed to Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, and, in particular, his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Zone of proximal development containing the concept of scaffolding was proposed for the first time by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978). He never used the exact terminology of scaffolding. In his view, ZPD is the distance between what a learner can do independently and what he or she can potentially achieve with individualized support from more capable others, such as a teacher, even a peer or someone who has greater expertise. The process and support by which a more knowledgeable other mediates a learner's attempts to take on new learning characterize scaffolding in instructional situations.

Grammar was associated with linear thought and "perceived as anathema to process because its teaching had always been identified with teacher-centered classrooms" (Devet, 2002, p. 10). Nowadays, with the entrance of digital technologies to the process of education especially in teaching and learning foreign languages, teachers' interest in resorting to computer tools for teaching grammar to get rid of traditional teaching has increased. In spite of the abundance of comparative research on electronic scaffolding in other academic fields such as reading and the growing body of research on methods of teaching grammar, as far as the literature review is concerned, a few research studies have investigated the use of electronic foreign language teaching. One area that has gained much from the computer tools in terms of data volume, easy access, interactive and immediate feedback and possible individualization of teaching is grammar drills. Generally, the results of the comparative studies have indicated that computer-based language instruction produced syntax development and created high motivation than traditional or conventional classroom instruction. However, a few studies have found that computer-based language instruction had non-significant or negative effects (Biesenbach-Lucas, Meloni & Weasenforth, 2000).

Abu Naba'h, Hussain, Al-Omari, and Shdeifat (2009) compared the computer assisted language learning (an instructional program) and the traditional method on the achievement of passive voice of secondary students in Jordan. The results of their study showed that there is an effect on students' achievement attributed to receiving the treatment through the instructional program. Ghorbani and Marzban (2013) investigated the effect of teaching grammar with Power Point Presentation on Iranian Beginner EFL learners over a four-week period. During these sessions grammar in CALL group was taught with Power Point software that were introduced to the class instead of the traditional method of grammar teaching. The grammar lessons with the inclusion of Power Point slides that was made up of colorful learning tips, inspiring pictures, bulleted patterns of highlighted examples, related sounds of the pictures, and their hyperlinks to refer to their original sites for further explanations. The researchers confirmed that the computers have been

considered a good fit for grammar instruction. In a study to investigate the difference of acquisition of specific grammar points (past tense (irregular and irregular), past continuous and present perfect (regular form) and conditional tense) for students taught in electronic teaching versus those in a chalk and talk class, Nutta (1998) administered a treatment of 60 minutes of teaching a day per one week. The results showed that computer-based grammar teaching was at least as effective as teacher-driven.

The purpose of scaffolding through e-mailing is to enable effective, efficient and engaging learning. It should contain cognitive and non-cognitive elements. Interest, motivation, emotions, beliefs, attitudes and efficacy constitute non-cognitive element. On the other hand, modeling, questioning, optimal guidance, information processing and recall constitute cognitive elements. By joining the two elements the teacher can reach a more effective, efficient, and engaging learning which via e-mail can reduce the learners' anxiety in learning grammar and boost their levels of their motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the purpose of the present study, the following research questions were formulated:

- Q1. Does electronic scaffolding have any significant effects on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' syntax?
- Q2. Does non-electronic scaffolding have any significant effects on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' syntax?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and setting

The population of this study included English learners at intermediate level studying at Metanat Foreign Languages Institute of Bardaskan, Khorasan Razavi, Iran. Their age ranged from 14-18. They were all native speakers of Farsi. All participants were studying English as a required subject for three to four years in secondary school.

Instrumentation

Language proficiency test

The language proficiency test named Nelson English language test, series 100, developed by Fowler and Coe (1976) was administered to determine the learners' level of proficiency and homogeneity in terms of English language proficiency. It consisted of two sections: structure and vocabulary in the form of multiple choice questions. It included 50 items and the time allotted was nearly 40 to 45 minutes.

The Nelson test is a standard test, however, in order to test the reliability of the test in this study for these students, a Kuder-Richardson was calculated to determine the degree of internal consistency. The analysis was done considering the data from the whole participants taking part in this study. The obtained value through the analysis was 0.602 which is regarded at an acceptable level of reliability.

ICT questionnaire

Since the treatment in e-scaffolding (ES) group was supposed to be done only through emails, the researcher had to determine learners' degree of familiarity with information and communication technology especially e-mail and Internet on which he could assign them to the ES group. To serve this purpose, the standard ICT questionnaire taken from Internet was administered to see whether the participants had the knowledge of using e-mail and Internet. This questionnaire includes two parts in Persian (Persian version, because of avoiding misunderstanding): the first part provided personal information about the participants, and the second part which is divided into four sub-parts consisting of 25 items in the Likert scale format from "little" to "very much". It is worth mentioning that in order to find more assurance on its reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to assign the degree of reliability (.72). In part A, the participants were required to mark the type and amount of using computer. In part B, they were to rank using computer software. Also, in parts C and D, they were asked to check the type and amount of using Internet and Internet services.

Grammar in Use Intermediate Third Edition Evaluation Test

As the aim of this study is to examine the effect of e-scaffolding on structural ability, a standard grammar test named Grammar in Use Intermediate Third Edition Evaluation Test (Cambridge University Press 2010) was administered as a pre-test. Since the time interval between the pre-test and post-test was long enough, the same pre-test was used as post-test too. This test is known as a standard test, however, in order to assure its reliability, Kuder-Richardson was administered to assign the degree of reliability. The value gained by that was 0.812 which is an accepted degree. It included 50 multiple choice items on different topics. The time allotted to answer it was 45 minutes.

Procedure

The researcher announced the course project to the institute principal. She reviewed the project and approved it. First, the Nelson English proficiency test, series 100, was administered to see whether they are homogeneous in terms of English language proficiency or not. At first, the test takers were 70 male students. The passing mark was at least 30 out of 50. Those who obtained at least 30 marks and more have been regarded having the same level of proficiency for this research. Two students failed the test. The rationale of administering this test was to assure their proficiency level. Second, the standard ICT questionnaire was set up to see whether they had information and communication technology literacy according to which 22 of the participants who were ICT literate were assigned as the electronic scaffolding (ES) group. The participants who obtained at least %75 of the choices could be regarded ICT literate. All the participants passed the questionnaire successfully except seven participants who did not possess computer systems at home. In order to find out the learners' level of structural ability before conducting the treatment, the researcher utilized the grammar in use intermediate test as a pretest on three groups. The control group and the non-electronic scaffolding group were supposed to attend their classes 90 minutes in the evening the first four days of the week for eight weeks. The researcher decided on certain rules for writing e-mails, otherwise he would become overloaded by e-mails from the learners. He agreed on the evenings when he answered the e-mails to avoid impatient learners sending him an e-mail requesting his answer twice a day. He said that he

usually uses group e-mailing which will save time and send certain answers or directions to all learners. Treatment was implemented in two months for sixteen sessions each with 90 minutes on control and NS groups in the afternoon the first four weekdays. All the weekdays from morning to night was allotted to e-mail exchanging with the ES group. The materials used in the present study also included the book contained grammatical points by Raymond Murphy (2012) titled "English grammar in use".

In the control group, the researcher taught the grammar points explicitly. A traditional grammar lecture followed by translation exercises. The structures were taught deductively. In the non-electronic scaffolding group grammar was taught inductively and in an implicit way by using scaffolding strategies. Also, these strategies such as modeling, templates, feedback, and questioning prompts which were approved and experienced by some researchers mentioned in the literature review are very effective in teaching grammar to foreign language learners. Thus, he tried to keep those strategies to teach grammatical points in both non-electronic scaffolding (NS) group and those possible in electronic scaffolding (ES) group.

But the ES group involved the learning process via e-mailing. The teaching and learning were done via e-mails. Through exchanging e-mails, the researcher established a trusted atmosphere and enhanced a "give and take" environment to learning by being a participant, a co-respondent, and a facilitator. He asked students to introduce themselves to one another through e-mailing. In the first e-mail for each unit containing a grammatical point, the teacher first introduced the grammar items learnt. Second, he gave explanations of forms and functions. Third, he followed the examples of usage in sentences and carbon copied to all members of the ES group. If there was no problem for them in understanding that point they sent an e-mail indicating all is OK. Feedback was given by the teacher as well as by the other respondents. If a student had a question on a certain grammatical point he received comments tailored to his level considering his current position by questions or statements. The teacher used different techniques such as template, modeling, question prompts, feedback appropriate to that particular structural point. To teach and scaffold, for example, "Relative Clauses" (who and which) the teacher, first, wrote what a clause and relative clauses are. Then he gave its forms and functions followed by the examples of usage in sentences. Since modeling as one of the scaffolding strategies was possible for most of the structural points, the teacher utilized that. He did this by chunking a compound sentence having who or which into simple sentences and highlighted that part having who or which clause in different colors, bolding and italicizing it. He used questions to draw the learners' attention to that particular point considering their previous knowledge related to that subject.

Study design

Because it was impossible for the researcher to set learners randomly to these three classes, the design of this study is quasi-experimental design. The participants of this research are intact.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to sort and reveal data in a logical way, the researcher administered various statistical procedures. In order to ensure the normality of data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (table 1) besides

the one way ANOVA were conducted for all data in Nelson test, grammar pretest and grammar posttest in three groups of e-scaffolding, non-electronic scaffolding and control groups.

Table 1: Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Nelson	G.PR	G.PO
N		66	66	66
Normal Parametersa	Mean	44.60	33.63	36.72
	Std. Deviation	3.26	3.77	4.32
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.136	.159	.140
	Positive	.136	.121	.093
	Negative	-.108	-.159	-.140
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.107	1.290	1.135
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.172	.072	.152

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Note. G.PR stands for grammar pretest; G.PO stands for grammar posttest

In order to homogenize participants and select those students with similar level of language proficiency, Nelson test was administered. Table 2 displays results of relevant analysis.

Table 2: Results of Homogeneity of Variances for Nelson Test

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.105	2	63	.338

As the table 2 shows, p-value is .338 which is greater than $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore, the null hypothesis of Levene test which is the equality of variances, is supported, and ANOVA can be used. To be sure about the homogeneity of the groups in terms of general proficiency, one-way ANOVA was used.

Table 3: Results of ANOVA for Nelson Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.576	2	.788	.072	.931
Within Groups	690.18	63	10.955		
Total	691.75	65			

As Table 3 shows, there is not any significant difference ($F=.072$, $p=.931 > 0.05$) among three groups in Nelson test before implementing the treatment. The results show that p-value is .931 which is greater than $\alpha = 0.05$.

To check and compare the homogeneity of the total participants of the three groups ($N=66$), the Nelson Test was administered. Also, to obtain more detailed information about the differences about the means and to compare the three groups, multiple comparisons were conducted. Table 4 illustrates the descriptive statistics of participants' scores.

Table 4: Results of Multiple Comparisons for Nelson Test

Dependent Variable: Nelson							
	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I- J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Scheffe	C	NS	.36364	.99796	.936	-2.13	2.86
		ES	.27273	.99796	.963	-2.22	2.77
	NS	C	-.36364	.99796	.936	-2.86	2.13
		ES	-.09091	.99796	.996	-2.59	2.41
	ES	C	-.27273	.99796	.963	-2.77	2.22
		NS	.09091	.99796	.996	-2.41	2.59

Note. NS stands for non-scaffolding group; ES stands for electronic scaffolding group; CI stands for confidence interval and C stands for control group.

As Table 4 shows, there is not any statistically significant difference among three groups since p-value is greater than 0.05 in every comparison. ($p=.936$ for comparison of control and non-scaffolding groups; $p=.963$ for comparison of control and e-scaffolding groups; $p=.996$ for comparison of non-scaffolding and e-scaffolding groups). Therefore, participants gained similar and close scores in Nelson test.

In order to assess the participants' performance at the outset of the study, one way ANOVA was again conducted. Results are shown in table 5.

Table 5: Results of Homogeneity of Variances for Grammar Pretest

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.480	2	63	.235

According to Table 5 p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p=.235$), therefore, AONVA can be conducted.

To ensure the homogeneity of groups with respect to grammar in pretest, one-way ANOVA was used. The results are revealed in table 6.

Table 6: Results of ANOVA for Grammar Pretest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	26.455	2	13.227	.927	.401
Within Groups	898.818	63	14.267		
Total	925.273	65			

As Table 6 shows, there is no significant difference ($F=.927$, $p=.401 > 0.05$) among three groups with respect to grammar ability.

To check and compare the homogeneity of the total participants of the three groups ($N=66$) in terms of grammar ability, the Grammar in use third edition evaluation test was administered. Also, to obtain more detailed information about the differences about the means and to compare the three groups, multiple comparisons were conducted. Table 7 illustrates the descriptive statistics of participants' scores and shows the results.

Table 7: Results of Multiple Comparisons for Grammar Pretest

Dependent Variable: grammar pretest	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% CI Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Scheffe	C	NS	-1.50000	1.13886	.425	-4.3552	1.3552
		ES	-1.09091	1.13886	.634	-3.9462	1.7643
	NS	C	1.50000	1.13886	.425	-1.3552	4.3552
		ES	.40909	1.13886	.938	-2.4462	3.2643
	ES	C	1.09091	1.13886	.634	-1.7643	3.9462
		NS	-.40909	1.13886	.938	-3.2643	2.4462

As Table 7 displays, p-value is more than 0.05 indicating that there is not any statistically significant difference among means of three groups in grammar test administered as the pretest. As a consequence, participants' homogeneity was accepted prior to the treatments implemented in the study.

In order to see whether e-scaffolding treatment has significant effects on EFL students' syntax, independent sample t-test was employed. And the first null-hypothesis restated below was rejected.

H01: "Electronic Scaffolding has no significant effects on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' syntax".

To compare the performances of the e-scaffolding and control participants in the grammar posttest, independent sample t-test was utilized. Table 8 illustrates the descriptive statistics of participants' scores.

Table 8: Results of Independent Sample T-test for Grammar Posttest in E-scaffolding & Control Groups

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	p
ES	22	39.45	3.55	42	5.26	.000
C	22	33.81	3.54			

As Table 8 shows, participants in e-scaffolding group (N=22, M=39.45, SD=3.55) significantly (df=42, t=5.26, p=.000 < 0.05) performed better than those in control group (N=22, M=33.81, SD=3.54) in grammar posttest. The difference is significant at the 0.05 level of significant. The present finding confirms the significant effect of using e-scaffolding in improvement of EFL students' grammar. Therefore the first null-hypothesis was rejected.

In order to see whether scaffolding has significant effects on EFL students' syntax, independent sample t-test employed. Also, the second null-hypothesis restated below was tested.

H02: "Non-electronic scaffolding has no significant effects on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' syntax".

To compare the performances of the non-scaffolding and control participants in the grammar posttest, independent sample t-test was utilized. Table 9 shows the results.

Table 9: Results of Independent Sample T-test for Grammar Posttest in Non-electronic scaffolding & Control Groups

Group	N	M	SD	df	t	p
NS	22	36.90	4.01	42	2.71	.01
C	22	33.81	3.54			

As Table 12 shows, participants in non-electronic scaffolding group (N=22, M=36.90, SD=4.01) significantly ($df=42$, $t=2.71$, $p=.01 < 0.05$) performed better than those in control group (N=22, M=33.81, SD=3.54) in grammar posttest. The difference is significant at the .05 level. The present finding confirms the significant effects of using non-electronic scaffolding in improvement of EFL students' grammar. Therefore the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the electronic scaffolding strategies and techniques initiated a meaningful change in the mean score of the ES group. In other words, providing learners with scaffolding via exchanging e-mails can positively affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners' performance in grammar tests. Besides, the results indicate that the participants in the e-scaffolding group developed more self-monitoring and regulation by producing more positive results at the end of the study. The results of this study contrastively show that receiving feedback, support and guidance from the instructor via e-mailing to the extent that it's not felt to be essential can develop a more interactive context in web-enhanced language learning modes, while lack of interaction has been claimed as a major drawback in internet-based L2 classroom activities. This study has established valuable insights into the use of emails in fostering the learning of grammar. The respondents of the study were observed to yield high interesting learning grammar through email exchanges.

Similar to any other study, some inevitable limitations, which may raise new questions for further researches in the same field in the future, are imposed on. In addition to the small sample size and its short duration, among so many channels and applications that are possible such as blogging, chatting, video chatting or e-mailing, the treatment was driven through only e-mailing by the researcher. Another is that this study was carried out in Metanat Language Institute of Bardaskan, Khorasan Razavi, Iran with intermediate students of English language, more research is needed to be conducted in order to see whether similar results will be attained in other settings. Also since the participants' gender is male, the relationship between learners' success in structural ability due to the effect of electronic scaffolding could be investigated in terms of gender, in other words, the research could be carried out with equal numbers of participants from each sex. In addition, because these classes already existed in this site, random sampling of the participants was impossible.

REFERENCES

- Abu Naba'h, A., & Hussain, J., Al-Omari, A., & Shdeifat, S. (2009). The effect of computer assisted language learning in teaching English grammar on the achievement of secondary students in Jordan. *The International Arab Journal of Information Technology*, 6(4).
- Biesenbach-Lucas, S., Meloni, C., & Weasenforth, D. (2000). Use of cohesive features in ESL students' e-mail and word-processed texts: A comparative study. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 13(3), 221-237.
- Devet, B. (2002). Welcoming grammar back into the writing classroom. *Teaching English in the Two Year College*, 30(1), 8-17.
- Ghorbani, S., & Marzban, A. (2013). The effect of CALL on Iranian beginner EFL learners' grammar learning. *Academic and Applied Studies*, 3(7), 15-25. Retrieved January 1, 2015, from www.academians.org.
- Maugham, S. W. (1938). *The summing up*. England: Garden City Publishing Company.
- McLoughlin, C., & Oliver, R. (1998). Planning a telelearning environment to foster higher order thinking. *Distance Education*, 19(2), 242-264.
- McLoughlin, C., & Marshall, L. (2000). "Scaffolding: A model for learner support in an online teaching environment". In HERRMAN, Allan & KULSKI, M.M. (eds). *Flexible Futures in Tertiary Teaching*. Proceedings of the 9th Annual Teaching and Learning Forum 2000. Perth, Curtin University of Technology (<http://1sn.curtin.edu.au/tlf/tlf2000/mcloulin2.html>).
- Murphy, R (2012). *English grammar in use. Fourth Edition ed*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP., Print.
- Nutta, J. (1998). Is computer-based grammar instruction as effective as teacher-directed grammar instruction for teaching L2 structures? *CALICO Journal*, 16(1), 49-62.
- Orrill, C. H., & Galloway, C. (2001, November). *Developing a scaffolding system to support mathematical investigations*. Paper presented at the national convention of the Association of Educational Communications and Technology, Atlanta, GA.
- Ragan, T., Boyce, M., Redwine, D., Savenye, W. C., & McMichael, J. (1993). *Is multimedia worth it?: A review of the effectiveness of individualized multimedia instruction*. Paper presented at the Association for Educational Communications and Technology Convention, New Orleans, LA.
- Taylor, R. (1980). *The computer in the school: Tutor, tool, and tutee*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Thornbury, S. (2000). *How to practice grammar*. In *How to teach grammar* (p. 94). Bluestone Press, Charlbury, Oxfordshire, UK.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: Development of higher psychological processes*, Harvard University Press, 86-87.

SUICIDE IN ANCIENT TIMES: A NEW-HISTORICIST APPROACH

Hussein Zamani

Dr. Pyeaam Abbasi

University of Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

While human's right to live has always been an unquestionable doctrine through the ages, his right to die has remained a matter of controversy thus far. Suicide through centuries has been a fact of life and humans' ideological pendulum has been swinging from the most antithetical extremes to the most agreeable extremes with regard to this phenomenon. Surprisingly, the adoption of fierce and inimical stances against suicide by church authorities in the Middle Ages, had no precedent in the ancient times as suicide was in many cases celebrated or at least tolerated by the ancients and was regarded as an honorable choice in the face of humiliation and capitulation. While humans' later toleration of suicide in the wake of modernism was to a great extent the fallout of the emergence of skeptical secular philosophies of life and more a backlash against the previous religious monopoly of the church, the ancients maintained a rigid adherence to their mundane life and reckoned suicide as an active means of attaining their worldly aspirations. The present paper aims to delineate the ancients' affirmative outlook towards suicide in different social, historical, political and literary contexts and to discuss the underlying reasons behind their approach. The findings from the research illustrates how conspicuously the ancients were obsessed with courage, nobility and honor that they sought to find an alternative for attaining these values even in the face of failure. Suicide was the means for measuring their courage against the workings of the fate.

KEYWORDS: Suicide; Ancients; Celebration; Toleration; Right to die

INTRODUCTION

Owing to the fact that Christianity materialized in a world in which dignity and chastity were the integral social fabrics, any Christian stance against suicide in favor of these basic precepts was naturally uncalled for. If the truth be known, many figures of authority such as the early bishop of Hippo, Augustine and the later theologian Thomas Aquinas have postulated that Jesus was a suicide as well. Akin to Socrates, he never adduces reasons to acquit himself and even seems to have incensed his judges. In the book of John we find Jesus saying: "No man taketh [my life] from me, but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:18). Our earliest records verify that Christians did not take issue with suicide and even extolled the virtues of suicide. To illustrate, around the year 300 the scholar Eusebius, soon to be a bishop, set his pen to paper for a compilation of Christian martyrs. He recounts how a Christian woman and her two virgin daughters took their lives out of deference to faith.

However, the most astringent remarks on suicide come from Saint Augustine in his book *City of God* around the year 400. He seems to have signed off on the presupposition that Jesus took his life voluntarily, writing, “His soul did not leave his body constrained, but because he would and where he would and how he would.” Yet he deprecated other suicides and clashes with Eusebius over his judgment on the story of virgin girls killing themselves. For Augustine, the girls would be exonerated of any possible rape. Augustine’s remarks provide us with corroborative evidence that individual intention supplants the outward appearance of an action as a gauge for any moral judgment. With that reversal we leave behind the classically inflected sense that honor—or even virtue, or purity, or the absence of sin—ought to decide the matter of guilt. We have arrived at a morality dependent on individual intention. He dubs suicide as a “detestable crime and a damnable sin” and squarely assails it:

This we affirm, this we maintain . . . that no man ought to inflict on himself voluntary death . . . that no man ought to do so on account of another man’s sins, for this were to escape a guilt which could not pollute him, by incurring great guilt of his own; that no man ought to do so on account of his own past sins, for he has all the more need of this life that these sins may be healed by repentance. . . . Those who die by their own hand have no better life after death (Augustine, 2009, p.29).

As mentioned, medieval retribution for suicide had been severely gruesome, and it became even more atrocious in the wake of the Protestants. In the late Renaissance, those who committed suicide continued to suffer ghastly violence, but these practices began to be drastically opposed by philosophical and literary investigation of suicide. As a matter of fact, many writers and intellectuals of the Renaissance and the early modern period that followed it were engrossed in suicide and viewed it from different facets. Still, the philosophy was to large extent against suicide, but now the pillars of reasoning were founded less on ecclesiastical orthodoxy and more on personal evaluation of the situation. The Renaissance was also an era of showing initiative in diplomacy, economics, and social relations, so we are not taken aback to witness changes in all the dimensions of culture, and adoption of new outlooks towards suicide was part of the vast cultural and political breakthrough. Petrarch excelled in philosophy and literature: his hero Cicero, as mentioned, was at least tolerant and at times booster of certain ancient suicides.

In the Enlightenment, the outlooks Berkeley delineated came to be voiced overtly by philosophers. Enlightenment philosophers launched a full-scale onslaught against a variety of religious taboos and purported that many ecclesiastical rules—such as the religious prohibition of self-murder—were utterly superstition and convention. The loudest champions of the right to suicide were two of the greatest upstarts against Christianity, the Enlightenment philosophers David Hume and Baron d’Holbach. When we survey their philosophical arguments, we come to know that they were concerned more with rejecting religious authority than in particular with adopting a more liberal attitude towards suicide for individuals and community. It is a significant distinction, since it appears that some people were convinced by these philosophers and acted on their convictions. According to contemporaries there was a noticeable rise in suicides in this age, and many pinned the blame on philosophical arguments siding with the right to suicide. When we read those arguments and find them to be acrimonious and smart onslaughts on the religious

injunction against suicide, not exacting, sympathetic reflections on the meaning of life, it is fair to wonder whether this philosophical mobilization against the churches did in fact inspire more negative fallouts than its arguments merited.

The present paper, however, aims to delineate how ancients viewed suicide. There is no shadow of a doubt that the agitation for human's right for suicide which emerged after the middle Ages in the rise of secularization, was more an intentional move for defying religious authorities and reckoned suicide as the last resort and more as an escape from the ignominy of life. For the ancients, however, the mundane world was replete with excitement and was the only context where human beings could attain their aspiration. However, suicide was highly celebrated for them in many cases and this viewpoint was not adopted as a reaction to previous eras.

DISCUSSION

Owing to coequality of the dead with the living and regarding suicide merely as bidding farewell to unbearable quandary offered by the mundane world and simply a means of entry into another existence, suicide is reckoned as a neutral phenomenon in ancient Egyptian perspective and bears no resemblance to what we see in the upcoming religious discourses.

An anonymous Egyptian papyrus entitled *A Dispute over Suicide* written in Egypt's First Intermediate Period proposes a tense dialogue between the soul and self in which a man, fed up with exhausting vicissitudes of life endeavors to coax his soul to escort him into death. Whether an individual is condoned to get away with himself takes center stage in the dispute as individual freedom calls social responsibility into question. While the soul asseverates that committing self-slaughter ruins any chance of enjoying a blissful afterlife, the self is adamant that death signifies a healing to him to attain tranquility and to triumph over mortality.

For a person sentenced to death, execution by suicide was excusable and the Romans, later on, followed the same route as well. Further evidence of the Egyptian embrace of suicide is manifest in what is dubbed Declaration of Innocence which comprised of forty two questions concerning sinful acts asked of a dead person ritualistically. While we can see questions as regards violence and bloodshed, no question is posed among them to denote a proscription for suicide.

No condemnatory or condonable attitude is adopted with respect to suicide in the Old Testament. One can itemize seven instances of self-destructive conduct therein: shunning the ignominy of being killed by a woman, Abimelech had one of his warriors put him to the sword. As Samson's hair grew long again, he regained his legendary robustness and tore down the philistine temple, putting to death he, himself and the multitude assembled there to rejoice at their victory over him. Ahitophel who forecasts a debacle in his rebellion against King David hanged himself. Saul, who had lost his three offspring in the battle against Philistines on Mount Gilboa, resolved to kill himself. Saul's armor bearer too, modeled after his lord. Following the fall of the city of Tizrah, Zimri who had abandoned all hope set the king's house on fire while he was there. Razis, a patriotic elder of Jerusalem, settled upon killing himself rather than be slaughtered by his foes. Jonah is recognized as a figure who considered suicide several times while being caught in the fish's stomach.

As a prominent case of someone engineering his own death we could refer to the tale of Samson, in the book of Judges. Samson's mother was visited by an angel during her pregnancy and was told that as long as his infant abided by Nazirite vows, God would grant him outstanding strength. He, therefore, had to abstain from alcohol and never cut his hair. He soon exerted his power on Israel over Philistines through his legendary strength demonstrated by such feats as killing a thousand of armed soldiers using only the jawbone of an ass and killing a lion bare handed.

On the way to his engagement party he comes across a dead lion and comes to know that swarm of bees has made its hive in the lion's ribcage. Taking some of the honey, he shares it with others and provides his in-laws-to-be with a riddle: "Out of the eater something to eat, out of the strong something sweet" which leads to a massacre. His tragic flaw is when he falls in love with another Philistine woman, Delilah, who overthrows him consequently.

As soon as she makes him expose the chink in his armor, she treacherously shaves his head while sleeping. Philistines soon apprehend him in his feeble state just to blind him. He is then enslaved and yoked like an ox to push a grindstone. While Philistines are rejoicing in their temple at their dominance, Samson whose hair has grown a bit, devastates the whole building killing himself and as many philistines as possible. The story is not voiced tragically and no moral assessment of the incident is made.

Just like the Old Testament, Hebrew Bible adopts a neutral stance against suicide. There are minor exceptions however. Job, whose life is a picture of sheer misery, wished he had never come into being. Despite his wife's provocations, he resists suicide. He says, "My Soul Chooseth strangling and death rather than my life". Suicidal as his words may appear, he does not give away. Hence, Job has always served as an anti-suicide biblical symbol. However, scripture sometimes guards against suicidal thought. In the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus we read:

Give not over thy mind to heaviness, and afflict not thyself in thine own counsel. . . . Love thine own soul, and comfort thy heart, remove sorrow far from thee: for sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein. Envy and wrath shorten the life, and carefulness bringeth age before the time. . . . For of heaviness cometh death, and the heaviness of the heart breaketh strength. In affliction also sorrow remaineth: and the life of the poor is the curse of the heart. Take no heaviness to heart: drive it away, and member the last end. (Ecclesiasticus 30:21, 22-24; 38:18-20) "Love thine own soul, and comfort thy heart." We are given a clear directive there: "Sorrow hath killed many, and there is no profit therein." Scripture is thus not as neutral as it might have seemed.

The New Testament from a neutral standpoint acquaints us with suicidal figures such as Judas Iscariot and Paul's jailer. Also, the Torah, neither condemns nor condones self-destruction and only in the body of rabbinical literature are we able to trace an opposing posture. Saul's self-destructive move is quite understandable when interpreted as an avoidance of profanity. Permission is granted to suicide whenever, it is a deterrence against disgrace to God.

Due to Hebrew's maintaining a tight attachment to life, suicidal inclination is less frequently observed among them. They boasted of being the God's selected nation and bore a positive attitude towards life. Insanity was known to be the trigger point for developing suicidal tendencies and they, thus, recognized major funeral rights for the victims and never desecrated the corpses.

In Judaism however, suicide was conspicuously a taboo as it put accent on the sacredness of life as well as humane intrinsic values. Giving up the ghost voluntarily was deemed as an affront to God. Life was to be preserved and suicide, even under the direst conditions, meant giving up hope in the Almighty. Suicide was however, justified in defense of goodness, morality and God. Exceptions to the ban on suicide were made only in extreme cases where the principles of divinity were jeopardized. Anyway, funeral rights were usually granted to the victims of suicide and the public participated in funeral rites out of reverence for the living, however with no rending of clothes and no eulogy. Suicide in the midst of war was permissible though as in the case of Josephus, the priest and general in the army of Jews. He was arrested by the Romans and lived the rest of his life in Rome when the lives of Jewish people had undergone major transmutations. He wrote the history of time in four books, *The Jewish War*, *Antiquities of the Jews*, *His Life* and *Against Apion*.

Josephus reports to us on his involvement in a mass suicide when he decreed the detachment of Jewish troops at Jotopata in A.D. 68. Hemmed in by Vespasian's army, his warriors came to the conclusion that demise takes precedence over capitulation and adjudicated to commit suicide. Josephus adopts an opposing stance primarily, contending that "for those who have laid mad hands upon themselves, the darker regions of the netherworld receives their souls, and God, their father, visits upon their posterity the outrageous acts of the parents. That is why this crime, so hateful to God, is punished also by the sagest of legislators. With us it is ordained that the body of a suicide should be exposed, unburied until sunset. . . ." He is soon censured for his pusillanimity and threatened to death. Ultimately, he desists from his urge and concedes that suicide was reasonable in such a situation where defending Torah and the holy name is the prime concern and indeed came up with the solution—"that they commit mutual slaughter by lot"—and they unanimously concurred. However, he and one soldier could survive the bloodbath "by chance or by the providence of God" and Josephus could successfully convince his fellow to show the white flag to the Romans.

He recounts even a more awe-inspiring mass suicide which took place in 74 A.D. Zealots, pursued by Romans, took refuge on altitudes of Masada under Eleazar Ben Jair's leadership. Roman enclosure lasts for three years and they lose any hope for further resistance. Eleazar assembles his comrades and reminds them of their vow not to live under the yoke of Romans and emboldens them to die by their own hand. He proclaims that "death affords our souls their liberty and sends them to their own place of purity where they are to be insensible to all sorts of miseries." The warriors engaged in a vast bloodshed which took a heavy toll, killing a total of 960 people. They primarily killed their families and then themselves. Reportedly, ruthless Romans were all awe-stricken in the face of honor and contempt for life demonstrated by the people. The only survivors were two women and five children who had gone into hiding.

Brutus, the most famous of Julius Caesar's assassins, took his own life when his brigade was defeated following the second battle of Philippi. Many instances of individual suicide could be seen in Josephus's books, some of which are concerned with Herod and his family members. Phasaël, Herod's younger brother, kills himself while in King Antigones's custody, in the belief that Herod is dead. Shackled in chains and awaiting capital punishment, he hits his head against a large rock. A year later, Herod gets even with Antigones by killing him. He also recounts two suicide attempts by Herod, one in 41 B.C. by sword and the second in 4 B.C. by knife.

In this part I will introduce the major figures of ancient suicide. We will move from mythical to historical contexts and present the reader with a range of motives for self-murder. In mythical realm motives mostly fall into one of the following categories:

suicide because of great loss
altruistic suicide,
suicide because of shame,
and suicide because of love gone wrong

There is a strong case for celebration of suicide in ancient Jewish, Greek and Roman worldview. There is, nevertheless, little evidence to buttress the frequency of suicide among them until at least the first century B.C.E.

Quite interestingly, ancient suicidal figures, whether real or fictional, are scarcely diagnosed with depression which is lucidly in stark contrast with our era's despair suicides. As a matter of fact, despair suicide is mostly reckoned as reprehensible. Plato, for instance, pays obeisance to suicide for the sake of community and launches an acrimonious onslaught against those who end their lives on the grounds of disillusionment. Today, killing oneself under coercion is not beheld as suicide through our eyes. For ancients, however, it was quite the reverse and Socrates served as a suicidal figure thus.

We should bear in mind that familial honor was of paramount significance among the ancients and suicides were less customarily perpetrated against the family than for it. In other words, ancient suicides were social apparatus to insulate family reputation from being tarnished. It was a means by which a good family name could be rehabilitated in the wake of an ignominious event.

Our discussion on ancient suicide centers upon archaic myths from Homer and Hesiod and later Greco-Roman mythology of Sophocles, Ovid and others. As a case in point, when Erechtheus sacrificed his youngest daughter to win victory for Athens against Eleusis, his other daughters kept their vows to die together and killed themselves as the incident was so hard for them to stomach.

Icarius who had been well versed by Dionysus in viticulture and Oenology, was oblivious to enlighten his fellows about the aftermath of drinking. Inebriated, they thought they had been poisoned. They killed Icarius out of fear and interred his corpse under a tree. His daughter, Erigone, unable to stay the course brought death on herself by hanging from the very tree beneath which her father was entombed. According to another source, "sorrowful Erigone wept her fill

for her slain sire, and already was untying the fatal girdle, and bent on death was fastening it to the sturdy boughs”(Hyginus, 1960, p.186). Erigone’s dog Maera led her to her father’s burial site and then threw itself into a well.

When Oedipus could get away with death by solving Sphinx’s unfathomable riddle, the fact heaped too much insult on Sphinx so that she leaped from acropolis to her death. By the same token, when Oedipus could successfully shun the sirens, they killed themselves: “Ulysses proved fatal to them, for when by his cleverness he passed by the rocks where they dwelt, they threw themselves into the sea” (1960, p.117). Supernatural beings had transparently no conception of being overpowered.

Iphigenia is an exemplar of death for the sake of community as Agamemnon sacrifices her for Artemis so that he allows the winds to shift and launch the Greek fleet toward Troy. Yet, in some other versions of the tale, the death is embraced voluntarily by her: “I have chosen death: it is my own free choice. I have put cowardice away from me. Honor is mine now” (Euripides 1375-78). No doubt, honor of community forcefully prevailed upon the ancients to sacrifice themselves. However, sacrificial death, in this particular case, occasions mortal repercussions, namely, the death of Agamemnon and later Clytemnestra. Also, Orestes’ is driven insane by divine spirits for murdering her mother.

Orion’s three Daughters, Coronides, Menippe and Metioche clearly exemplify ancients’ unceasing tribute to their communities. When the only way to deliver Ionians from the fatal plague was to sacrifice two young women willingly, Orion’s daughters had no hesitation to accept death in behalf of their fellow citizens. As one ancient chronicler tells us, “they cried out . . . that they were willing sacrifices. They thrust their bodkins into themselves at their shoulders and gashed open their throats” (Liberalis, 1992, p.84). The prominent Roman poet Ovid (43 B.C.E. to 18 C.E.), too, directs our attention to an artist’s depiction of the scene where Orion’s daughters are portrayed in the streets of Thebes, stoutheartedly “cutting their throats, piercing their brave hearts with swords,” and dying “for the sake of their people” (Ovid, 2010, p.372). It is Crystal clear that there is no attempt made to disguise their extolment for their suicide.

It is beyond doubt that suicide was reckoned as a guardian of one’s honor in the period of Homer. When Charondas indeliberately breached one of his formulated laws by entering the town assembly without removing his dagger, he killed himself with the same dagger thereupon. In the same vein, Greeks and Romans were accredited to take their own lives to avoid apprehension and humiliation in the battlefield. In this regard, we could instance Demosthenes who took poison on the verge of being incarcerated by the Macedonians. Likewise, Vulteius and his troops opted for suicide rather than servility to Pompey. Upon hearing the news of their lord’s suicide, Otho’s soldiers had no ambivalence to follow suit.

P. Decius Mus, 337 B.C., is also noted as he, in compliance with the ritual of *devotio*, sacrificed himself in the Battle of Vesuvius to decimate the foes. Decius the Younger, son of Mus, also went for killing himself in a fight against the Gauls in 295 B.C. Cato the Younger of Utica is also remarkable as he favored inviting his own death over subjection to Caesar. As a case in

point, Regulus welcomed death with open arms when he abode by his pledge to return to Carthage considering that he had propelled Rome into war against Carthaginians upon his release. Moreover, Greek history transmits two incidents of heroic mass suicide which transpired at Corcyra one in 425 B.C and the other two years later in 427 B.C. Positive that their execution is imminent, large numbers of prisoners engaged in a mass suicide to dodge their mortifying destiny.

When Odysseus bequeathed Achilles' armor, Ajax, who looked upon himself as the true heir, took umbrage at the incident and committed himself to get back at his former comrades. Deluded by Athena, he slaughters a herd of sheep in the belief that they are Greek combatants. When he rose from the torpor into which he had sunk, he ends his life forthwith to extricate himself from such a fiasco. There is a sensible irony to note here. While he was struggling to latch on to Achilles armor, he was totally ignorant of how defenseless he could be against his own mortal jealousy. Ajax's case intelligibly epitomizes suicide of shame in the ancient world. In like manner, Jocasta, Oedipus's mother, hangs herself in the knowledge that she had married her own son and Oedipus blinds himself with a pin from her cloak.

The myth of Thisbe and Pyramus which later provided a template for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet stands as one of the great myths of suicide for love. Both plays present star-crossed lovers who absurdly put an end to their lives. Narcissus, however, typifies self-love. In the earlier versions of the story, Narcissus, immensely tantalized by his own image, plunges into the water and drowns himself willfully. In Canon's version, nonetheless, he slew himself and narcissus flower blossoms in the ground drenched with his blood.

Hercules's lover, who craves his attention, is duped by the demigod's foe and soaks Hercules' robe in what she conceives to be the love elixir so as to rejuvenate his love for her. But when he puts the robe on, it sears his flesh and when he tries to take it off, it pulls out his organs. He asks his friend to make a pyre and throws himself on it. Hercules engages in a sort of self-immolation which plainly precipitates an impending and otherwise agonizing death. In this sense, we may call this type of suicide Herculean.

Euripides (480 to 406 B.C.E.) as the most modern of the three ancient Greek playwrights has a different slant on the matter since he bluntly values life over death. In his play *Iphigeneia in Aulis* he writes: "Ill life o'er passeth gracious death". Elsewhere in *The Madness of Hercules*, Euripides' hero says: "Yet, thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—shall I quit life and haply prove me craven? Or, . . . I will be strong to await death."

While ancient mythical and literary suicides feature sizeable amount of passion, historical records of self-murder are less marked by emotional fervor than by philosophical composure. Though historical figures are in most cases coerced into committing suicide, they do so with a glorious display of courage and nonchalance for death. The fact has its roots in the philosophical worldview of the epoch undoubtedly. We will not hem and haw, then, to make mention of historical instances of forced self-murder. In discussing suicide in ancient Greek and Roman

world, we ought to take notice of the fact that they envisaged no eternal afterlife for the man. Death consequently was the end.

Pythagoras (570 and 495 B.C.E.) is known as one of the earliest proposers of anti-suicide argument. Pythagorean schools vocally ran counter to volitional end to life because, life is hallowed there. Man is dispatched at a guard post and is duty-bound not to leave it until he is retired. Plato, later on, borrowed the idea, which remained a well-known allegory for years.

Cleomenes I, the king of Sparta personifies one of the few instances of suicide which is induced by madness. He is no doubt a figure of substance because his example later appealed to Renaissance philosopher Michel Montaigne and the Enlightenment philosopher David Hume as two major voices in defense of suicide. According to Plutarch, he had nothing to lose when his plot to dethrone Demaratus foiled. However, he resisted Therycion's enticement to commit suicide and determined to stay alive as long as he could for the others, "For it is an ungenerous thing either to live or die for ourselves" (Plutarch, 1918). Ultimately, in prison he went insane and knifed himself to death. Initial resistance to a splendid suicide culminated eventually in a wretched self-slaughter. That is why the story never escaped Montaigne and Hume's attention.

Plutarch also draws our attentions to what is defined as suicide cluster nowadays:

Once upon a time a dire and strange trouble took possession of the young women in Miletus for some unknown cause. The most popular conjecture was that the air had acquired a distracting and infectious constitution, and that this operated to produce in them an alteration and derangement of mind. At any rate, a yearning for death and an insane impulse toward hanging suddenly fell upon all of them, and many managed to steal away and hang themselves. Arguments and tears of parents and comforting words of friends availed nothing, but they circumvented every device and cunning effort of their watchers in making away with themselves (Plutarch, 1931, 11:249).

To end the epidemic, a decree was issued pursuant to which women who took their lives were sentenced to be dragged naked through the marketplace. The women, supremely protective of their chastity, could not tough the disgrace out and did not hang themselves anymore.

Among historical records, Socrates' enforced suicide appears salient. By reason of his conviction that philosophy is best done through dialogue, no writing, ascribed to him, is handed down to us to be indicative of his worldview. His student, Plato, is the pre-eminent provenance on Socrates' ideas. It is beyond doubt, that he was resolute in censuring every aspects of life in his contemporary world of ancient Greece, particularly, humans' voracity for wealth and sovereignty. As Plato relates in his *Phaedo*, Socrates staged a spectacular exhibition of poise and resignation in his death. In both Plato and Xenophon's accounts of his death, Socrates would have been able to abscond from the lock-up but he has a deep yearning to eschew the humiliation of old age and proclaims himself "better of dead." In disregard of court's verdict, he never beseeches for life. Still, in Plato's account of his dying scene, Socrates expresses his disapproval of ending one's life prior to God's mandate: "Man is situated in this life as if he were on a post or station which he must not quit without leave; because the gods exert a providential care over us on which account we are a part (as it were) of their property and possessions; and because we

should think it unjust and punishable (if it were in our power to punish) for any slave of our own to kill himself without our permission.” There is a real prospect that Socrates fixed upon suicide as means to dispose of an afflictive death. Accordingly, convicts were granted clemency when they were provided with hemlock. Self-murderers could also avoid sequestration of their holdings which would have been otherwise denied for those who were executed for crime. They could also enjoy sepulchral rights. It was viewed as a goodwill gesture when Nero took kindly to let Seneca commit suicide when he suspected his former teacher’s machination against him. Seneca’s forlorn writing insinuates that his suicide was less out of honor than utter despair:

Hence the boredom, the disgust for oneself, the tumult of a soul fixed on nothing, the somber impatience that our own inaction causes, especially when we blush to admit the reasons . . . tightly contained in a prison with no exit. . . . As Lucretius says, “Thus all continually flee themselves.” . . . We follow ourselves; we cannot get rid of that intolerable company. . . . We lack the strength to bear anything: work, pleasure, ourselves, everything in the world is a burden to us. There are some whom this leads to suicide because their perpetual variations make them turn forever in the same circle and because they have made all novelty impossible for themselves, they lose their taste for life and the universe.

Roman law, nonetheless, manifestly vetoed suicide in the case of slaves and soldiers as it was not in the national interest. Prevalence of stoic army suicides shows under no uncertain terms that this legal ban was unavailing overall.

Plato (424 to 348 B.C.E.) is known for turning the spotlight on otherworldliness by pertaining to his theory of ideals. His well-known Allegory of the Cave pictures men in fetters, who face the far wall of a cave. Their only avenue towards understanding is gleaning shadows cast on the wall by representations of the objects in front of the fire. Once one throws off the shackles and turns back, he will be sightless first by the fire and then by the light outside. The gist of his argument is that what accounts for knowledge is no more than a shade. True knowledge is procured only in an excruciating and arduous course of understanding.

In his *Laws*, Plato dwells upon the theme of suicide first and foremost. He enumerates extenuating circumstances for suicide. Suicide is justified for one so dishonored as to be beyond expiation and correspondingly in cases of insufferable loss. Socrates too could not be rebuked as he was compelled by the state to do so. Notwithstanding his seemingly lenience for suicide, he launches into a draconian tirade against those who end their lives out of “weakness to the vicissitudes of life”.

As the originator of manifold scientific disciplines from marine biology to logic, ethics to psychology, Aristotle appears more down-to-earth than his counterparts. He dismisses suicide as an injustice to community and a type of social larceny. However, he does not waver in his rationalization of suicide for the sake of community. Taking your life is not only condonable but also commendable, provided you cede it to the republic.

Throughout history, medical sphere has always laid the groundwork for fierce disputes over toleration of suicide. As one of the pioneers of scientific medicine, Hippocrates' (460 to 377 B.C.E.) express rejection of assisted-suicide is manifest in his famous adage "First, do no harm." Hippocratic Oath patently gainsays euthanasia: "I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor will I make any suggestion to this effect." Only patients who were "overmastered by their disease" (Hippocrates, 1967, pp.185-217) were an exception to the rule. They were allowed to make a plea to practitioners to relieve them of pain forever.

The advent of stoicism late in the Greek period marks an epoch incontestably tolerant of suicide. At the heart of stoicism was the idea of accepting life as it is. Resignation and passivity are the pivots around which their whole ascetic philosophy revolves. Characteristically, they were completely impervious to death and embraced it with open arms. One should leave life as one leaves a room that has become too smoky. Given their skeptical outlook on life, this came to mean a penchant for death. The school was founded by Zeno of Citium and was in the ascendant until 529 C.E. when the Byzantine emperor Justinian closed all the philosophical schools in deference to Christianity.

Both Greeks and Romans feast their eyes on death naturalistically. The idea of an afterlife for ordinary people, distinct from gods, begins to emerge, vaguely, in the Judaism of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.E., starting with the prophet Isaiah but it could never supersede pagan ideologies. Centuries later, the author of Ecclesiastes spells out the fact:

For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? (Ecclesiastes 3:19–21).

Elsewhere the eponymous Preacher writes:

For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun (Ecclesiastes 9:4–6).

In the Hellenistic age, dating from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.E. and spreading throughout the vast Roman Empire, a range of "mystery religions" came to prominence, namely, the cult of Isis, the Eleusinian Mysteries and the Mythraic Mysteries. In a completely rarefied atmosphere, their cosmopolitan luminaries passed on the occult and provided their initiates with insurance and a life after demise. The epidemic dissemination of mystic ideologies was to a large extent an insurrection against the frosty religion of the state. Pre-Christian Romans' worldview, after all, had been predicated principally upon mundane doctrines and for them adherence to the values and virtues of community was the chief avenue to safeguard purpose and inner peace.

Allegiance to such mores required them to keep cool in confrontation with death and even to sacrifice their lives for a sublime end.

Hellenistic period is also marked by Epicurean movement which was thought of as tolerant towards suicide. Epicurus (341 to 270 B.C.E.), based upon the little writing imparted to us, was steadfast in cleansing the man of the fear of death, fear of the gods and fear of death:

Whatsoever causes no annoyance when it is present causes only a groundless pain in the expectation. Death, therefore, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are, death is not come, and when death is come, we are not. It is nothing then, either to the living or to the dead, for with the living it is not and the dead exist no longer (Epicurus, 1972, pp.649-50).

The Roman poet and philosopher Lucretius was the great bard of Epicureanism and is said to have taken his own life at age forty-five, in 55 B.C.E. Due to the fact that so little of Epicurus' own writing has survived thus far, he could come to our aid opportunely in order to elucidate Epicureans' approach towards death. In line with his shaman, in his book-length poem entitled *On the Nature of Things*, he outspokenly dispenses with the feeling of apprehension for death:

Death, then, is nothing to us, no concern,

Once we grant that the soul will also die.

Just as we felt no pain in ages past

When the Carthaginians swarmed to the attack,

So too, when we no longer are, when our

Union of body and soul is put asunder,

Hardly shall anything then, when we are not,

Happen to us at all and stir the senses,

Not if the earth were embroiled with the sea and
the sea with heaven!

Now if you happen to see someone resent

That after death he'll be put down to stink

Or be picked apart by beasts or burnt on the pyre,

You know that he doesn't ring true, that something hidden

Rankles his heart—no matter how often he says

He trusts that there's no feeling after death (Lucretius, 1995, pp. 26-27).

It should be noted, however, that Lucretius' writing, unlike Epicurus', strikes us as existential and nihilistic. While comradeship and elation constituted central tenets of Epicurus' mindset, Lucretius appears to have been a much more skeptical disciple. According to him, "each man tries to flee from himself, but to that self, from which of course he can never escape, he clings against his will, and hates it." The fact comes as no surprise as according to historians, cynicism had suffused the period between the seventh and fourth centuries B.C. Among the heavyweights of philosophy, Theognis of Megara, Sophocles, Euripides, Herodotus, and Democritus were great apostles of the right for suicide. Epictetus, the prominent stoic philosopher puts in his two cents'

worth: “live as long as it is agreeable; if the game does not please you, go; if you stay, do not complain.”

Cato was a Roman statesman and is recognized as an apotheosis of rectitude. He was also a Stoic. In 49 B.C.E. when Caesar could wrest the power from Senate, Cato preferred to end his life rather than witnessing the demise of the Republic and bowing down before a victorious Caesar. Based on valid documents he, in all likelihood, took his life twice. In one version, he first gashed his abdomen. He was found covered with blood and a doctor replaced his intestines and stitched up his wound but when left alone again, Cato ripped out the stitches, eviscerated himself again, and finally died.

Cicero (106 to 43 B.C.E.), the ingenious Roman rhetorician, philosopher and statesman, brings another arresting commentary on suicide. Cicero and Cato are poles apart as Cicero acclimatized himself to the political reversal following the investiture of Julius Caesar. He on the one hand finds Cato a model of liberty and on the other hand sees eye to eye with Plato that no man should exercise his right to die as we should attend our posts fully. In point of fact, he applauded self-sacrifice for the sake of state:

“But noble deaths, sought voluntarily, for the sake of country, are not only commonly reckoned glorious by rhetoricians but also happy. They go back to Erechtheus, whose daughters sought even with eagerness for death to save the lives of their fellow-citizens” (Cicero, 1950, pp. 116-17).

Women have been always viewed as the pillars of strength in reference to suicide. There is no shadow of a doubt that Lucretia should be reckoned as one of the greatest sources of inspiration for the ancients. Raped by Etruscan king's son Sextus Tarquinius, this semi-legendary figure in the history of the Roman Republic took her own life clamoring for justice. The incident is said to have kindled the revolution that overthrew the monarchy and established the Roman Republic. Arria, is another Roman figure who was recognized as the embodiment of self-sacrifice and the quintessence of philosophical spirit. In the year 42 C.E. when his husband Caecina Paetus was convicted of treason by the emperor Claudius and dictated to kill himself, he found himself too pusillanimous to undertake the task. Finding her mate shamefully effete, Arria valiantly stabbed the dagger into her chest, famously saying, “Nondoleat, Paete!”—It doesn't hurt, Paetus!—and handed the dagger back to him for his turn (Pliny the Younger, 2006, pp. 152-53). Pliny the Younger (61–c. 112 C.E.) held many contemporary suicides in high esteem most of which validate the great influence exerted by stoic movement. He recounts how a severely wounded soldier is emboldened by his wife to take both their lives. The fact overtly betokens the potent example that Arria served for Romans. Porcia Catonis is another salient female figure who is supposed to have wolfed down scorching coals upon hearing the death of his husband Brutus. To belabor the point, Cleopatra made a sharp retort to Augustus Caesar's inauguration by committing suicide, clutching two poisonous asps to her breast.

Quite interestingly, unrequited love provided compelling impetus for the ancients to end their lives. Virgil (70–19 B.C.E.) the illustrious Roman poet makes us conversant with absorbing

instances of suicide for love. In his *Aeneid* he relates how Dido, the queen of Carthage, killed herself when Aeneas, with whom she had fallen in love, left him. In another story, when Theseus forgot to hoist the white sail to denote his victory, his father Aegeus presumed his son to be dead and drowned himself in the sea, which from then on bore his name. Similar is the suicide of Hero who dolefully drowned herself when Leander's body washed ashore. Considering the following passage on the ancient queen, no apparent condemnation of suicide catches our eyes:

"Let me die, I go gladly to the dark.
May the heartless Trojan see my flaming pyre
from far out on the deep
and let it bring him evil omens." She spoke
and then her maidens saw her fall
upon her sword, the red blood spouting
and frothing over her sword
drenching her hands (Virgil, 2009, p. 89).

CONCLUSION

The ignominy and abhorrence attached to the act of suicide in the Middle Ages conspicuously had no precedence in the ancient times. Even from a religious point of view, the Old Testament and the New Testament not only adopted a tolerant stance against suicide but also paid tribute to the act in some cases. We may therefore conclude that it was in the writings of church authorities such as St. Augustine and St. Aquinas that suicide was later regarded as an obvious violation of God's rights and was bitterly repressed in the Middle Ages. For the ancients, suicide could be interpreted as a means of attaining honor and grace when capitulation or death in the hands of enemy was the last resort. Surprisingly, women, who later on were known to be the fair sex, were the paragons of courage and honor for the ancients and were in many cases among the most renowned suicides. It was also viewed as a means of expiation when a hero made a tragic flaw and merited retribution for that. Moreover, ancients pertaining to an existential philosophy of life, sometimes favored suicide over tolerating the backbreaking after-effects of a great loss, for instance, in the cases of unrequited love. The fact attests to the fact that ancients had no strong adherence to the blessings of an afterlife so when worldly life ceased to fulfill their aspirations they preferred to do themselves in.

REFERENCES

- Augustine, A. (2009). *City of God*. (M. Dods, Trans.). Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson.
Cicero, M. T. (1950). *Tusculan Disputations*. (J. E. King Trans.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Epicurus. (1972). Letter to Menonnceus. (R. D. Hicks Trans.). *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* (pp. 107-123). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Euripides. (1992). *Iphigeneia in Aulis: The Greeks*. O. Hatzopoulos (Ed.). Athens: Kaktos.
Euripides. (1979). *The Madness of Hercules*. Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University.

- Euripides. (1972). Letter to Menoceceus. Diogenes Laertius, (R. D. Hicks Trans.) *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hippocrates. (1967). (W. H. S. Jones Trans.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hyginus, G. J. (1960). *Poetic Astronomy*. (M. Grant Ed.). Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.
- Josephus, F. (1997). *The Jewish War*. (H. St. J. Thackeray Trans.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Josephus, F. (1987). *The Works of Josephus*. (W. W. Trans.). Peabody, MA: Hendrikson,.
- Liberalis, A. (1992). *The Metamorphoses of Antoninus Liberalis: A Translation with a Commentary*. (F. Celoria Trans.). New York: Routledge,. Print.
- Lucretius, T. (1995). *On the Nature of Things*. (A. M. Esolen Trans. & Ed.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Ovid, P. (2010). *Metamorphoses*. (S. Lombardo Trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Plato. (1973). *Phaedo. The Republic and Other Works*. (B. Jowett Trans.). New York: Anchor.
- Pliny, G. (2006). *The Complete Letters*, (P. G. Walsh Trans.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Plutarch, L. M. (1918). *Parallel Lives*. Cambridge: Loeb Classic Library, Harvard University.
- Plutarch, L. M. (1931). The Bravery of Women. (F. C. Babbitt Trans.). *Moralia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Seneca, L. A. (1932). *Letters to Lucilius*. (E. Phillips Barker Trans.). Oxford: Clarendon.
- Virgil, P. (2009). *The Aeneid*, (S. Ruden Trans.). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Authors' Note:

Hussein Zamani, University of Isfahan, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Department of English Literature, Isfahan, Iran, Pyeaa Abbasi, University of Isfahan, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Department of English Literature, Isfahan, Iran, Zip code: +98-31-8174674331.

Any correspondence should be addressed to: hussein_zamani@ymail.com

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI) AND PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (PA)

Mahdi Nasiri

Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, University of Zanzan, Zanzan, Iran

Nasrin Razzaghi

MA, Department of English Language, University of Zanzan, Zanzan, Iran

Sahar Riahi

MA, Department of English Language, University of Zanzan, Zanzan, Iran

Fateme Mousavi

MA, Department of English Language, University of Zanzan, Zanzan, Iran

Atefe Nejabat

MA, Department of English Language, University of Zanzan, Zanzan, Iran

ABSTRACT

Phonetic awareness is identified as a key early literacy skill which plays an important role in learners' academic success. The present study aims to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Phonological Awareness (PA). This paper reports an experimental study. The present study was conducted on students who were selected based on the convenient sampling. 57 lower-intermediate English students were selected from four different private English institutes in Zanzan and Gazvin cities in Iran. From the total participants, 27 were males and 30 were females. Two types of instrument were employed to collect the necessary data, a test on phonological awareness and a questionnaire on emotional intelligence. The findings of the study indicated that there is no significant correlation between EI and PA. Further interpretations of the results revealed that some other extraneous factors might directly or indirectly shed some light on PA. The practitioners, active in teaching pronunciation, can benefit more from the current study. The most fundamental implication is that teachers are supposed to be aware that students with high or low EI will perform equally on PA.

KEYWORDS: emotional intelligence, phonological awareness, foreign/second language acquisition.

INTRODUCTION

Phonetic perception and production are known to be an essential part of human development. As children grow up, they begin to manifest the ability to discriminate between sounds and

consequently perceive them. The ability to distinguish sounds is the issue of PA (Erdos, Genesee, Haigh, & Savage 2011; Konza, 2011; Mathes & Torgesen, 1998). Due to the significance of PA, especially in early years of life, there have been various attempts to define it (Anthony & Francis, 2005; Griffith & Olson, 2004; Yopp & Yopp, 2009). Yopp and Yopp, for instance, define it as 'the ability to manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in words, and rudimentary phonological skills, such as judging whether two words rhyme' (2009, p.1). In other words, children who can detect and manipulate sounds are phonologically aware. PA as an auditory skill which affects learners' academic success is a necessary step in understanding the relationship between the sounds and letters (Torgesen & Wagner, 1998). Owing to this fact, it plays a noticeable role in learning to read and spell (Bentin, 1992; Katzir, Kennedy, Kim, Lovett, Morris & Wolf, 2006). Although PA skills do not lead to independent and successful readers, they are crucial steps in the development of reading skills. Students who do not have sufficient awareness of how speech is divided into small sounds will have difficulty in learning to read a written system. In order to foster learners' PA, various strategies can be implemented. Some of these strategies that are related to emotions rather than cognition deal with emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence (EI) as a term that has long attracted the attention of scholars and researchers encounters with a plethora of definitions (Assanova & McGuire, 2009; Gardner, 1983; Goleman, 1995). Ardashiri and Zarafshan contend that 'EI is largely accepted as the ability to understand and apply the knowledge created from our emotions to aid effective functioning, reduce the impact of stress, and enhance relationships' (2012, p.106). Furthermore, EI plays a considerable role in students' educational success. Numerous studies have attempted to investigate the effect of EI on learners' academic achievement (Brackett & Salovey, 2006; Mohammadi, 2012; Williford, 2000). Studies indicate that students with high level of EI are more willing to take part in speaking and brain based-activities. They try to cooperate with other students because they have high level of social skills and self-esteem. In contrast, low level of EI leads to isolation from classroom environment, conversations as well as brain-based activities (Bora, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Phonological awareness (PA) is a term that should not be confused with other terms such as phonemic awareness and phonics which are the sub skills of PA (Yopp & Yopp, 2000). PA refers to the skill of analyzing the words at the level of independent sound units. These skills place on two ends of a continuum ranging from holistic, simple form of awareness to more complex forms (Cisero & Royer, 1995; Treiman & Zukowski, 1991; Yopp & Yopp, 2009). Less complex end of a continuum encompasses activities such as initial rhyming, rhyming songs, sentence segmentation and so forth. At the complex end of a continuum are activities such as breaking words into onsets and rimes as well as blending rime and onset into words. Finally, phoneme segmentation is an instance of more complex level of awareness which requires explicit instruction. Moreover, PA is a general perception of person about how spoken language can be divided in to its components. For instance, it can be a perception about how sentences are divided into words, syllables as well as rimes and onsets. When a syllable is broken down into the smallest units, the term phonemic awareness is applied (Ehri, Nunes, Schuster, Shanahan,

Willows, & Yaghoub-Zadeh, 2001; Burns, Griffin & Snow, 1998). Phonemic awareness refers to sound when words are divided in to their smallest units of sounds. Finally, Phonics refers to how speech sound and written letter correspond to each other (Burns, Griffin & Snow, 1998). The significance of phonemic awareness in fostering the learners' PA should not be overlooked. 'A child's phonemic awareness on entering school is widely held to be the strongest single determinant of the success that she or he will experience in learning or conversely, the likelihood that she or he will fail' (Stanovich, 1994, p.2).

Without sufficient awareness of how words can be broken down into discrete segments, identification and manipulation of sounds becomes difficult or even impossible. As the words are divided into the smallest units, phonemes, phonemic awareness manifest itself. Consequently, familiarity with phonics enables learners to comprehend the relationship between letters and sounds. To put in a nutshell, being a competent reader requires learners to pass through five steps including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension in which the PA is the fundamental skill. PA is developed through certain activities. Most of these activities refer to preschool period (Mathes & Torgesen, 1998).

PA is practiced during kindergarten and the first grade at school with children (Ehri & Roberts, 2006; McGee & Ukrainetz, 2009). During this period, children have natural tendency to play with language and develop their PA. The major objective of PA is directing children's attention to the elements of the words, thus it demands certain mental processing including thinking, recognizing, distinguishing, exploring and realizing the sound of language. Through activities that stimulate phonetic awareness, children listen to each other while reading aloud, then recognize the sounds in words and repeat it for themselves and recognize familiar sounds. By practicing and engaging in different tasks during classroom activity, learners understand the patterns among words and apply this knowledge to reading and sentence processing. It is worth noting that PA is a skill that should be taught to children; it cannot develop on its own (Chard & Dickson, 1999; Christie, Richgelds & Roskos, 2003; Ege, 2006; Justice, Pullen, 2003; Lonigan, Menchetti & Phillips, 2008; Olofsson & Niedersoe, 1999; Rubba, 2004; Torgesen et al., 1992; Torgesen & Wagner, 1998). In this case, preschool teachers can help children extend their PA through activities such as reading aloud books that play with sounds, sharing poetry that plays with sounds, sharing songs that play with sounds as well as playing games that draw attention to sounds. In addition to these activities, according to National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009) PA instruction should be purposeful and child-appropriate. Moreover, similar to various domains of second/foreign language learning, phonetic acquisition deals with factors that are emotion based.

One of the areas concerning with emotion is Emotional Intelligence (EI) which has a long history. About 2000 years ago, Plato indicated that all learning has an emotional base (Della-Chiesa, Hinton & Miyamoto; 2008; Wharam, 2009). According to Matthews, Roberts and Zeidner (1997), in 1872 Charles Darwin found that it was not the fact that the strongest or the most intelligent species could survive but the species that are the most responsive to changes could survive more. In 1920, Edward Lee Thorndike introduced social intelligence which referred to the ability to understand and manage people in order to act and behave wisely. The

advent of social intelligence made the foundation for emergence of EI. In 1950s, Abraham Maslow introduced his hierarchy of needs in which the emotional need placed in higher order needs (Burden & Williams, 1997). In 1990, Peter Mayer and John Salovey found that some people are much better than others in recognizing their own emotion and other people's feeling and solving problem in relation to emotional matter. They perceived the non-cognitive aspect of intelligence in previous works and coined the term emotional intelligence in 1990. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) EI is a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action

Mayer and Salovey introduced a four-skilled model of EI skills in which the four skills are inter-related in a way that mastery in one skill influences the other areas. The first skill is “perception of emotion” which refers to perception of emotion in oneself and others. The second skill is “the use of emotion to facilitate thinking” which refers to ability to use or generate emotions to focus on attention, communicate feelings, or engage in other cognitive processes such as reasoning, decision making and problem solving. The third skill is “understands of emotion” which refers to ability to understand emotional information and the causes of emotions. The fourth skill is “management of emotion” which concerns with the ability to be open to feelings and apply effective strategies to promote personal understanding and growth. In 1992, Daniel Goleman investigated about why EI is more important than IQ (Kagan, 1995). Goleman suggested that IQ by itself is not a predictor of human performance in activities and only about twenty five percepts of human performance deals with IQ. The most recent definition which made an attempt to put the most encompassing definition forward was as the capacity, ability, skill, or potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand and explain emotions (Hein, 2007). In all of the definitions of the EI there are some common features: first, it relates to the person ability to be self-aware and understand his/her own emotions whenever experience them. Second, it relates to discover other people's emotion. Third, it refers to manipulating emotional information. Studies on emotional intelligence suggest that EI skills deals with knowing how and when to express emotion and how and when to control emotion which plays a crucial role in children's personal, social and academic lives. Bora (2012) pointed out that students with high level of EI were more engaged in classroom activities because their self-esteem and social skills were in a high level. Previous studies indicate that cognitive and non-cognitive abilities relate to each other highly. Emotional and social skills cause improvement in cognitive function. Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2011) suggested that there was a significant relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their critical thinking skills.

Regarding PA, most of the previous studies focus on the relationship between PA and reading. In the context of Iran, Dastjerdi, Jahani, Mehri, Saeedmanesh and Soleymani (2009) conducted a study in order to investigate the relationship between PA and reading in first grade students. They concluded that there is a direct relationship between PA and reading. In another study, Kazemi (2014) argued that teaching PA can improve students' reading achievement. It is worth mentioning that a number of these studies take into consideration kindergarten children's PA claiming that PA can facilitate reading comprehension (Kjeldsen, Niemi & Olofsson, 2003). Accordingly, Chein (2002) confirmed that among different PA tasks (e.g. syllable awareness,

onset-rime awareness, and phonemic awareness) phonemic awareness has the highest relationship with reading and speaking skills.

While the so-called studies focus on the PA of kindergarten children, the present study focuses on lower-intermediate EFL learners' PA. This study is an innovative one for this area, since the relationship between PA and EI is being investigated which is not the focus of the previous studies.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Study of emotional intelligence and investigation of its relationship with foreign/second language acquisition is a new phenomenon in educational contexts (Ardashiri & Zarafshan, 2012). Very limited numbers of studies have attempted to focus on the effect of EI on PA. In the present study, the relationship between emotional intelligence and phonological awareness was investigated. Therefore, the following research question was formulated for current study.

Is there any relationship between emotional intelligence and phonological awareness?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

57 Iranian students who studied English as a foreign language in private English institutes of Zanzan and Qazvin served as the participants of the present study. 30 of students were females and 27 of the students were males. The students were in lower-intermediate level of language proficiency based on the levels specified by institutes. They ranged in age from 12 to 15 and had already studied English.

Instruments

This study is conducted by a questionnaire and a test. The test was on phonological awareness naming Phonological Awareness Quick Screening Test (PAQST). Adams and Foorman (1998) developed PAQST which consisted of 66 items. PAQST was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of their ability in awareness of phonology. The reliability of the Phonological Awareness Quick Screening Test was computed through method of estimating reliability and reported to be 0.76.

The second instrument which was applied to measure emotional intelligence of the participants was Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT). The SSEIT includes 33 items self-report, each of which used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Moreover, the reliability index of the test was calculated and reported to be 0.91.

Procedure

Permission for data collection was granted from the principals of four different language institutes in Zanzan and Qazvin. Administers distributed the PAQST papers test among the participants. Then, respondents were asked to provide details of their age, gender and educational level. Before administering the test, administrators explained about the test briefly and the

respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Then, administrators of the test assisted the participants in replying the questions step by step in order to make them more capable in answering the questions properly.

After collecting the PAQST test papers, the SSEIT questionnaire papers were distributed among the same participants. Administrators explained the details of replying the questions. Furthermore, administrators translated every question of the questionnaire into participants' mother tongue in order to guarantee effective data gathering and avoid comprehension problems that participants might encounter when given the English one.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study the relationship between lower-intermediate language learners' emotional intelligence (EI) and phonological awareness (PA) was gone under investigation. Statistical procedures were established in order to answer the research question concerning if there is any probable relationship between learners' level of EI and their level of PA and to test hypothesis. It was hypothesized that a positive relationship exists between EI and PA.

Based on the students' scores obtained from SSEIT and PAQST test, two-tailed Pearson correlation was conducted in order to find the relationship between the two variables. Statistical package for the social science (SPSS) version 16.0 was used for analysis, and results were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Two-Tailed Pearson Correlation between Scores of EI and PA

	E.I	P.A
E.I Pearson Correlation	1	-0.21
Sig. (2-tailed)		.875
N	57	57
P.A Pearson Correlation	-0.21	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.875	
N	57	57

As the results indicate there is no significant relationship between PA and EI (correlation between two variables ($r = -.021$) is negative and the Sig. (2-Tailed) value is .875 which is more than .05 indicating that there is no statistically significant correlation between the variables of the study.). Therefore, increase or decrease in EI does not significantly relate to increase or decrease in PA.

CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to investigate the possible relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and phonological awareness (PA). Appropriate statistical procedures were followed to get required answers to the research question. The research question investigated if there is any probable relationship between language learners' level of EI and their level of PA. The hypothesis was that whether monitoring of one's emotions could be a strategy to develop phonological awareness which plays a crucial role in learners' reading skills. As it is presented in the above section, this study indicated that there is no positive and significant relationship between the two variables. The analysis demonstrated that students with high level of EI may or may not have high level of phonological awareness. In other words, EI has no impact on learners' PA. So the hypothesis of the study claiming that there is a positive relationship between EI and PA was rejected.

To the best knowledge of the so far researchers no other studies have yet attempted to assess the relationship between EI and PA. However, there are numerous studies focusing on either of the variables independently and their impact on learner skills. One of these studies conducted by Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2011) suggested that there was a significant relationship between students' EI and their critical thinking skills. While some other studies assessing the effect of EI on learners' academic achievement (Brackett & Salovey, 2006; Mohammadi, 2012; Williford, 2000), indicated that students with high level of EI are more willing to take part in speaking and brain based-activities. According to these and many other studies mentioned in the above sections it appeared that EI and PA have positive impacts on learners' achievements, though findings of this study revealed no statistically significant correlation between EI and PA.

However, the researchers do not claim that the results obtained from this study are absolutely conclusive. Furthermore, it is suggested that the findings of the present study should not be taken as definitive rather as indicative of some hypotheses to be tested in future studies.

Limitation of the Study

Like other studies, this study had some limitations. One of the major limitations of the present study was about sample size. Larger sample size could definitely lead to significant results. Since the focus of the present study was on the relationship between emotional intelligence and phonological awareness, the results cannot be applied to other areas such as vocabulary, grammar and so forth. What is more, gender issue was not exclusively controlled for current study; therefore, more studies are needed to ponder upon these kinds of relationships with a focus on gender.

REFERENCES

- Adams, M.J. (1990). *Beginning to read: thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Anthony, J., L., & Francis, D., J. (2005). Development of phonological awareness. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14(5), 255-259.

- Assanova, M., & McGuire, M. (2009). *Applicability analysis of the emotional intelligence theory*. Indiana University. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~spea/pubs/undergrad-honors/honors_vol.3_no.1.pdf
- Azimifar, M. (2013). The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among Iranian students in elementary schools. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 216-222.
- Bentin, S. (1992). Phonological awareness, reading, and reading acquisition: a survey and appraisal of current knowledge. In R. Frost & L. Katz (Eds.), *Orthography, phonology, and meaning* (pp. 67-84). Amsterdam: Elsevier, North-Holland.
- Brackett MA, & Salovey P, (2006). Measuring emotional intelligence with the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). *Psicothema*, 18(1), 34-41.
- Chard, D. J., and Dickson, S. V. 1999. Phonological Awareness: instructional and assessment guidelines. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 34(5), 261-270.
- Chessman, E., McGuire, J., Snakweiler D., & Coyne M. (2009). First year teacher knowledge of phonemic awareness and its instruction. *The Journal of Teacher Education and Special Education*, 32, 270-289.
- Cisero, C., & Royer, J. (1995). The development and cross-language transfer of phonological awareness. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 20, 275-303.
- Ehri, L. C., Nunes, S. R., Willows, D. M., Schuster, B. V., Yaghoub-Zadeh, Z., & Shanahan, T. (2001). Phonemic awareness instruction helps children learn to read: Evidence from the National Reading Panel's meta-analysis. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36, 250-287.
- Ehri, L. C. & T. Roberts (2006). The roots of learning to read and write: acquisition of letters and phonemic awareness. In Dickinson, D. K. & S. B. Neuman (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy Research Volume 2*. New York: Guilford.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.
- Ghanizadeh, A., & Moafian, F. (2011). Critical thinking and emotional intelligence: investigating the relationship among EFL learners and the contribution of age and gender. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(1), 23-48.
- Goleman, D. (1995a). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Griffith, P. L. & Olson, M.W.. (2004). Phonemic awareness helps beginning readers break the code. *The Reading Teacher*, 45, 516-523.
- Haigh, C. A., Savage, R., Erdos, C., & Genesee, F. (2011). The role of phoneme and onset-rime awareness in second language reading acquisition. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 34(1), 94-113. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9817.2010.01475.x
- Hinton, C., Miyamoto, K., & della-Chiesa, B. (2008). Brain research, learning and emotions: implications for education research, policy, and practice. *European Journal of Education*, 43(1), 87-103.
- Katzir, T., Kim, Y., Wolf, M., Kennedy, B., Lovett, M., & Morris, R. (2006). The relationship of spelling recognition, RAN, and phonological awareness to reading skills in older poor readers and younger reading-matched controls. *Springer*, 19, 845-872. doi:10.1007/s11145-006-9013-2

- Khalili, SH. (2013). Any effects of emotional intelligence on learning English language at Amir Bahador English language institute-Tehran. *Switzerland Research Park Journal*, 102(10), 998-1010
- Konza, D. (2011). Phonological awareness. *Department of Education and Children's Services*, 1(2), 1-6.
- McGee, L., & Ukrainetz, T. (2009). Using scaffolding to teach phonemic awareness in preschool and kindergarten. *The Reading Teacher*, 62(7), 599-603.
- Mohammad, F., O. (2014). The use of phonological awareness skills in teaching phonetics and phonology for university students. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(1), 101-116.
- Mohammadi, M. (2012). The role of emotional intelligence on English learning as a second language. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 3(9), 1953-1956.
- Rahmani, M., & Sadighi, F. (2011). The impact of linguistic and emotional intelligence on the reading performance of Iranian EFL learners. *The Journal of Teaching language skills*, 3(1), 152-171.
- Roskos, K.A., Christie, J.F., & Richgels, D.J. (2003). The essentials of early literacy instruction. *Young Children*, 58(2), 52-60.
- Schuele, C. M., & Boudrea, D. (2008). Phonological awareness intervention: beyond the basis. *American Speech- Language-Hearing Association*, 39, 3-20.
- Schutte, N.S., Malouff, J.M., Hall, L.E., Haggerty, D.J., Cooper, J.T., & Golden, C.J. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.
- Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Stanovich, K. (1994) Constructivism in reading education. *The Journal of Special Education*, 28, 259-274.
- Thajakan, N., & Sucaromana, U. (2014). Enhancing English phonetic awareness of Thai grand one students through multimedia computer-assisted language learning. *Theory and Practice in Language studies*, 11, 2294-2300. doi:10.4304/tpls.4.11.2294.2294-2300
- Torgesen, J.K., & P.G. Mathes. (1998). *What every teacher should know about phonological awareness*. Tallahassee: Florida Department of Education.
- Torgesen, J. K., & Wagner, R. K. (1998). Alternative diagnostic approaches for specific developmental reading disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 13, 220-232.
- Treiman, R. & Zukowski, A. (1991). Levels of phonological awareness. In S. A. Brady & D. P. Shankweiler (Eds.), *Phonological processes in literacy: A tribute to Isabelle Y. Liberman* (pp. 67-83). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Williams, M.; Burden, R. 1997. *Psychology for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Williford H, 2000. *The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement in Eleventh Graders*. Retrieved at 20, November, 2010 from: <http://www.nadasisland.com>.

Yopp, H. K., & Yipp, R. H. (2009). Phonological awareness is child's play. *Beyond the Journal*, 30, 1-8.

Zeidner, M., Matthews, G., & Roberts, R. D. (2009). *What we know about emotional intelligence: How it affects learning, work, relationships, and our mental health*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

THE EFFECT OF LEITNER'S BOX ON IMPROVEMENT OF VOCABULARY RETENTION

Mansoorreh Hosseinnia and Roghayeh Maghsoodi

ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper was to investigate the effect of using Leitner's learning box in studying inter-mediate to advanced vocabularies among the students of Saba English institution in Jajarm, North Khorasan, Iran. This research was carried out in two classes of male and female learners which were between the ages of 15 to 18.. Sixty learners were randomly chosen from among the students of Saba English institution, who were studying in 18th term. The test was performed in fall semester 2014. One class was considered the control group that received the conventional treatment while the other class that was considered as experimental group received the Leitner's learning box to use it for learning vocabulary. Before initiating the treatment, two similar tests were prepared as the pre-test and post-test to discover the vocabulary knowledge of the students at the initial and final stages of the study. The analysis of obtained results in the post-test manifested significant differences between the two groups such that the students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group in terms of their vocabulary knowledge. Thus, it was concluded that the use of Leitner's learning box in studying vocabulary for the 18th term students of saba English institution led to a higher level of vocabulary improvement.

KEYWORDS: vocabulary, vocabulary test, Leitner's box, active words, passive words.

INTRODUCTION

“Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write.” Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, “learners often achieve less than their potential” and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities such as listening to the radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different contexts, reading, or watching television”(Richards, 2002).

“If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh.” (Harmer 1993) . One of the most challenging parts of language learning is the acquisition of vocabulary. Vocabulary as a main component of English language learning has drawn many attentions in past years. Laufer (1997) indicates that learning the vocabulary is at the heart of language learning and its use. Indeed, vocabulary makes the essence of English language. Vocabulary is an intrinsic part of language teaching as well as learning. Vocabulary is essential for critical thinking, close reading, concise writing and other skills (Levines., 2005). Many researchers concur that there is very little research performed in the field of vocabulary learning and that the most effective means of vocabulary learning is still unclear (Folse, 2004; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Annette & De Groot, 2006).

“Learning vocabulary is a very important part of learning a language. The more words you know, the more you will be able to understand what you hear and read; and the better you will be able to say what you want to when speaking or writing” (Shoebottom, 2012).

In the English language teaching and learning literature, a recurring theme has been always the neglect of vocabulary. It was often given little priority in language programs and was often left to be looked after itself and received only incidental attention in textbooks and language programs (Hedge, 2008; Richards & Renandya, 2002). Many authors remark that at one time it was widely assumed that lexical instruction is not essential as it can happen by itself; thus, the vocabulary teaching was not popular (Moir & Nation 2008). However, today, the importance of vocabulary and its significance in language learning have become more accepted. Griffiths (2006) indicates, for instance, that recently the significance of teaching vocabulary has been acknowledged. Learning vocabulary seems to be one of the easiest things about learning a language (after all, it's not difficult to remember a word, is it?). But it's also one of the hardest things to do, especially when you have reached a certain level.

Although vocabulary has been the subject of several studies, few researches have revealed the effective techniques of vocabulary teaching and learning. Thus, it is of great importance to find the most effective techniques for vocabulary teaching. Based on a research performed by Allen (1983), all experienced language teachers verify the important role of words and know that the lack of them leads to feeling of insecurity.

Vocabulary is an indispensable part of English language learning process. It would be impossible to learn a language without vocabulary. The important role of vocabulary has been emphasized in all different methods in language teaching and learning. Rivers (1981) states that vocabulary cannot be taught; it can be presented, explained, included in all kinds of activities, but it must be learned by the individual. “Have you ever wanted to increase your English vocabulary? As most learners agree, it's vital to know a lot of words if you want to make progress in a foreign language. Even if your grammar is excellent, you just won't be able to communicate your meaning without a wide vocabulary. But exactly how can you increase your vocabulary knowledge?” (Pemberton, 1997).

Statement of problem

The place of vocabulary in L2 teaching and learning has deservedly received great attention in recent years. Due to this fact, materials designers have been trying to provide L2 learners some ways or devices to increase our vocabulary knowledge.

Significance of the study

Vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign. Despite the fact that vocabulary has not always been recognized as a priority in language teaching, interest in its role in second language (L2) learning has grown rapidly in recent years and specialists now emphasize the need for a systematic and principles approach to vocabulary

by both teacher and the learner. The problem, “how can you increase your vocabulary knowledge?” is the significance of this study lies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary is considered as one of the important components of language knowledge. Horowitz (1988) found that a large number of ESL students completing her questionnaire either agreed or strongly agreed that “the most important part of learning a foreign language is learning its vocabulary”. Also research has shown that “lexical errors tend to impede comprehension more than grammatical errors and native-speaking judges tend to consider lexical errors as more serious than grammatical ones” (Ellis, 1994). Widdowson, 1993 (as cited in Lewis, 1993: 115) states that the more we consider the matter, the more reasonable it seems to suppose that it is the starting point, and that the syntax need to be put to the service of words and not the other way round. Interest in second language vocabulary acquisition (hereafter SLVA) has grown steadily in the last thirty years. It has given rise to the procedure of several excellent books (e.g., Huckin, Haynes, & Coady, 1993; Huckin & Coady, 1997; Nation, 1990; Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997; Singleton, 1999; Schmitt, 2000).

Some information about learning words

“The vocabulary you know can be divided into two groups - passive vocabulary and active vocabulary. Passive vocabulary contains all the words that you understand when you read or listen, but which you do not use (or cannot remember) in your own writing and speaking. Active vocabulary is all the words you understand, plus all the words that you can use yourself. Your active vocabulary, in English and your own language, is probably much smaller than your passive vocabulary.

The more you work on learning a word, as suggested above, the more likely it is that it will become part of your active vocabulary. Once you have chosen which words to learn, you next have to decide how you are going to learn them” (Shoebottom, 2012). Here we want to introduce a useful device for leaning vocabulary and investigate the effect of it for learning vocabulary.

Leitner’s box

“Our brains get bombarded with information provided by our senses. We are presented with too much to store and encode. The brain has developed sophisticated algorithms for throwing away information. The brain has developed algorithms for encoding information into Long Term MEMORY if it is important. We can use these methods of moving information from Sensory MEMORY into Working MEMORY and encoding it into Long Term MEMORY for easy recall later. Leitner’s Cardbox application is designed to lift things into the Long Term MEMORY through controlled repetition and spacing. The box system (also called “Leitner system”) was originally conceived by German psychologist Sebastian Leitner in the 1960s. Its purpose is to provide a structure for people to learn and retain vocabularies in short-term and long-term memory. The box system is comprised of a set of boxes (5 in the case of Leitner’s Cardbox application), each containing a certain number of flashcards. This amount rises proportionally with the box’s number. Also, the higher the box number, the nearer are the respective cards in the

long-term memory. Leitner's Cardbox application is based upon the algorithm as developed and tested by Sebastian Leitner a German psychologist" (ITNT, 2003- 2011).

Method

In this method flashcards are sorted into groups according to how well you know each one in the **Leitner's learning box**. This is how it works: you try to recall the solution written on a flashcard. If you succeed, you send the card to the next group. But if you fail, you send it back to the first group. Each succeeding group has a longer period of time before you are required to revisit the cards.

examples

Example 1. Suppose you have 3 groups called Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3. The cards in Group 1 are the ones that you often make mistakes with, and Group 3 contains the cards that you know very well. You might choose to study the Group 1 cards once a day, Group 2 every 3 days, and the Group 3 cards every 5 days. If you look at a Group 1 card and get the correct answer, you "promote" it to Group 2. A correct answer with a Group 2 card "promotes" that card to Group 3. If you make a mistake with a Group 2 or Group 3 card, it gets "demoted" to the first level, which forces you to study that card more often.

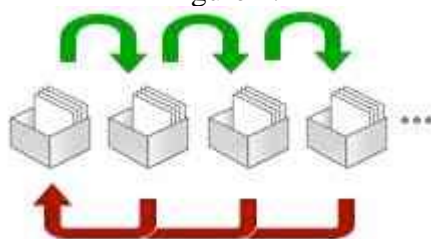
The advantage of this method is that you can focus on the most difficult flashcards, which remain in the first few groups. The result is, ideally, a reduction in the amount of study time needed.

Example 2. This example uses 5 proficiency levels and 12 decks of flash cards. Cards at Proficiency Level 1 are reviewed at every learning session; those at Level 5 are retired and no longer in use. Those at Levels 2, 3, and 4 are reviewed every 2nd, 3rd, and 4th session, respectively.

Learning sessions are numbered from 0 to 9, then the numbering starts over again (that is, 0, 1, 2, ... 8, 9, 0, 1, 2 ...). Cards at Level 1 are in Deck Current; those at Level 5 are in Deck Retired; all other cards are in 1 of these 10 "progress" decks, each of which begins with a title card sporting 4 digits:

0-2-5-9 • 1-3-6-0 • 2-4-7-1 • 3-5-8-2 • 4-6-9-3 • 5-7-0-4 • 6-8-1-5 • 7-9-2-6 • 8-0-3-7 • 9-1-4-8 If a learner is successful at a card from Deck Current, it gets transferred into the progress deck that begins with that session's number. (For example, success at a card during Session 6 transfers it from Deck Current to Deck 6-8-1-5.) Cards from that deck are reviewed whenever a number from the deck title matches the session number. (For example, cards from Deck 6-8-1-5 will be reviewed again at Sessions 8, 1, and 5.) If a learner has difficulty with a card during a subsequent review, the card is returned to Deck Current; otherwise it stays in its progress deck. When a learner is successful at a card during a session that matches the last number on the deck (for example, Session 5 for Deck 6-8-1-5), that card goes into Deck Retired, and the title card for that progress deck is freed up for use at the following session (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)".

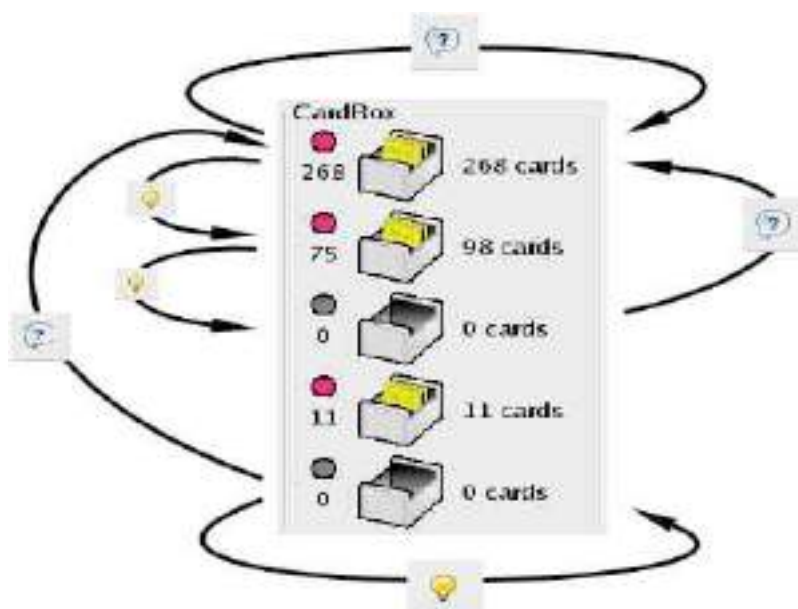
Figure 1.



benefits

- **Selective Learning:** Prioritize your studying by focusing on the proper compartment—each compartment represents a degree of knowledge. This allows you to learn what you need to learn, when you want to learn it.
- **Staggered Learning:** Using the review scheduling system allows you to maintain properly spaced review sessions. Staggered learning minimizes the amount of time required to complete a cardfile and maximizes information retention.
- **Automation:** Flashcards are moved between the compartments without effort. Review frequency is determined automatically using established intervals and an e-mail will show up each day indicating what cardfiles you need to study.
- **Assessment:** By examining the distribution of flashcards within the various compartments you can easily gauge your mastery of the subject.
- **Community:** Cardfiles can be made up of any of the hundreds of thousands of flashcards in our system. Add these flashcards to your own cardfiles to leverage the time spent by your peers to create these flashcards”(Tuolumne Technology Group, 2001, 2012).

“Leitner Learning Strategy



” (Granule User's Manual)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the mentioned problems and the study purpose, the following questions were posed:

Q1: Is there any noticeable difference between the impact of traditional teaching method and the Leitner's learning box (LLB method) on vocabulary knowledge of the students of Saba English institution?

Q2: Does using LLB have a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge and learning?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

According to a review of literature and the aforementioned lines of reasoning the following alternative hypothesis was formulated.

H1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students in the experimental group who use LLB and the mean scores of those students in the control group who do not use LLB.

H2: Using LLB does not have a positive effect on vocabulary knowledge of students of one class in the experimental group at the end of the study and treatment.

H3: Traditional teaching treatment does not have a positive effect on vocabulary knowledge of first year students in the control group at the end of the study.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

A quantitative study was selected because of the nature of this research and the research questions. In addition, the proper design for this study was experimental. Two groups were selected. One group served as the experimental group and received treatment (LLB) while the other group served as the control group and received only the routine instruction. To verify the homogeneity of the two groups a language proficiency test was carried out for this purpose. It should be mentioned that the control and the experimental groups were matched for every items except for the treatment. Both groups were the students of 18th term of Saba English institution in two different classes. In order to measure the effectiveness of the treatment, the pre-test / post-test design was selected. In this case, the words in this study were chosen of *Interchange* (Jack c. Richards) that was taught in 18th term of Saba institution. Before starting the treatment, the authors made a one hundred item multiple-choice test and did a pilot study on a smaller group. The one hundred item multiple-choice test was split into two equal halves based on odd and even numbers as the pre-test and post-test.

Participants

Sixty learners were randomly chosen from among the students of Saba English institution, who were studying in 18th term. The participants were both male and female learners and they were between the ages of 15 to 18. The cluster sampling was used to select and specify the number of students required to carry out the experiment, that is, the procedure of selection of participants started with randomizing the larger groups and moved toward smaller ones. Therefore the unit of selection was not an individual but a group of individuals. They were divided into two groups of thirty learners. One group used leitner's box for learning the vocabulary of 18th term's book, the other group not.

Instruments

The first instrument which was used by the Institute to measure the language proficiency level of the students was the Vocabulary English Language Test. The test aimed to measure the vocabulary level of the students in 18th term which was chosen of the Interchange book, Intro. The second instrument was SPSS software used for the analysis of data.

Procedure

After selecting and dividing students in two groups (one group were used Leitner's box for retention of words, another group weren't used Leitner's box for retention of words), the researcher gave them a vocabulary test to examine their vocabulary English language proficiency level. Then she analyzed the data by SPSS software.

The obtained data

The data gathered on variables were analyzed by the following methods through SPSS software. 1) Descriptive Statistics was used to determine the mean and standard deviation of each group on the pre-tests and post-tests. 2) Independent *T*-test was used to find the difference between the levels of the students of both groups on post-tests. 3) Matched *T*-test was used to compare the two mean scores of the students of both groups in pre-test and post-test on vocabulary tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pre-test data

After students took the vocabulary pre-test and post-test, the mean scores, the medians, the standard deviations, the variances, the minimum and the maximum of the vocabulary pre-test and post-test scores of the control and the experimental groups were calculated respectively. The related results are given in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: The Results Obtained for Control Group in Pre-test and post-test

Variables	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	13.85	14.45
Median	14.20	15.50
Standard Deviation	0.785	0.949
Variance	0.597	0.847
Minimum	12.5	13.75
Maximum	17	17

Table 2: The Results Obtained for Experimental Group in Pre-test and post-test

Variables	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	14.35	17.05
Median	14.20	17.25
Standard Deviation	0.850	0.895
Variance	0.724	0.794
Minimum	13	15
Maximum	16	18

As Table 2 shows, like the control group, the mean of experimental group's post-test scores (17.05) is larger than the mean of pre-test scores (14.35). Therefore, from these numbers can conclude on the average the way of teaching has caused the improvement of students' scores in both relevant groups, but it is important to know that such a conclusion is only a descriptive conclusion. As Table 1 and 2 show the mean of the two groups is similar in pre-test, but the mean of the two groups was different in post-test. The result of pre-test showed that the two groups were almost at the same level of vocabulary knowledge and the mean of two groups were not of great difference.

Post-test data

After giving treatment (LLB) to the experimental group, the research questions of the study were to be answered "Is there any significant difference between the impact of traditional teaching method and using LLB on vocabulary knowledge of first year students in the university? Does using LLB have a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge?" to answer these questions the researcher used two comparisons. First the performances of the two groups compared and second the performances of the two groups in the pre-test and post-test compared to investigate their progress and the influence of using LLB. Table 1 and 2 show the results. The posttest results show that there is a significant difference between the control and the experimental group regarding their vocabulary knowledge. The T observed is 9.612 and T critical at the selected significance level of 0.05 for degree of freedom 24 is 2.056. In other words, the T observed exceeds the T -critical implying that the experimental group performed significantly better in the post-test. As Table shows the post-test results reject the first null hypothesis and it was concluded that there is a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in terms of their vocabulary knowledge at the end of the study. Overall, the experimental group represented a greater increase than the control group. Then based on the results the second null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that using LLB has a positive effect on the experimental groups' progress in their vocabulary knowledge at the end of the study.

Discussions

The results of the study indicated that though both traditional and LLB methods enhanced vocabulary development of the students from the pre-test to the post-test, the experimental group seemed to be better than the control group. That is, the experimental group students had

significantly better vocabulary gain scores than the control group students at the end of the study. During the 16-week study, both groups followed the same course book which provided the students with a number of the new vocabularies (words). While the control group students learned vocabulary only through traditional method, the experimental group students learned vocabulary only through LLB as a new method. The experimental group students in the present study were shown explicitly the LLB strategy which they could try to achieve better vocabulary learning. The students discussed this strategy was more effective than other strategies, and received help and feedback from the teacher. When they failed to only memorize a new word, they tried to use LLB strategy, as they were aware of the existence of another strategy which they could fall back on. Thus, the instruction seemed to help them to learn better new words their performance. The vocabulary instruction through LLB empowered students in learning the relevant vocabulary. During the instruction period, students themselves found that they benefited from this strategy. It seemed that after a certain amount of practice and use, they knew how and when to use this strategy for remembering new words and for retrieving it when needed.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of LLB on the vocabulary knowledge of two groups of 18 term students of Saba English institution of Jajarm, North Khorasan, Iran. Through the analysis of the findings from the students' vocabulary pre-tests and post-tests, it was concluded that the contribution of LLB in teaching vocabulary to students led to a higher level of vocabulary improvement. Using LLB facilitates their involvement in the class work by sharing answers, trying to participate, paying attention, giving the examples, encouraging themselves to take part in the lesson, participating as volunteers, interacting with each other in a low-risk, warm-up activity, and utilizing the new words in the example. The findings revealed that participants in the experimental group, who had received the treatments on LLB, significantly enhanced better performance in a vocabulary test. Therefore, accordingly, through rejecting the first and second null hypotheses, the researchers can claim that LLB is a useful way of enhancing vocabulary learning and can play an important role in teaching and learning vocabulary to first year students. The result of this study indicated that there was significant difference in the efficiency of LLB compared to traditional teaching method. It was confirmed that learning vocabulary through LLB would lead to better learning than traditional method. The results of present study have several important achievements:

- 1) since vocabulary is a very important part of the language, a teacher must equip himself/herself with up-to-date techniques and methods of teaching them. The results of this research can be valuable for language teachers at the inter-mediate to advanced levels.
- 2) the present study showed a new technique in vocabulary learning and teaching such as four-step vocabulary flash card in order to facilitate vocabulary learning for students and also provide an opportunity for them to use or review their vocabulary in every situation.
- 3) LLB is very practical and useful for those who prepare themselves for international exams such as TOEFL, IELTS and GRE.
- 4) the results of this study proved that LLB is an effective way of enhancing vocabulary learning for students.

5) this study introduced a strategy (LLB) that make vocabulary learning interesting and easy for students.

Limitations of the study

Every study has own limitations. One of the limitations of the present study is the time limitation. The time period of the institution was three months and I had to investigate in that time period. Another limitation of my study was limited participants because of limitation of student in the institution classes. The other limitation is related to the Leitner's box. The access of it was difficult to all of the students. And the writing of words in the flash cards was time-consuming.

REFERENCES

- Allen, F. V. (1998). *Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary: Teaching techniques in English as a second or foreign language*. New York: Oxford University Press: ISBN 0-19-434130-5.
- Annette M. B., & De Groot (2006). Effects of stimulus characteristics and background music on foreign language vocabulary learning and forgetting. *Language Learning*, 56(3), 463-506.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Folse, K. S. (2004). *Vocabulary Myths*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Granule User's Manual. Retrieved may 26, 2012 from <http://vocab\LEITNER BOX\Long-Term Memory And Leitner Cardbox System.mht>.
- Griffiths, C. (2006). Language learning strategies: Theory and research. Iran. *ILI Language Teaching Journal*, 2(1).
- Harmer, J. (1993). *The Practice of Language Teaching*. New York: Longman.
- Hedge, T. (2008). *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Horowitz, L.M. (1998) Associative symmetry and second language learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 63 (3), 287-294.
- Huckin, T., & Coady, J. (1997). *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition* (pp. 203-224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huckin, T., Haynes, M., & Coady, J. (Eds.). (1993). *Second language reading and vocabulary learning*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Hunt, A., & Beglar, D. (2005). A framework for developing EFL reading vocabulary *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 17(1), 23-59. ISSN: 15390578.
- ITNT. (2003- 2011). Retrieved may 26, 2012 from http://vocab\LEITNER BOX\Download Leitner Box 1_5_1.mht.
- Laufer, B. (1997). *The lexical plight in second language reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Levine, H., Levine, N., Levine, R., (2005). *Vocabulary for the High School Student*. Amsco School Publications, Inc.
- Lewis, M. (1993), *The lexical approach*. Hove, England: LTP.
- Moir, J., & Nation, P. (2008). *Vocabulary and good language learners: Lessons from good language learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. New York: Newbury House.

- Pemberton, R. (1997). The HKUST Language Center SAC team. Retrieved may 26, 2012 from <http://vocab/VOCABULARY/Language Center.mht>.
- Richards, J. (2000). *Interchange*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. (2002). *Mythology in language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rivers, W. M. (1981). *Foreign language skills*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schmitt, N., & McCarthy, M. (Eds.). (1997). *Vocabulary: Description: acquisition, and pedagogy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shoebottom, P. (2012). How to learn vocabulary. Retrieved may 26, 2012 from <http://vocab/VOCABULARY/How to learn vocabulary.mht>.
- Singleton, D. (1999). *Exploring the Second Language Mental Lexicon*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Tuolumne Technology Group, (2001, 2012). Retrieved may 26, 2012 from <http://vocab/LEITNER BOX/Leitner Cardfile System.mht>.
- Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, Retrieved may 26, 2012 from <http://vocab/LEITNER BOX/leitner box.mht>.

HEDGING IN PERSPECTIVE: THE CASE OF PERSIAN AND ENGLISH NEWS STORIES

Leila Owraki

*Department of TEFL, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
E-mail: leila.oraki@gmail.com*

Vahid Ghahraman

*Assistant Professor at Iranian Institute for Encyclopedia Research, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: ghahraman@iecf.ir*

Farzin Fahimniya

*Assistant Professor at Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: farzin.fahimniya@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study was directed at probing hedging phenomenon in the field of written news discourse, more specifically, in one specific genre of news writing, namely news stories. Underlying purpose of the present research was to analyze frequency and forms of hedging devices and their functions in news stories selected from four sections (arts & culture, business & economy, politics, and sports) of English and Persian newspapers. To investigate hedging phenomenon, Yuryevna (2012)'s taxonomy of hedging devices and adapted classification that combined two models, namely Yu's (2009) model of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model of hedging functions were used. Data for this study contained a corpus composed of a total of 79,711 words collected from the news stories of four famous and highly-circulated newspapers in Iran (Jaamejaam and Iran) and United States of America (The New York Times and Washington post). The results of the present study showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the English and Persian news stories in the frequency of hedges, specific types and forms of hedges (except epistemic adverbs) and also functions of these devices. The English and Persian news stories were not different from each other in the use of epistemic adverbs. Epistemic nouns and implicit pragmatic markers as two types of the hedging forms had no frequency in the data. Although there were some shortcomings, limitations, problems and complexities in this study, the present research provided certain implications regarding the presence and importance of hedging phenomenon in news genre. The ESP instructors may find the comparative results of this study as a source for designing writing tasks for the learners that help them master this metadiscourse feature in writing Persian or English news stories.

KEYWORDS: Form; Function; Genre; Hedge

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most important skills with a crucial role and fundamental basis in learning a second or foreign language. Writing is important because of its power of communication. It can involve a close relationship with author and reader. Hedging plays a major role in the effectiveness of a writing piece both from the reader and the writer perspective. Hedge is the main center and has a crucial importance in this study. Hedging as a member of linguistic category has different definitions. Concerning the current different definitions of hedges in the literature, the most commonly adopted definition of hedge that is the basis of this study is presented by Hyland (1998), “hedges are linguistic means used to indicate either a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically” (p. 1).

The research on hedging has only just initiated and is quite new concept in discourse researches. Although hedge is a quite new concept, it has received great attention and numerous studies have been done that are dealing with academic/scientific or spoken discourse and mostly between one or different languages in terms of using hedging devices (e.g. Salvager-Meyer, 1994; Hyland, 2000; Falahaty, 2007). Although various investigations have documented the presence and functional role of hedges in these genres, little attention has been given to other genres like newspaper. Newspaper is a vital genre because it is one of the forms of written discourse that is issued daily or weekly. It has more readers than other kinds of written texts and help the public know everything that is happening around the world. Newspaper discourse like academic discourse which follows constraints or conventions of a discipline, governs certain conventions in order to be accepted by their corresponding discourse community and meet their expectations. Yuryevna (2012) in his study stated that “news writing is not simply a language work done by the journalist to record and report to the recent occurrences and developments, but it is an invisible interaction between the journalist and the audience” (p. 3). According to Buitkiene (2008), “newspapers carry articles of an extremely diverse character; consequently, linguistic means employed, hedging included, to achieve specific purposes are also divergent” (p.11). Although there are different articles in newspapers (E.g. news stories or ‘straight news’, opinion, editorial articles), this study focuses on news stories. Likewise, he has also stated that “the main function of news stories is to objectively inform the reader, and provide him/her with hard facts” (p.12).

Hedge words can pose serious problems for ESP students and Persian journalists in translating, writing and reading in English language in general and journalistic texts in particular because they have lack of exposure to English as a foreign language and are unaware of the functions of these linguistic features. They have not also received enough instruction on how to use them in order to produce appropriate texts in the foreign language. So the ability to hedge effectively in English for them may be difficult. Therefore, this study aimed to compare the frequency, forms and functions of linguistic devices which act as hedges in the news stories selected from the following four sections: arts & culture, business & economy, politics and sports of English and Persian newspapers published by two groups of journalists: American news story journalists (as educated native speakers of English) and Iranian news story journalists who write in Persian (as educated native speakers of Persian).

This study attempts to familiarize ESP students and Persian news story journalists attempting to publish their English news stories in international journals or English newspapers with appropriate use of hedging devices in order to avoid vagueness and misunderstanding, communicate closely with the readers, enrich the understanding of hedging phenomenon in this genre and increase their awareness of the way educated native speakers of English in the field of journalism organize their writings. It is hoped that this study could be applied not only to the field of language teaching and teaching writing for the students and journalists of this second or foreign language, but also to teaching some ESP courses (e.g. English articles and news writing course). This research also fills the gap of previous researches and the literature related to hedging phenomenon in news genre.

BACKGROUND

In 1972, Lakoff presented the term hedging. It has commonly been distinguished as “words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy” (Lakoff, 1972, p. 471). Later, Hyland (1998) considered hedging devices as “linguistic means used to indicate either a) a lack of commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or b) a desire not to express that commitment categorically” (Hyland, 1998, p. 1). For many years, hedges have achieved a special consideration in linguistic researchers, particularly in spoken and written scientific/academic discourse. Considering that “hedging is a central to academic writing where the need to present unproven propositions with caution and precision is essential” (Hyland, 1996, p. 433), many researchers (Salager-Meyer, 1994; Hyland, 1996; 1998; Clemen, 1997; Vold, 2006; Yu, 2009; Pisanski-Peterlin, 2010 and others) have been performed to consider this hedging phenomenon. Moreover, Iranian researchers have also investigated on hedges, for example: Davoodifard (2006) studied the incidence of hedging devices in English and Persian academic research articles and she concluded that English academic research articles employ more hedging devices than Persian ones. All the research studies have revealed that hedging is a usual and one of the most prominent characteristics of academic connection. Buitkiene (2008) considered that the reasons given in support of such studies are really firm, because “English has become the lingua franca of academic discourse, young researchers as well as renowned ones, despite their nationality, have to express themselves in this language if they want to be fully accepted members of the international academic community” (Buitkiene, 2008, p. 11). Thus, “the issue of hedging, alongside with other linguistic, cultural, rhetorical aspects, became strongly accentuated and researched cross-linguistically and cross-disciplinarily in written and spoken academic discourse” (Buitkiene, 2008, p. 11). However, other genres as well as different registers within these genres also employ hedging strategies (Buitkiene, 2008, p.11).

Newspaper discourse among those genres can be investigated as Noorian & Biria, (2010) has reasonably found out “the most remarkable genre since it is undeniably one of the most popular public media which has a wide range of audience” (p. 67). News writing is not actually a language task performed by the journalist to note and give an account of the new incidences and improvements, but it is a hidden action and reaction between the audience and the journalist. Although it is generally received that the language employed in news reports is necessitated to be

correct, concise, and real, these necessities do not refuse the essence of hedging devices in news reports. Fomina (2010) in her investigation mentioned that “hedging frequently occurs in newspaper articles since it is an efficient strategy to persuade somebody in such a way that readers don’t feel that the ideas are being imposed on them” (p. 206). Hedged expressions are neither true nor false they are somewhere in between and that is exactly the quality that makes them so popular with many writers and speakers (Fomina, 2010, p. 206). Unfortunately, the study of hedging phenomenon in news texts has not received much attention and is a relatively new concept in discourse studies. In the past decades; researchers have been concerned about the use of hedges in written and spoken academic or scientific discourse. Numerous studies have investigated and paid great attention in hedging phenomenon (Salager- Meyer, 1994; Clemen, 1997; Markkanen& Schroder, 1997; Hyland, 1998; 1999; Yu, 2009). Researchers have documented the significance use and role of hedges in academic or scientific writing. Other genres (E.g. newspaper genre) also use hedging devices but they have not received the attentions and investigations they deserve. In the other words, the total number of investigations on hedging phenomenon in newspaper discourse is not as many as the total number of investigations concerning scientific/academic discourse. Clemen (2002) investigated on hedging devices in journalism and demonstrated the attendance of hedging devices in this genre. Her study was the first investigation concerning specially on hedging in journalism. He educed a little number of economic texts from *The Economist* magazine and indicated what kind of hedging devices may be presented in them. Her study was scarcity of enough information, however, it still presented “an idea of the occurrence of hedges and kindred elements in a genre of economic text that deserves still wider coverage” (Clemen, 2002, p. 46). Buitkine (2008) studied on hedging devices in two types of newspaper articles (editorials and news stories) from four different newspapers: *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, and *Herald Tribune International*. The results of the study revealed that editorials employ more hedging devices than news stories because editorials attempt to persuade the readers but news stories attend to inform the reader. Buitkiene (2008) in her investigation mentioned that on the basis of newspaper article genre, hedging devices are distributed differently in newspaper discourse. Each newspaper genre educes them in a distinct way, since “each genre pursues different interests and policies” (Buitkiene, 2008, p.12). He also found out that “the main function of news stories is to objectively inform the reader, to provide him/her with hard facts, while editorials aim to form or influence, sometimes even to manipulate, public opinion” (Buitkiene, 2008, p.12). Fomina (2010) investigated certain discourse functions of English hedging devices in the British English magazine *The Guardian*. He achieved that “hedging frequently occurs in newspaper articles since it is an efficient strategy to persuade somebody in such a way that readers do not feel that the ideas are being imposed on them” (p. 206). Yuryevna (2012) investigated hedging phenomenon in two particular genres of online news writing (news articles and opinion articles). The result indicated that opinion articles employ more hedging devices than news articles and attend to use more lexical hedging devices, whereas news articles prefer to employ non- lexical type of hedging devices. This study differs from other studies in compensating some shortcomings of the previous researches by comparing frequency, forms and functions of hedging devices only in the news stories selected from the four mentioned sections of English and Persian newspapers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Regarding what were mentioned above and based on the purposes, the present study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference regarding the frequency of hedging devices employed between news stories of English and Persian newspapers?
2. Is there any significant difference regarding the forms of hedging devices employed between news stories of English and Persian newspapers?
3. Is there any significant difference regarding the functions of identified hedging devices between news stories of English and Persian newspapers?

METHODOLOGY

Corpora of the Study

The corpora of this study included a total number of 200 news stories. Therefore, the corpora of the study were divided into two subsections including English and Persian news stories.

English News Stories

The corpus was composed of 100 English news stories written by American journalists who specialize in writing news stories. *The New York Times* and *Washington post* were chosen for this study, since they are the most prominent and elite newspapers in USA due to the information they contain. The news stories, though randomly selected, were chosen from the four mentioned sections of both newspapers (25 English news stories from each section).

Persian News Stories

A total number of 100 Persian news stories from two elite and highly-circulated newspapers in Iran namely, *Jaamejaam* and *Iran* written by Iranian journalists, was chosen. These 100 Persian news stories were selected randomly from the four sections of the newspapers (25 Persian news stories from each section).

The researcher tried to select the news stories which are approximately in the same length in order to get to a reliable result, so the news stories that are too short or too long were discarded. Having a wide variety of sections can increase the external validity of the results. The reason why news stories were chosen in this analysis is closely related to the importance of broadcasting the news, information exchange, mass communication in present day societies, and the findings of the previous studies (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Noorian & Biria, 2010; Buitkiene, 2008) that confirmed the key role of hedges in newspaper discourse as an efficient strategy in attaining effective persuasion. The main motivations for focusing on the news stories of arts & cultural, business & economic, political and sports sections are their nature and information they contain. Moreover these sections have approximately the most readers in comparison to other sections.

Instrumentation

Yuryevna (2012) compiled taxonomy of hedging devices to guide the process of identifying and categorizing hedging devices in the sample texts (see appendix A). This taxonomy was used in

this study in order to identify and categorize hedging devices. Wordsmith Tools' Concordance program was used in this study in order to identify English hedges. This program allows seeing a particular word or phrase in the contexts. Adapted classification that combined two models, namely Yu's (2009) model of hedging strategies and Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model of hedging functions was used as theoretical model for analyzing hedging functions (see appendix B). The reason for choosing this classification is an adaptation of Hyland's classification with some modifications concerning linguistic devices and their correspondence the hedging functions. To examine hedging devices in the Persian news stories, Persian equivalents for the taxonomy and theoretical model were suggested by the researchers who are familiar with hedge analysis (see appendix A).

Data Collection

As concerns hedging devices across languages, the research data for the present study comprised 200 news stories (100 English and 100 Persian news stories). 100 English news stories derived from the four mentioned sections of the English newspapers contained a total of 44,277 words ranging from 302 to 589 words whose average length amounted to 443. 100 Persian news stories extracted from the four mentioned sections of the Persian newspapers comprised 39,856 words. The lexical range of the Persian news stories was between 300 and 493 with an average length of 399 words. All the news stories were published between August, September, and October 2014. Time can affect the style of the writers. With this time limitation, this factor can be restrained. News stories must be chosen carefully because some of the news stories derived from *The New York Times* and *Washington post* were not written by native American English journalists and in the same way, there are some news stories collected from *Jaamejaam* and *Iran* that were not produced by Iranian news story journalists who write in Persian as native speakers of Persian. Although the news stories that are too short or too long were discarded, the total number of words in the selected news stories of the mentioned newspapers and their sections wasn't the same.

Therefore, in order to balance the total number of words across the English and Persian news stories in general and across the sections in particular, 3 arts & cultural, 2 business & economic, 4 political and 2 sports news stories derived from the English newspapers were excluded. As a result, the total number of words in the English news stories reduced from 44,277 to 39,855 words. Table 1 provides details about the number of words and news stories selected from the English and Persian newspapers and their four sections.

Table 1: The Number of Words and News Stories for Data Analysis

Section Category	Arts & Culture	Business & Economy	Politics	Sports	Total number of news stories	Total number of words
English news stories	22 9,969	23 9,963	21 9,961	23 9,962	89	39855
Persian news stories	25 9,967	25 9,963	25 9,962	25 9,964	100	39856

Once the materials of the research study were selected, they were analyzed in terms of the hedging frequency, forms and functions they perform. Procedures used for analyzing the data are discussed below.

Procedure

After collecting the data, the first task is to organize and present them in an understandable way. The English news stories were analyzed by employing Wordsmith Tools 5.0. Wordsmith Tools' Concordance program was employed in the present study in order to identify English hedging forms. For the purpose of electronic search, the list of common hedging devices that was compiled by Yueyevna (2012) was used in the study. Then, due to the highly contextual nature of hedges, the electronic search was followed by a manual examination of the identified items. All identified English items were scrutinized in their context in order to determine and locate hedging devices in their proper categories.

As concerns the analysis of the Persian data, the selected news stories were also read precisely word by word in order to identify hedging items and locate them in their proper categories. The researchers who are familiar with hedge analysis judged about determination of those English and Persian linguistic items that express mitigation. Then, the overall frequency and percentage of hedging devices and also the frequency and percentage of each category of hedging forms were identified in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. Since all the selected news stories did not have exactly the same length and were varied, the raw figures were converted to a common basis (marker per 1000 words), that is calculating the frequency of hedging per 1000 words. It can provide a basis for comparing the frequency of occurrence. In order to ensure the reliability of the analysis and avoid probable errors of identification, the frequency of hedging devices counted two times.

Then a closer examination of the frequency and percentage of different types of each category was conducted. Besides, chi-square tests were used in order to determine whether there is a significant difference regarding the frequency of hedging devices and also forms of employed hedges between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. Moreover, the researchers were determined the frequency and percentage of each category of hedging functions in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. At this point, the analysis was based on the adapted classification that combined two approaches, namely Hyland's (1998) polypragmatic model of hedging functions and Yu's model of hedging strategies. Chi-square tests were also employed in order to identify whether there is a significant difference between the English and Persian news stories in terms of the functions of identified hedging devices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall Distribution of Hedging Forms

The overall distribution of hedging forms by categories was counted separately for the English and Persian news stories. Tables 2 and 3 show it.

Table 2: Distribution of Hedging Forms in the News Stories of English Newspapers

Categories	F ¹	F ²	%
Modal verbs	80	2.00	19.2
Approximators	99	2.48	23.8
Epistemic lexical verbs	27	0.67	6.5
Epistemic adverbs	7	0.17	1.7
Epistemic adjectives	27	0.67	6.5
Epistemic nouns	0	0	0
Passive constructions	121	3.03	29.1
Impersonal passives	17	0.42	4.1
Attribution to the source	38	0.95	9.1
Implicit pragmatic markers	0	0	0
Total	416	10.43	100

Note. F¹ - raw frequency, F²-frequency per 1,000 words, %-percentage of the individual categories

Table 3: Distribution of Hedging Forms in the News Stories of Persian Newspapers

Categories	F ¹	F ²	%
Modal verbs	17	0.42	12.2
Approximators	34	0.85	24.5
Epistemic lexical verbs	4	0.10	2.9
Epistemic adverbs	2	0.05	1.4
Epistemic adjectives	4	0.10	2.9
Epistemic nouns	0	0	0
Passive constructions	59	1.48	42.4
Impersonal passives	3	0.07	2.2
Attribution to the source	16	0.40	11.5
Implicit pragmatic markers	0	0	0
Total	139	3.48	100

Note. F¹ - raw frequency, F²-frequency per 1,000 words, %-percentage of the individual categories

Concerning the frequency of occurrence of hedging devices in the English and Persian news stories, Tables 2 and 3 shows that the frequency of hedging devices per thousand words in the news stories of English newspapers was 10.43 (n=416) which meant that 1.04% of words in this corpus were hedges, whereas the frequency of hedging devices per thousand words in the Persian ones was 3.48 (n=139) which indicated that 0.35% of words in this corpus were hedges.

Table 4: Chi-Square for the Frequency of Employed Hedges in the English and Persian News Stories

Chi-square Test		
X^2	df	p
138.25	1	0.001**

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

According to the Table 4, there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the frequency of employed hedges ($X^2=138.25$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). Therefore, the English news stories show a statistically significant higher inclusion of hedging devices than the Persian ones. Based on this, it implies that the English news story writers show their uncertainty, tentativeness and lack of complete commitment towards the proposition by means of using hedging devices more frequently than the Persian news story writers. The findings said little about the use of specific hedging categories. Therefore, the results of the analysis were examined in more details in the following section in order to provide closer analysis of the each hedging category.

Categories of Hedges

Modal Auxiliary Verbs

While modal verbs can be readily identified in the sample corpus, the actual meaning expressed by modals is less clear (Hyland, 1998, p. 105). Coates (1983, 1992) regards epistemic modality as the “speaker’s assumptions or assessment of possibilities” (p. 55). It demonstrates lack of confidence or the speaker’s confidence in the truth of the statement stated. The study showed that there are six modal auxiliary verbs with epistemic meaning that were used as hedges in the English news stories, whereas there are two modal auxiliary verbs with epistemic meaning that were used as hedges in the Persian ones. Among them an auxiliary verb *could* (/tæva:nestæn/ توانستن) was found to be the most common in the English news stories, accounting for almost 7.45% (n=31) and in the Persian ones, accounting for about 10.07% (n=14). A modal auxiliary *may* (n=18) was appeared to be the second most common hedging device, amounting for 4.32% of all identified hedging device in the English news stories, whereas an auxiliary verb *should* (/ba:jestæn/ بایستن) is the second most common hedging device in the Persian ones, accounting for about 2.15% (n=3). The third most frequent auxiliary verb in the English news stories was a modal verb *would* (n=13), accounting for about 3.12%. In the data analyzed for this study, a modal auxiliary *might* was appeared to be the fourth most common hedging device, amounting for 1.92% (n=8) of all identified hedging device in the English news stories. The fifth most frequent auxiliary verb in the English news stories was the modal verbs *can* (n=5) and *should* (n=5), accounting for about 1.20% (for each one).

To summarize the results regarding modal auxiliary verbs, it can be said that as it is presented in Table 5 below, there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of modal auxiliary verbs as hedging devices ($X^2=40.91$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$).

Table 5: Results of Chi-Square Tests for the Distribution of Hedging Forms by Categories in the English and Persian News Stories

Chi- square Test			
Categories	X^2	df	p
Modal verbs	40.91	1	0.001**
Approximators	31.76	1	0.001**
Epistemic lexical verbs	17.06	1	0.001**
Epistemic adverbs	2.77	1	0.096
Epistemic adjectives	17.06	1	0.001**
Epistemic nouns	-	-	-
Passive constructions	21.35	1	0.001**
Impersonal passives	9.80	1	0.002**
Attribution to the source	7.14	1	0.008**
Implicit pragmatic markers	-	-	-

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

On a general level, the news stories of English newspapers with total of 80 items employ a higher number of modal auxiliary verbs than the Persian ones which have only 17 hedging items in total. It shows that the English news story journalists express more prediction, possibility, tentative assumption, and assessment of probability by using epistemic meaning of modal auxiliary verbs than the Persian ones.

Approximators of Quantity, Frequency and Degree

Approximators of quantity, frequency and degree are those hedging devices that “work locally on a word or a phrase within the proposition, making its meaning sound vague, fuzzy, and imprecise” (Yu, 2009, p. 105). The data analyzed for the present study showed that 99 approximators, accounting for 23.8% were identified in the news stories of English newspapers and 34 items, accounting for 24.5% were identified in the news stories of Persian newspapers. In

the English news stories, there are seven types of approximators that were used to express hedging. As concerns the Persian news stories, there are four different types of approximators to express hedging. Among them *about* (n=37, 8.89%), *almost* (n=3, 0.72%), *approximately* (n=1, 0.24%), *around* (n=4, 0.96%), *at least* (n=9, 2.16%), *nearly* (n=13, 3.12%) and *some* (n=32, 7.69%) were present in the English news stories, while the Persian ones included *about* (/hodu:de/ حدود) (n=11, 7.91%), *at least* (/hæde ?æqæl/ حداقل) (n=1, 0.71%), *nearly* (/næzdi:k be/ نزدیک به) (n=3, 2.15%) and *some* (/bærxi:/ برخی) (n=19, 13.66%). According to the Table 5 presented earlier, it can be noticed that the chi-square test results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of approximators as hedging devices ($X^2=31.76$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). The English news stories show a statistically significant higher inclusion of approximators than the Persian ones. It suggests that the English news story journalists work locally on the meaning of a word or a phrase within the proposition in order to sound imprecise, fuzzy and vague by means of approximators more frequently than the Persian ones.

Epistemic Lexical Verbs

According to Varttala (2001), “while auxiliaries are commonly viewed as a central way of producing modal meanings, they are by no means the only devices with such potential” (p. 118). Hyland (1998) considers epistemic verbs as “the most transparent means of coding the subjectivity of the epistemic source” (p. 119), and they are usually employed to hedge either assertiveness or commitment. Five different lexical verbs with epistemic meaning were identified in the English and Persian news stories with 31 items in total. Total number of this type of hedges was 27 (6.5%) in the English news stories, whereas the incidence was noticeably lower in the Persian news stories with 4 items (2.9%). The English news stories included five epistemic lexical verbs, namely *appear* (n=9, accounting for about 2.16%), *believe* (n=3, 0.72%), *seek* (n=6, 1.44%), *seem* (n=6, 1.44%) and *suggest* (n=3, 0.72%), while only two of them, namely *seem* (/be næzær resi:dæn/ به نظر رسیدن) (n=3, 2.15%) and *believe* (/mo?taqed bu:dæn/ معتقد بودن) (n=1, 0.71%) were used in the Persian news stories. As shown in the Table 5, the chi-square test results revealed that there is a significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of epistemic lexical verbs ($X^2=17.06$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). Therefore, epistemic lexical verbs are more frequent in the English news stories than the Persian ones. It implies that the English news story journalists code the subjectivity of the epistemic source, hedge their commitment or assertiveness and provide non-factual status of a proposition more frequently than the Persian news story journalists.

Epistemic Adverbs

Apart from modal auxiliaries, epistemic lexical verbs and approximators, there are many other ways of stating epistemic modality. A type of epistemic meaning associated with hedging is also frequently presented by epistemic adverbs “which can introduce a certain degree of indefiniteness or lack of precision to the information” (Yueyevna, 2012, p. 61), “either to provide a more accurate representation of reality or simply because vagueness is more appropriate for this specific communicative situation, in which a higher degree of precision is not considered necessary” (Poveda Cabanes, 2007). Two different forms of epistemic adverbs as hedging

devices were identified in the English and Persian news stories with 9 items in total. Total number of this type of hedges was 7 (1.7%) in the English news stories, whereas the incidence was lower in the Persian news stories with 2 items (1.4%). The English news stories included two epistemic adverbs as hedging devices, namely *possibly* (n=2, accounting for about 0.48%) and *probably* (n=5, 1.20%), while only one of them, namely *probably* (/ehtema:læn/ احتمالاً) (n=2, 1.43%) was available in the news stories of Persian newspapers. It can be noticed that according to the Table 5 presented earlier, the results of chi-square test showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of epistemic adverbs ($\chi^2=2.77$, $p=0.096$, $df=1$). Therefore, the English and Persian news stories are not different from each other in the use of epistemic adverbs. It shows that the English and Persian news story journalists use the same number of epistemic adverbs to provide a vague representation of reality and also represent not quite precise and a certain degree of ambiguity to the information.

Epistemic Adjectives

A number of adjectives were present in the research data that involve the kind of meaning that may be taken to constitute hedging. According to Varttala (2001), these adjectives with epistemic meaning mark the information presented as tentative, uncertain, doubtful, or not completely precise in many situations entirely similar to that of the adverbs. Three different adjectives with epistemic meaning were identified in the English and Persian news stories with 31 items in total. Total number of this type of hedges was 27 (6.5%) in the English news stories, whereas the incidence was noticeably lower in the Persian news stories with 4 items (2.9%). The English news stories included all three epistemic adjectives, namely *likely* (n=15, 3.60%), *possible* (n=10, 2.40%) and *unlikely* (n=2, 0.48%), while only one of them, namely *possible* (/ehtema:li:/ احتمالی) (n=4, 2.87%) was found in the Persian ones. As seen earlier in the Table 5, the results of chi-square test revealed that there is a considerable difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of epistemic adjectives ($\chi^2=17.06$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). As mentioned before, the English news stories present a higher number of epistemic adjectives than the Persian ones. It shows that the English news story journalists tend to mark the information presented as tentative, uncertain, doubtful, or not completely precise more than the Persian news story journalists.

Epistemic Nouns

The findings of the present study demonstrated that noun hedges weren't present in the English and Persian news stories. It implies that the journalists don't use noun hedges in their news stories. The absence of this type of hedging devices in the news stories could be again explained by the functions they perform in news discourse. The main function of news stories is to objectively inform the readers, to provide them with hard facts (Buitkiene, 2008, p. 12). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect such findings.

Passive Constructions

The findings of the present study indicated that agentless passive constructions as one of the hedging forms were found in the news stories of English newspapers with total of 121 items, accounting for almost 29.1% and also Persian newspapers which had 59 items, amounting for about 42.4%. The chi-square test results revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the news

stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of agentless passive constructions ($X^2=21.35$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). Therefore, the English news stories show a statistically significant higher inclusion of agentless passive constructions than the Persian ones. Based on this, it implies that the English news story journalists attempt to prevent taking responsibility for what they are stating about in order to present the news stories objective by means of various types of passive constructions more frequently than the Persian news story journalists.

Impersonal Passive Constructions

While passive constructions are not always used to express hedging, impersonal passive constructions in this sense are easier to identify and to define their hedging meaning (Yueyevna, 2012, p. 68). The findings of the present study revealed that impersonal passive constructions that are used as hedging devices were present in the news stories of English newspapers with total of 17 items, accounting for about 4.1% and the Persian news stories which had only 3 items, amounting for almost 2.2%. To summarize the results, it can be said that as it was presented earlier in the Table 5, there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of impersonal passive constructions as hedges ($X^2=9.80$, $p=0.002$, $df=1$). Therefore, it shows that the English news stories present a higher number of impersonal passive constructions than the Persian ones.

Attribution to the Source

According to Yuryevna (2012) “this category of hedging devices can be regarded as a particular characteristic of the news writing” (p. 68). Since the journalist are supposed to be as objective and accurate as possible, reference to the source of the information can be one way to avoid misinterpretation of the facts or events and to protect themselves from the possibility being negatively judged by the readers (Yuryevna, 2012, p. 68). The findings of the present study revealed that this category of hedging devices was found in the news stories of English newspapers with total of 38 items, accounting for almost 9.1% and also Persian newspapers which had 16 items, accounting for almost 11.5%. According to the Table 5 presented earlier, it can be noticed that the chi-square test results revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of attribution to the source hedges ($X^2=7.14$, $p=0.008$, $df=1$). Therefore, the English news stories show a statistically significant higher inclusion of attribution to the source than the Persian ones. It suggests that the English news story journalists prevent misinterpretation of the events or truths and keep safe themselves from the possibility being negatively judged by the readers in order to be accurate and objective to a greater extent than the Persian news story journalists.

Implicit Pragmatic Markers

This category of hedges wasn't present and constituted no percent of all hedging devices identified in the English and Persian news stories. Pragmatic markers with interpersonal and interactive functions may bring a sense of cooperation, sharing, intimacy or solidarity between the interlocutors, expressed by humble and modest attitude, in a reduced or weakened tone (Yu, 2009, p. 98). News stories in comparison to other genres such as opinion articles perform different functions and follow different interests.

The main function of news stories is to objectively inform the readers, to provide them with hard facts, while opinion articles aim to persuade the reader and form public opinion (Buitkiene, 2008, p. 12). Therefore, as the findings of the present study showed, the journalists do not employ these different expressions and senses in their news stories. This category consists of some devices, for example, direct questions, parenthetical constructions, hypothetical conditionals, etc.

Functions of Hedges

Hyland (1998) in her polypragmatic model of hedges divided hedging functions into three main categories: accuracy-oriented, writer-oriented and reader-oriented hedges. Table 6 below presents the overall distribution of writer, accuracy and reader-oriented hedges in the English and Persian news stories.

Table 6: *Distribution of Hedging Functions in the News Stories of English and Persian Newspapers*

Function of Hedge	ENS			PNS		
	F ¹	F ²	%	F ¹	F ²	%
Writer-oriented	317	7.95	76.20	105	2.63	75.54
Accuracy-oriented	99	2.48	23.80	34	0.85	24.46
Reader-oriented	0	0	0	0	0	0

Key to Table: F¹-raw frequency, F²-frequency per 1,000 words, % percentage of the individual categories, English news stories (ENS), Persian news stories (PNS)

This Table shows that apart from reader-oriented hedges which had no frequency in the data, the English news stories contained more writer-oriented and accuracy-oriented hedges compared to the Persian ones. Furthermore, the frequency of writer-oriented hedges in the English and Persian news stories was higher than accuracy-oriented hedges. A more closed examination of each hedging function will be presented further in the following subsections.

Writer-oriented Hedges

As Table 6 presented earlier demonstrated, the first prominent functional category of hedges in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers was writer-oriented hedges. Journalists employ this type of hedging devices in the news writing in order to support themselves from the possible results of error by restricting their personal responsibility. Table 6 showed that the frequency of writer-oriented hedges per thousand words in the English news stories was 7.95 (n=317), accounting for about 76.20% of the overall number of hedges which was more than that of the Persian ones (2.63, n=105, amounting for 75.54%). As shown in the Table 7, the chi-square test results revealed that there is a significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of writer-oriented hedges ($\chi^2=138.25$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$).

Table 7: Results of Chi-Square Tests for the Distribution of Hedging Functions by Categories in the English and Persian News Stories

Chi-square Test			
Categories	X^2	df	P
Writer-oriented hedges	138.25	1	0.001**
Accuracy-oriented hedges	31.76	1	0.001**

**Level of Significance at 0.01 *Level of Significance at 0.05

Therefore, the English news stories favor more number of this type of hedging functions than the Persian ones. It implies that the English news story journalists tend to maintain some distance from propositions in order to reduce the probability of refutation and make a shield for themselves against the possible consequences of error by limiting their personal responsibility more frequently than the Persian news story journalists.

Accuracy-oriented Hedges

According to the Table 6 presented earlier, the second important functional category of hedges in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers was this category of hedging functions. The prominent function of this category is to express statements with higher exactness. The writers in order to present information more precise and objective employ a diversity of degree of precision adverbs that present an “acceptable degree of imprecision to specify the accuracy” (Hyland, 1998, p. 140). Table 6 showed that the frequency of accuracy-oriented hedges per thousand words in the English news stories was 2.48 (n=99), accounting for about 23.80% of the overall number of hedges which was more than that of the Persian ones (0.85, n=34, amounting for 24.46%). As seen earlier in the Table 7, the results of chi-square test revealed that there is a considerable difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of accuracy-oriented hedges ($X^2=31.76$, $p=0.001$, $df=1$). As mentioned before, the English news stories present a higher number of this type of hedging functions than the Persian ones. It indicates that the English news story journalists attempt to express information with more accuracy and precision according to reality than the Persian news story journalists.

Reader-oriented Hedges

Reader-oriented hedges mainly are about the interpersonal interaction between writers and readers, in other words, reader-oriented hedges are as devices that help to lessen the statements in a way that “bring a sense of cooperation, sharing, or solidarity between the interlocutors” (Yu, 2009, p. 97) and make easy and effective communication between the writers and readers. According to the Table 6 presented before, the results of the present study indicated that because of the nature of news stories that informs the readers and presents truths and realities objectively, reader-oriented category of hedging functions wasn’t employed and found in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. It implies that the journalists do not concern the readers in exchanging of opinions or direct them as an attentive individual to answer and judge regarding the truth value of the proposition in their news stories. They also do not provide and express a

sense of cooperation, intimacy and sharing in the statements between the readers and themselves in their news stories.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to compare the frequency, forms of linguistic devices which act as hedges and determine the functions of identified hedges and see whether the incidence of the hedging frequency, forms and functions varies in the news stories selected from four sections (arts & culture, business & economy, politics, and sports) of English and Persian newspapers. In respect to the first research question, the findings of this study showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the frequency of employed hedges. Therefore, the English news stories show a statistically significant higher inclusion of hedging devices than the Persian ones. Finally, it is concluded that this study rejects the first null hypothesis. As concerns the second question which deals with specific types and categories of hedging devices, regardless epistemic nouns and implicit pragmatic markers which had no frequency in the data, the present study revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the English and Persian news stories in the use of each hedging form except epistemic adverbs. In other words, apart from epistemic nouns and implicit pragmatic markers that were not present in the data, this study rejects the second null hypothesis regarding all the forms of hedging devices except epistemic adverbs employed between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. With regards to the third research question, the findings of the present study showed that regardless reader-oriented hedges which had no frequency in the data, there is a statistically significant difference between the news stories of English and Persian newspapers in the use of each hedging function (writer-oriented hedges & accuracy-oriented hedges). In other words, regardless reader-oriented hedges that were not present in the data, this study rejects the third null hypothesis regarding the functions of identified hedging devices between the English and Persian news stories. The findings of this study supported Yuryevna's (2012) study on hedging in news writing that indicated implicit pragmatic markers, epistemic nouns and reader-oriented hedges aren't present in the news stories. The present study also confirmed his study that showed writer-oriented hedges are the first prominent functional category of hedges and accuracy-oriented hedges are the second important category of hedging functions.

The results of this study showed that hedges play a prominent role in the news genre. Although considerable differences were found in the use of hedging devices, their forms and functions in the news stories of each language, the most significant issue was the language differences that, following Hyland (1997), are believed to be the result of the cultures of English and Persian communities. The notion of culture-specificity as developed by Hyland (1997) refers to the ideological schema that controls each community's knowledge, purposes, self-identification and conduct. The use of language by community members can express signs of their community-specific culture. So, writings of journalists of news stories to be specified by their discourse community norms, values and native language. The English news story journalists are involved in the effective nature of their discourse. It seems that this can be affected by the way they connect themselves with other members of the society and their awareness of cultural factors.

English and Persian writers mitigate their statements when they try to hide a matter against a thrust. This can be affected by the matter that as a result of impreciseness of an unhedged proposition, all the essential information cannot be presented (Varrttala, 2001). Although the Persian news story journalists employ fewer hedges and somehow are more open and honest than their English counterparts, this could not mean that they are impolite or want to indicate more authority. It seems that their understanding of cultural factors is completely different from their English counterparts. Thus, it is indicated that understanding cultural issues can lead to proper interpretation of hedges.

Besides cultural issues and differences between communities, these types of comparisons will hold true if we pay special attention to the nature of the sections. In other words, the nature of the sections can be regarded as one of the factors influencing the observed differences in the amount of using hedging devices, hedging forms that are employed and also functions they perform in the news stories of English and Persian newspapers. The different bases of argumentation in various sections can be considered as another reason for the observed differences. The amount of information that should be presented in the news stories can differ from one language to another and also from one section to another. The different emphasis given to the news stories of various sections of English and Persian newspapers can partially protect this idea.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study indicated that hedging as mitigating device was widely employed and present in the English and Persian news stories. It suggests its importance in newspaper genre. These findings proved that hedge is an essential feature of professional writing. There are a number of limitations that may influence the findings of the study. First, establishing a clear definition of hedge is extremely difficult because researchers of various studies have proposed definition of hedges in different ways. Second, providing a comprehensive taxonomy and classification of all hedges using in a language is a very controversial task, because researchers have little agreement on the functions and forms of hedge. As concerns delimitation, this study is based on relatively small corpora (200 news stories). In order to complement the findings of the present study, some further researches can be suggested:

1. Future researches can be carried out expanding the corpora size to see if the same results are obtained.
2. Future researches are needed to examine other sections for in-depth analysis and reliability of the results in order to find out whether the results will be the same as or different from the results of the present study.
3. It is suggested that future researches concentrate on other genres of news, because only a single genre of news, that is, news story was examined in this study.

The results of the present study may be useful and have implications for ESP students and instructors, material developers and also Persian news story journalists attempting to publish their news stories in English in international journals or English newspapers. They are provided with a better understanding of hedges and can also be used for the development of teaching and studying writing in English. In other words, the findings of this study can have remarkable advantages for the students and journalists to examine and consider their extent of foreign language experience, the awareness of conventional rules and norms of English language, and the differences that might exist between the use of hedges in English and Persian news stories. It helps them make judgment accurately about employing one form rather than another. Moreover, the results of this study can also be used by ESP instructors, in order to inform the learners of the differences that may occur in hedging devices use between English and Persian news writing. ESP instructors when teaching writing skills should emphasize the ability to make a difference between observed facts and interpretations, make the learners aware regarding the way that English journalists use hedging and modify their claims and statements appropriately, and also aware them concerning the different degrees of emphasis that the English journalists may use in their news. The ESP instructors may find the comparative results of this study as a source for designing writing tasks for the learners that help them master this metadiscourse feature in writing Persian or English news stories. Furthermore, the findings of the present study suggest the necessity for developing and designing some authentic materials by material developers in order to manifest the natural frequency, forms and functions of hedging devices in their work. Information conveyed by authentic data is undoubtedly of great value for educational purposes.

REFERENCES

- Buitkiene, j. (2008). Hedging in newspaper discourse. *Žmogus ir žodis*, 10(3), 11-15. Retrieved March, 27, 2011 from <http://WWW.biblioteka.vpu.lt>
- Clemen, G. (1997). The concept of hedging: Origins, approaches and definitions. In R. Markkanen & H. Schroder (Eds.), *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 235-245). Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.
- Clemen, G. (2002). Hedging in English journalistic economics. In: A. Nuoppen, T. Harakka and R. Tatji (Eds.) *interculturelle wirtschafkommunikation Forschungsobjekte und Methoden*. 93. Vaasa: the University of Vaasa, p. 41-47. Retrieved March, 30, 2011, from <http://lipas.uwasafi/comm/publications/>
- Coates, J. (1983). *The Semantics of the Modal Auxiliaries*. London and Canberra: Croom Helm.
- Coates, J. (1992). The expression of root and epistemic possibility in English. In J. Bybee & S. Fleischman (Eds), *Modality in grammar and discourse* (pp. 55-66).
- Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: A cross-linguistic study of newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40, 95-113. Retrieved April, 12, 2011 from <http://www.elsevier.com>
- Davoodifard, M. (2006). *A Contrastive Analysis of Hedging in English and Persian Research Articles: Linguistic and Cultural Variations across Languages and Disciplines*. An unpublished thesis, University of Esfahan, Iran.

- Falahati, R. (2007). The use of hedging across different disciplines and rhetorical sections of research articles. In N. Carter, L. H. Zabala, A. Rimrott & D. Stroschenko (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 22nd Northwest Linguistics Conference (NWLC) at Simon Fraser University* (pp. 99-112). Barnaby, Canada: Linguistics Graduate Students Association.
- Fomina, I. A. (2010). Some discourse functions of English hedges. *Международный журнал экспериментального образования*, 8, p. 206-207. Retrieved March,12, 2011, from <http://www.rae.ru>
- Hyland, Ken. (1996). Nurturing Hedges in the ESP curriculum. *System* 24(2) 477–90.
- Hyland, K. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing. *Journal of second language writing*, 6 (2), 183-205.
- Hyland, K. (1997). Scientific claims and community values: articulating an academic culture, *Language and Communication*, 17(1), 19-31.
- Hyland, K. (1998). *Hedging in scientific research articles*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: JohnBenjamins Publishing Company.
- Hyland, K. (1998). Exploring corporate rhetoric: Metadiscourse in the ceo'slether. *Journal of Business Communication* 35(2): 224–245.
- Hyland, K. (1998).Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscours. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Academic attribution: Citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics*, 20(3), 341-267.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Disciplinary discourses: writer stance in research articles. In: Candlin,
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Met discourse in introductory course books. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18, 3–26.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interaction in academic writing*. London: Pearson.
- Lakoff, G. (1972). Hedges: A study in meaning criteria and the logic of fuzzy concepts. *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 2, 458-508.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (1997). Hedging: A challenge for pragmatics and discourse analysis. In R. Markkanen & H. Schröder (Eds.), *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts* (pp. 3-18). Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter.
- Markkanen, R., & Schröder, H. (Eds.). (1997). *Hedging and discourse: Approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts*. Berlin/ New York: de Gruyter.
- Noorian, M., & Biria, R. (2010). Interpersonal metadiscourse in persuasive journalism: A study of texts by American and Iranian columnists. *Journal of Modern Languages*, 20, 64-79.
- Pisanski Peterlin, A. (2010). Hedging devices in Slovene-English translation: A corpus-based study. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 9 (2). Retrieved May, 12, 2011, from <http://ojs.ub.gu.se/ojs/index.php/njes/article/view/419>
- Poveda Cabanes, P. (2007). A contrastive analysis of hedging in English and Spanish architecture project descriptions. *Spanish Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 20, 139-158.
- Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical written discourse. *English for specific purposes*, 13(2), 149-171. DOI:10.1016/0889-4906(94)900132

- Varttala, T. (2001). *Hedging in scientifically oriented discourse: Exploring variation according to discipline and intended audience* (Unpublished MA Thesis). University of Tampere. Retrieved May, 8, 2011, from <http://acta.uta.fi/english/teos.php?id=5718>
- Vold, E. T. (2006). Epistemic modality markers in research articles: A cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16(1), 61-87. Retrieved May, 4, 2011, from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/>
- Yu, S. (2009). The pragmatic development of hedging in EFL learners. (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation) City University Hong Kong. Retrieved May, 1, 2011, from <http://dspace.cityu.edu.hk/handle/2031/5731>
- Yuryevna, B. E. (2012). *Hedging in online news writing*. (unpublished Master's Thesis). National Taiwan University of science and technology. Retrieved January, 1, 2012, from <http://dspace.cityu.edu.hk/handle/2031/5731>.

Appendix A

Taxonomy of Hedging Devices (Yuryevna, 2012, p. 97)

Common Lexical Items Expressing Hedging

1. Modal Verbs

Can, could, may, might, should, would

توانستن، ممکن بودن، بایستن، خواستن

2. Epistemic Lexical Verbs

Seem, appear, believe, think, guess, suggest, suppose, propose, predict, assume, speculate, suspect, attempt, seek

به نظر آمدن/رسیدن، معتقد بودن، تصور کردن، احتمال دادن، حاکی بودن (نشانه چیزی بودن)، قرار بودن، در نظر داشتن، پیش بینی کردن، فرض کردن، گمان کردن، حدس زدن، قصد کردن، خواستن

3. Epistemic Adverbs

Probably, perhaps, maybe, possibly, apparently

احتمالا (احتمال دارد/احتمال می رود که)، شاید، ممکن است، در حد امکان، ظاهراً (گویا)

4. Epistemic Adjectives

Likely, unlikely, possible, probable

ممکن، بعید، احتمالی، امکان پذیر (شدنی)

5. Epistemic Nouns

Possibility, probability, chance

احتمال، امکان، شانس

6. Approximators

Some, about, nearly, almost, quite, somewhat, kind of, sort of, somehow, to some extent, approximately, around

برخی (بعضی)، حدود، نزدیک به، تقریباً، نسبتاً، تا اندازه ای (قدری)، تا حدی، کم و بیش، به نحوی، حدوداً، در حدود

Syntactic Items Expressing Hedging

1. Impersonal Passive Constructions

It is believed/assumed/said that...; X is believed/though/supposed to...

اعتقاد بر این است/فرض بر این است/گفته می شود که...; ... بر این باور است/تصور می شود/قرار است که...

2. Agentless Passive Constructions (Passive Construction without By-Agent)

3. *Attribution to the Source*

According to X,...; As x stated,...

بنا بر (بر اساس، به گفته ی، بر طبق، به عقیده ی، مطابق، بر حسب) ...،...؛ همانطور که... بیان کرد (اظهار داشت)،...

4. *Parenthetical Constructions Expressing Personal Reference and Attribution*

I believe, I think, as far as I know, in my/our opinion

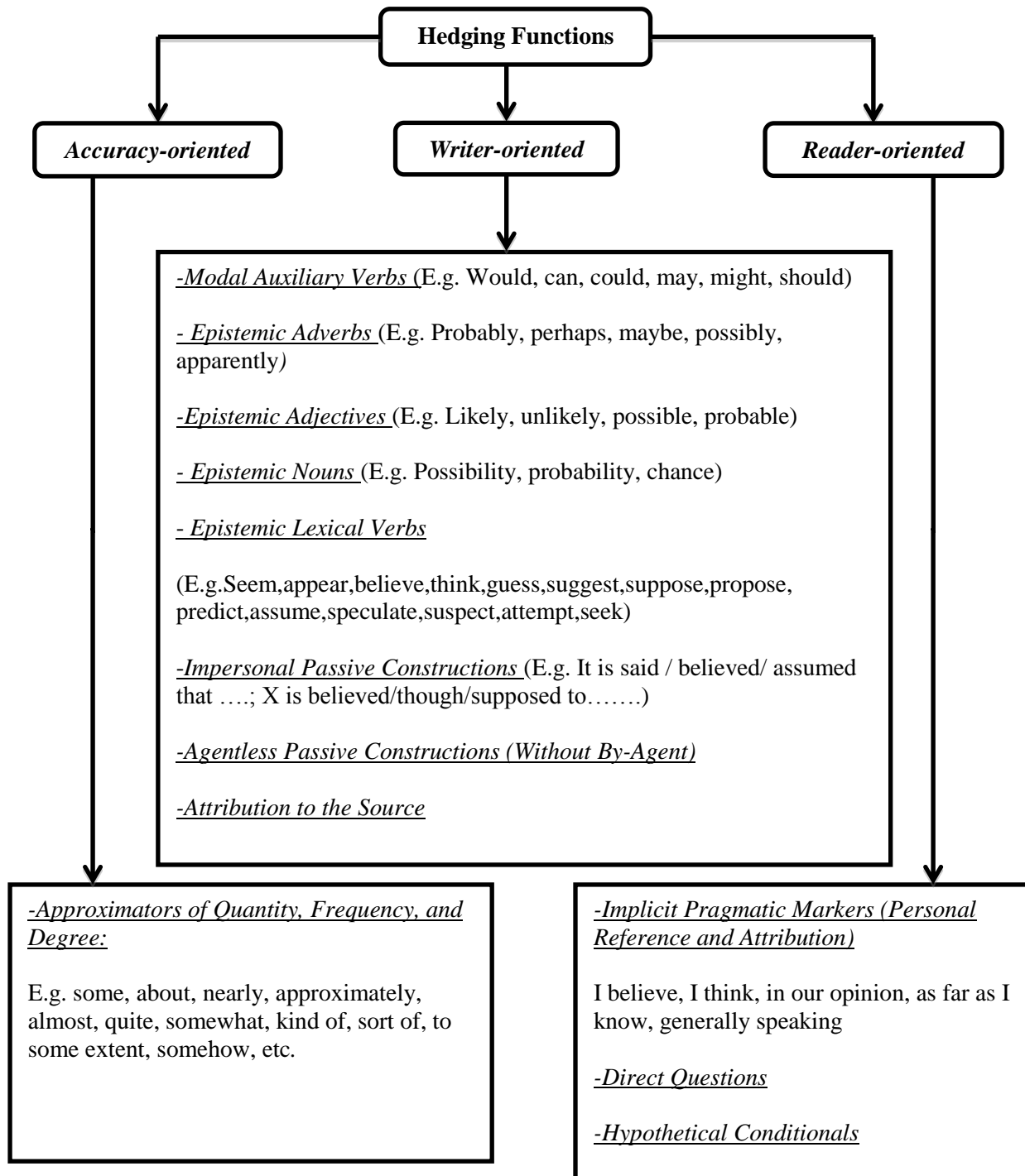
من معتقدم (باور دارم)، من تصور میکنم (فکر میکنم)، تا آنجایی (چنان) که می دانم، به عقیده ی من/ما

5. *Direct Questions*

6. *Hypothetical Conditionals*

Appendix B

Theoretical Model for Analyzing Functions of Hedges (Adapted From Hyland, 1998, p.186; Yu, 2009, p.106)



THE EFFECT OF SELF-CORRECTION ON EXTROVERTED AND INTROVERTED INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' WRITING IMPROVEMENTS

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran

*Head of the English Department for MA Students , Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran
Branch, Tehran, Iran
Baradaranabdollah@yahoo.com*

Mohammad Reza Alavi

*M.A holder , Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
mohammadalavi1821@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study was an attempt to investigate the Effect of Self-Correction on Extroverted and Introverted Intermediate EFL(English as a Foreign Language) Learners' Writing Improvements. To carry out the study, 128 intermediate Iranian male EFL learners were selected through administration of Preliminary English Test (PET) and employing the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ). The participants were assigned to four main groups: (1) extroverts who corrected their own writings; (2) extroverts whose writings were corrected by the teacher; (3) introverts who corrected their own writings; (4) introverts whose writings were corrected by the teacher. The experimental groups (Group 1 & 3) received a seven-week period of treatment. The obtained results showed that personality type had no significant effect on learners' improvement in writing. However, correction method proved to be significantly effective, with self-correction method showing greater effect on writing improvement. The results indicated that self-correction method has a greater effect on learners' improvement in writing than the traditional teacher-correction method. The first null-hypothesis was rejected, implying that there is a significant difference between the two correction techniques; self-correction is more effective in writing improvement than the teacher-correction. The second null-hypothesis was supported. This implies that extroverts and introverts can improve equally in their writing and being extroverted or introverted will have no significant effect on learners' rate of improvement.

KEYWORDS: *extroversion, introversion, self-correction, teacher-correction, EFL writing development, writing feedback.*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching of ESL writing has undergone great changes in the twentieth century, particularly since 1945, from viewing language as an end product to viewing it as an interactive process in which learners play a determining role. Consequently, responding to learners' errors has undergone great changes. However, teachers need to inform the learners of the quality of their pieces of

writing. (Chastain, 1988; Magnan, 1990; Hyde *et al.*1997). Apart from different approaches of teaching writing and different writing correction methods, personality traits such as Extroversion and Introversion are believed to have an impact on learners' learning in that learners with different personality types view language and language learning differently (Fillmore, 1979; Stern, 1991; Brown, 2006; Shepherd, 2002; Hajimohammadi, 2010).

During the recent decades most of the language-teaching specialists have changed their attitudes and have tried to put the learners in the focal point of the attention through providing them with some tasks. Consequently, many methods and strategies emerged and each of them has assigned a different role to learners. As far as writing improvement is concerned, some teachers have recommended that a part of the responsibility for learning is put on the learners themselves. For instance, the learners can be taught to read their own pieces of compositions and check for the errors. That means self-correction instead of the traditional teacher-correction (Fathman - Whalley, 1990). Moreover, focusing on the learners many instructors have put forward the idea of considering the learner factors such as personality type, motivation, attitudes and other personal factors. Thus, these factors have gained prominence. One of these factors is the personality trait of Extroversion /Introversion. Considering a student as extrovert or introvert would likely affect many teachers' attitudes toward him due to the erroneous stereotype that some teachers have against introverted learners. (Borg, Shapiro, 1996). The present study intended to investigate the effect of these two personality factors as well as correction methods in writing improvement of learners.

An Overlook on Teaching Writing

There's no doubt that developments in teaching of ESL composition have been influenced by and, to a certain extent, are parallel to the developments in the teaching of writing to the native speakers of English (Silva 1990). Since 1945- the beginning of the modern era of second language teaching in the United States- many particular approaches or orientations to L2 writing have achieved dominance and then faded but never disappeared. Each approach, at least as it emerges in the literature, has the distinctive focus, highlighting in one case the rhetorical and linguistic form of the text itself; in another the writer and the cognitive processes used in act of writing, in another the content for writing, and in the last the demands made by the reader (Raimes 1991, p. 448)

According to Silva (1990), the four most influential approaches to this period are:

1) Controlled Composition(*focus on form*): Silva (1990) describes this phase of composition teaching by remarking that controlled composition that sometimes is referred to as guided composition has its roots in Charles Fries's (1945) 'oral approach', the precursor of the Audio-lingual Method of second language teaching. The basic notions of controlled composition are that language is speech (from structural linguistics) and learning is habit formation (from behaviorist psychology). From this perspective writing was regarded as a secondary concern, essentially as reinforcement of oral habits.

2) Current-Traditional Rhetoric: In the mid-sixties there appeared an increasing awareness of producing extended written discourse. This awareness led to suggestion that controlled composition was not enough; that writing was more than building grammatical sentences; and that there was a need for a bridge between controlled and free writing. This approach combined the principles of current-traditional paradigm from native speaker composition instruction with Kaplan's theory of 'constructive rhetoric' (Silva 1990, p. 13).

Kaplan (2006, p. 13) defined rhetoric as "the method of organizing syntactic units into larger patterns". He suggested that ESL writers "employ rhetoric and a sequence of thought, which violates the expectations of the native reader". From the perspective of this version of current-traditional rhetoric, writing is basically a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns. Learning to write, then, involves becoming skilled in identifying, internalizing, and executing these patterns. The writer fills in a preexisting form with provided or self-generated content. The reader is easily confused and perhaps vexed by unfamiliar patterns of expressions. The text is the collection of increasingly complex discourse structures (Silva 1990, p. 14).

3) the Process Approach(*focus on writer*): This is an approach in teaching composition writing which emphasizes the composing processes that writers make use of in writing (such as planning, drafting, and revising) and seeks to improve learners' writing skills through developing their use of effective composition processes. This approach is sometimes compared with a product approach or a prose model approach, that is, one which focuses on producing different kinds of writing products and which emphasizes the imitation of different model paragraphs or essays (Richards *et al.* 1992). In this approach, content, ideas and the need to communicate determine the form. In essence, "composing means expressing ideas, and conveying meaning. Composition means thinking" (Raimes 1983 a, p. 261). In the classroom context, this approach calls for providing a positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which learners, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing processes. The teacher's role is to help learners develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, generating ideas and information, focusing, and planning structure and procedure), for drafting (encouraging multiple drafts), for revising (adding, deleting, modifying and rearranging ideas), and for editing (attending to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics). From the process perspective, writing is a complex, recursive, and creative process similar in L1 and L2. Writer is the center of attention. The reader, focusing on the content, ideas, and the negotiation of the meaning, is not preoccupied with form. The text is a product –a secondary, derivative concern, whose form is a function of its content and purpose. It is the responsibility of the individual writers to identify and appropriately address the particular task, situation, discourse community, and socio-cultural setting in which they are involved.

4) English for Academic Purpose(*focus on content*): There have been a lot of criticisms against process approach. One major criticism is that the process approach does not adequately address some central issues in ESL writing. Reid (1984 a, b) has suggested that the approach neglects to seriously consider variations in writing processes due to differences in individuals, writing tasks,

and situations. Critics also question whether the process approach realistically prepares learners for academic work. According to Horowitz (1986, p. 144), this approach “creates a classroom situation that bears little resemblance to the situation in which learners’ writing will be exercised”. He suggests that process orientation ignores certain types of academic writing tasks. He also believes that the two basic tenets of process approach –“content determines form” and “good writing involves writing”– do not necessarily hold true in many academic contexts. He further asserts that the process approach overemphasizes the individual’s psychological functioning and neglects the socio-cultural context.

English for academic purpose, as an alternative instructional methodology, aims at recreating the conditions under which actual university writing tasks are done and involves the close examination and analysis of academic discourse format and writing task specification. In brief, from English for academic purpose orientation, writing is the production of the prose that will be acceptable at an American academic institution, and learning to write is a part of becoming socialized to the academic community (Silva 1990 p. 17). According to Silva (1990), an adequate and appropriate theory of writing is one that regards writing as an interactive activity, is reasonably comprehensive and internally consistent, reflects an understanding of historical developments in the field, is informed by current work in relevant disciplines, and is sensitive to the cultural, linguistic, and experimental differences of individuals and societies. Unfortunately, it seems that these approaches are not sufficiently grounded in appropriate and adequate theory and credible research and each of them is privileging and limiting its attention to a single element of writing. Controlled composition focuses on lexical and syntactic features of the text, whereas ESL current-traditional rhetoric focuses on discourse-level text structure. The process approach attends to writers’ composing behaviors, while English for academic purpose approach focuses on the reader, in the form of the academic discourse community. Therefore, it seems that there are no comprehensive theories of L2 writing, and also it does not seem prudent to assume that theories of first-language writing alone suffice (Silva 1990).

When and How to Correct the Errors (correction as feedback)

Undoubtedly, the final purpose of any writing course is to improve learners’ writing. However, Tsang (1996) found that frequent writing practice with little or no teacher feedback only led to limited improvement in L2 writing. The importance of feedback has also been pointed out by Swain and Lapkin (1995, p. 384) who posit that “relevant feedback could play a crucial role in advancing their [the learners’] language learning.”

Terrell (1985) remarks three reasons for not correcting learners’ errors directly: (1) it does not lead to more language usage in future, (2) it may result in independent effect and learners that interfere with learning and (3) it will probably cause learners to focus their attention on language rather than meaning. The written work must be viewed by teachers not as the final product but as the raw language material that the learners are in the process of shaping. According to Power (2002), the positive correction strategy firstly depends on the approach or, approaches, which underlie the planning of the program. He believes that considering the programs, teachers must decide whether to adopt a behaviorist approach (steering round errors -simplicity, minimal steps,

and reinforcement of correct utterances) or whether to draw the learners into the danger areas of correction. He goes on asserting that “neither behaviorist nor cognitive strategies of correction will succeed unless something tells the learners that a mistake has been made.”

Similar to the teaching of the other skills, teaching writing should involve learners with their own learning. The self access approach, with a better defined focus on the learners’ learning experience, needs, realistic learning objective and personalized learning program, is seen as an alternative of the uniformed conventional teacher-oriented approach. The attempt to experiment with this approach is to explore the learners’ potential and existing knowledge of English in his learning experience and maximize such experience to help him learn and use English effectively and efficiently. Teachers must coach and guide meta-cognition for it develops learners’ self-monitoring and self-correction skills. If teachers want their learners to think, the learners must know that the teacher will test their thinking and problem solving skills as explicit elements that go into determining their grades. Critical ability on the learners’ part is probably better developed through self-correction. Self-correction, which is welcomed by many teachers, certainly makes the learners more aware of the kind of mistakes they are making and will consequently result in something being learned. Yet, in practice it does not solve all the problems.

Personality Factors and Teaching Writing

Since different learners view the language learning from different points of view, it is the responsibility of course designers to design a syllabus appropriate for any given class of learners. The tasks should be in line with the learners’ needs and personality types. During the recent years most of the teaching approaches changed their attitude toward learners’ needs and emotion. This, in its turn, may lead to individualized learning in which allowance is made in the design of a curriculum for individual differences in what learners wish to learn, how they learn, and the rate at which they learn. Individualized instruction attempts to give learners more control over what they learn and how they learn it (Richards *et al.* 1992).

According to Ellis (1985), in an individual approach, learners’ factors that can influence the course of development are considered to be infinite and very difficult to classify in a reliable manner. Five general factors that can contribute to individual learners differences are ‘age’, ‘aptitude’, ‘cognitive style’, ‘motivation’, and ‘personality’. As Fillmore (1979) points out, on one hand individual differences are seen as an all-important factor, while on the other hand they are treated as relatively insignificant. One of these individual differences is the personal factor that is difficult to observe by a third person (Schumann, 1975). Fortunately, in recent years there has been increasing awareness of these psychological characteristics, which have bearing on language learning and can influence the learning outcome (Stern 1991). This increasing awareness that sensitizes teachers to variations in their reactions to different learners has been achieved through different psychological methods such as Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), Pinker Personality Profile and Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To investigate the performance of the extroverts and introverts with regard to their improvement in writing the following questions were proposed.

1. *Is self-correction more effective than teacher correction in Iranian Intermediate EFL learners' writing improvement?*
2. *Is there any relationship between personality traits of Extroversion and introversion and learners writing improvement?*

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of self-correction on extroverted and introverted learners' writing improvement. Accordingly, 128 male EFL learners were selected as the participants of the study. They were assigned to four different groups – two groups included extroverts and two groups included introverts. Afterwards, they were given seven topics to write about in a seven- week period. While two groups –one extroverted and one introverted– enjoy self- correction, the teacher corrected the writings of the other two groups.

Participants

The participants of this study were selected from an English language institute, which is located in Tehran, Iran, named Iran mehr English Language Institute. The participants of this study were 128 male learners ranging between 14 and 20 years old, who (according to the chart of the institute) were intermediate learners. These 128 learners were selected from among 156 intermediate learners according to their scores in Preliminary English Test (PET) and also on the basis of the responses to Eysenck Personality Questionnaire.

Instrumentation

Preliminary English Test (PET)

The Preliminary English Test (PET) is an international examination sanctioning a certain level of mastery of the English language. A preliminary exam consists of three main points: the focus, the ideas, and explanations. The exam consists of 3 papers: Reading and Writing, Listening and an oral examination. A total of 70% across the 3 papers is needed to pass the exam. All items in each test have carefully been pre-tested by the constructors of the tests. These tests are widely used by EFL teachers as one of the most accurate means of measuring the general knowledge of Standard English. On the basis of the proficiency level of the available population, the P.E.T test was adopted and administered at the beginning of the study to select homogeneous participants. The allotted time to answer the test was one hour and half. The total score of the test was 60. The mean score was 32.58 and the standard deviation was 5.237.

Personality Questionnaire

The EPQ measures up to 21 scales of personality that are consistent with the giant three dimensions of personality traits (Extroversion, Neuroticism, and Psychoticism) as defined by Professor Hans Eysenck (Jackson *et al.* 2000). Therefore, EPQ provides a particularly accurate and comprehensive assessment of personality. The EPQ version that was employed in the

present study aimed to distinguish between *extroverts* and *introverts*. It included 57 YES/NO items, according to which the degree of the learners' extroversion could be measured. According to the EPQ key, in a given learners responses 'YES' to items 1, 3, 8, 10, 13, 17, 22, 25, 27, 39, 41, 44, 46, 49, 53 and 56 and 'NO' to items 5, 15, 20, 29, 32, 34, 37, and 51, he or she would be a total extrovert.

Therefore, if the number of corrected YES and NO, responses is 5, for example, a given learners would tend to have 4% extroversion tendencies and consequently 96% introversion tendencies. If the number of a student's total correct YES and NO responses to these 24 items is 18, he or she would have 95% extroverted tendencies and 5% introverted tendencies. One separate key is also provided to secure the reliability of the responses. According to this key, responding YES to selected items such as 6 and 24 and responding NO to items 12, 18, 30, 36, 42, 48, and 54 would be considered as lies. Therefore, the more lies are included in a student's responses, the less reliable his or her responses to the total 57 items would be. EPQ supposes that if there are more than 3 lies in a student's responses, that student must be excluded from the study. It is essential to note that being introverted or extroverted is not binary. In other words, no one is exclusively extroverted or introverted. Rather, everyone shows a range of extroverted and introverted behaviors and, thus, falls somewhere in the continuum with total extroverted behaviors at one far end and total introverted behaviors at the other far end.

Correction Code Sheet

This sheet included some symbols and alphabet letters that were representatives of the error types the learners would have in their pieces of writing. It has to be mentioned here that the symbols are quite conventional and each teacher can develop his or her version of the correction codes. The symbols and alphabet letters were chosen mostly in a way that best could symbolize the error types. The error types and responding symbols were the follows:

Code	Use	Example
WW	Wrong word	As our plane flew <u>on</u> the mountains we saw snow
WT	Wrong time	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>see</u> snow.
WF	Wrong form	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>was seeing</u> snow
WO	Wrong order	As our plane over the mountain <u>flew</u> we saw snow.
SP	Spelling	As our plane <u>flue</u> over the mountains we saw snow.
P	Punctuation	As our plane flew over the mountains; we saw snow.
X	Extra word	As our plane flew over <u>to</u> the mountains we saw snow.
M	Missing word	As our plane flew over the mountains - saw snow.
R	Register	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>observed</u> snow.
?	Not clear	As our plane flew over the mountains we saw snow.
!	Silly mistake!	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>seed</u> snow.
RW	Try re-writing	<u>O</u> ur vehicle flies, we snow find, over mountains you saw it.

Composition Rating Scale

This scale was developed according to the 'Error Count Method'. The errors that were considered in this study were '*semantic errors*', '*grammatical errors*', and '*punctuation errors*'. The minus

mark was assigned to each error. Two raters (the researcher and one of his colleagues) rated each piece of writing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To select the participants Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered at the beginning of the study. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the PET

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for Preliminary English Test (PET)

Number of Items	Number of Participants	Mean	Standard Deviation
50	156	32.58	5.273

After the 128 participants were assigned to the four groups, a one-way ANOVA was carried out to ensure the homogeneity of the four groups regarding their general English proficiency. The general descriptive statistics related to the distribution of the participants in the four groups according to their performances in PET are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: General statistics related to the distribution of the participants in the four groups

	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Number of Learners	32	32	32	32
Mean	33.312	33.290	32.281	33.515
Standard Deviation	3.897	3.625	3.665	3.759

As it may be clear from the mean scores and the standard deviations of the four groups, the participants have been assigned to the four groups homogeneously. This is further confirmed by the result of one-way ANOVA (Table 3) as follows:

Table 3: Statistics related to the homogeneity of the four groups

Source of Variation	SS	d.f	MS	F observed	F critical
Between Groups	29.7064	3	9.9021	0.7081	2.70
Within Groups	1733.9732	124	13.9836		

Compared with the critical F value of 2.70, the low observed value of 0.7081 depicts that there is no significant difference between the four groups as far as the learners' performances in P.E.T are concern. This implies that the participants have been assigned to the four groups homogeneously. Two questions were posed earlier in chapter one:

- 1) Is self-correction method more effective than teacher-correction method in the learners writing improvement?
- 2) Is there any relationship between learners' personality traits of extroversion/introversion and their writing improvement?

To find the answers to these questions, the researcher obtained the main data from the final compositions of the four groups. To analyze the data, a two-way analysis of variances (Two-way ANOVA) was employed to investigate the relationship between (1) Extraversion/Introversion as

personality traits, (2) self-correction versus teacher-correction as correction method, and (3) the learners' scores based on a written composition at the end of a seven-week period. Thus the following results were obtained.

Table 4: Two-Way ANOVA. The effect of Self-correction method and Personality traits on writing improvement

Source of Variation	SS	d.f	MS	F observed	F critical
Personality Trait (factor A)	150.8804	1	150.8804	0.67033	2.70
Correction Method (factor B)	698.4453	1	698.4453	3.10308*	2.70
(Factor A) × (Factor B)	57.5392	1	57.5392	0.2556	2.70
Within Groups	27910.06	124	255.081		
Total	28816.92	127			

As Table 4 reveals, the F observed value of 0.67033 related to the personality traits (factor A) is much lower than the critical value of 2.70 at 1 and 124 degree of freedom. This depicts that being extroverted or introverted alone, that is personality trait regardless of the correction method, has no significant effect on learners' improvement in writing. However, as Table 4 illustrates, the F observed value of 3.10308 related to correction method (factor B) is greater than the F critical value of 2.70. In other words, the correction method (*self-correction*) has proved to be significantly effective on learners' improvement in writing.

Moreover, the other observed F value of 0.2556 related to the interaction between the two factors of personality trait and correction method is much lower than the F critical value 2.70. This implies that there is no significant interaction between personality trait and correction method because the corresponding F observed value is much lower than the F critical value.

CONCLUSION

As AbiSamra (2003) asserts teacher's attitude toward correction, the way in which he offers it to learners, and learners' own feelings about the teacher in general are significant factors in the effectiveness of correction strategies. She recommends that teachers focus more on process in their comments and use multi-draft assignments; they should teach learners how to use feedback to enhance their writing skills (Self-correction has proven to be very effective; being aware of one's errors and rewriting those using problem-solving techniques is significantly beneficial for developing writing skills). As self-correction has proved to be superior to the traditional teacher-correction with regard to the writing improvement, it can be suggested to teachers to apply this method as an alternative to the traditional teacher-correction method in order to involve the learners in the whole process of writing, in general, and in the correction of errors, in particular. The followings would also justify the merits of self-correction.

According to Harris (1995), learners often perceive feedback (teacher-correction) as criticism rather than as constructive and well-meaning suggestion. Therefore, giving a part of the correction responsibility to the learners themselves will mean to them that the issue of criticism is

not as sensitive as it might have been if correction was done by the teacher himself. Furthermore, Boughey (1997, p. 128) asserts, the correction carried out by the learners is a process approach. She believes that in order for this process of writing, revising, and rewriting to be developmental, “some form of constructive feedback to the successive piece of writing is desirable and often necessary”. She goes on to say that in large mainstream classes peer reviews may suggest itself as an obvious means of alleviation of the workload of the teacher. At any rates, the learners must first be trained in taking this responsibility. Self-correction can serve as a preliminary practice for this responsibility.

According to Zeny (2003), the benefit of using correction codes to carry out the self-correction is that learners tend to pay closer attention to their work, considering different possibilities for choice of lexis, for instance. So, in fact, there is awareness raising and more willingness to assume responsibility for their production, even though it may happen merely at a linguistic level. As Porto (2001) says, each writer writes for specific readers and readers would read the written piece critically. Therefore, if the reader and the writer is the same person, some consciousness-raising would occur. According to Ferris (2007), self-correction follows the principles of problem solving and discovery learning, according to which learners themselves, guided by the teacher, find their problems in a relaxing atmosphere. Therefore, the solution can be better fitted into the cognitive structure which already exists in their minds. The other finding of the present study suggests that there is no significant difference in extroverts and introverts regarding their improvement in writing. Therefore, it can be suggested to the teachers that they consider the existing differences between the learners’ different potentials due to their different personality types. Teachers should bear in mind that introverted learners, who are sometimes erroneously believed to be shy, quiet, easygoing, and even not talented, can show improvement in the tasks required for them by just using strategies different from those of their extroverted counterparts to approach the goals (Hajimohammadi, 2010).

Therefore, it can be concluded that all learners, regardless of their personality traits, have the aptitude to learn in an efficient way just if the teachers discover the appropriate channel through which they would improve. These findings indicate that educators need to be aware of these temperament factors in order to address individual educational needs of learners. If educational setting is incompatible with the learners’ personal orientations towards learning, they may be unable to engage in educational activities and will be left at a disadvantage. More importantly, learners may disengage from the learning process which can further hamper their educational success.

Limitations of the study

The findings of the present study account for male intermediate teenagers. The instruction method is based on extensive reading and writing. Moreover, only two personality factors have been considered in the study, namely extroversion and introversion. The study also account for the effect of self-correction method on the learners’ improvement in writing. Therefore, two variables are considered in this study.

REFERENCES

- AbiSamra, N. (2003). *Teaching Writing: Ways to Help Second Language Writers Experience a Sense of Ownership of their Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Borg, M.O., & Shapiro, S.L. (1996). Personality type and learners' performance in Principles of Economics. *Journal of Economic Education*, 27, 3-25.
- Bouhey, C. (1997). Learning to write by writing to learn: a group-work to approach. *ELT journal*, 51 (2), 126-134.
- Brown, D. (2006). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Regents.
- Brumfit, C. (1997). Staged Approach. In T. Power (2002). *Writing in the Second Language Class: correction techniques in English Language Teaching*.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (2002). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing Second Language Skills; Theory and Practice*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
- Cohen, A.D., & Cavalcanti, M.C. (2009). Feedback on composition: Teacher and student verbal reports. In B. Karoll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*. pp. 155-177. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eysenck, H. (1971). *Reading in Extroversion-Introversion: theoretical and methodological issues*. London. Staple Press.
- Fathman, A., & Whalley, E. (1990). Teacher Response to Student Writing. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second Language Writing* (pp.185). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Fillmore, L.W. (1979). *Individual differences in second language acquisition*. New York: Academic Press.
- Fries, C. (1945). *Teaching and learning English as a second language*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Gorman, T.P. (1993). Methods of Teaching Writing to Learners at Advanced Levels, *UCLA Work papers in TESL*, 7, 41-52.
- Hajimohammadi, R. (2010). Impact of Self-Correction on Extrovert and Introvert Students in EFL Writing Progress, *English Language Teaching*, 4, 161-168
- Harris, M. (1995). 'Talking in the middle: why writers need writing tutors'. *College English*. vol. 57/1, pp. 27-42.
- Hyde, L., Lonoff, S., & Marius, R. (2002). Grading Papers. Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. Harvard University. (<http://www.bokcenter.harvard.edu>)
- Jackson, C.J., Furnham, A., Forde, L., & Cotter, T. (2000). The structure of Eysenck personality Profiler. *British Journal of Psychology*, 91, 223-239.
- Kaplan, R. (2006). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16, 1-20.
- Magnan, S.S. (1990). Teaching and Testing Proficiency in Writing. Skills to Transcend the Second Language Classroom. In A.C. Omaggio (Ed.), *Proficiency Curriculum Articulation: The Ties that Bind*. Middlebury, Vt, Northeast Conference, pp. 109-136.

- Olshtain, E. (1991). "Functional Task for Mastering the Mechanics of Writing and Going just Beyond" in *Teaching English as Second or Foreign Language* by Celce-Murcia (1991), pp. 235-244.
- Porto, M. (2001). 'Cooperative writing response group and self-evaluation'. *ELT Journal*. vol. 55/1, pp. 38-46.
- Power, T. (2002). Writing in second language class. Correction techniques in English language teaching. (<http://www.betinternet.com/~ted.power/ted.html>.)
- Raimes, A. (1983 a). Anguish as second language? Remedies for composition teachers. In A. Freedman, I. Pringle, and J. Yalden (Ed.), *Learning to Write: First language/second language* (pp. 258-272). London: Longman.
- Raimes, A. (1983 b). *Techniques in Teaching Writing*. Oxford University Press.
- Raimes, A. (1991). Out of Woods: Emerging traditions in teaching of writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25 (3), 407-423.
- Reid, J. (1984 a). The radical outliner and the radical brainstormer: a perspective in composing processes. *TESOL Quarterly*, 18 (3), 529-533.
- Reid, J. (1984 b). Comments on Vivian Zamel's "The Composing Process of advances ESL learners. Six case studies". *TESOL Quarterly*, 18 (1), 149-159.
- Richards, J.C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. Longman Group Limited.
- Schumann, J.H. (1975). Affective factors and the problem of age in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*. vol. 25, pp. 209-235.
- Shepherd, P. (2002). Know your own mind. (<http://www.trans4mind.com/shepherd.html>).
- Silva, T. (1990). ESL composition instruction: Developments, issues, and directions. In B. Kroll (Ed.) *Second language writing: research insights for the classroom*. pp. 11-23. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stern, H.H. (1991). *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1995). 'Problem in output and processes they generate: A step toward second language learning'. *Applied Linguistics*, 16 (3), 371-391.
- Terrell, T.D. (1985). The Natural Approach to Language Teaching: An Update. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 41, 461-479.
- Tsang, W. (1996). 'Comparing the effect of reading and writing on writing performance'. *Applied Linguistics*, 17 (2), 210-233.
- Zamel, V. (1985). Responding to learners' writing. *TESOL Quarterly*. vol. 19/1, pp. 79-101.
- Zeny, M.E. (2003). Feedback on written production: a discussion. (<http://www.disal.com.br/index.com>)

The Authors

Dr. Abdollah Baradaran is the Assistant Professor of TEFL and the chairman of the foreign languages faculty at Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. As for his professional background, he has taught many courses in teaching language at the graduate level. He has published several papers in national and international journals and presented in numerous seminars.

Mohammad Reza Alavi (Corresponding Author) has got his M.A from Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. He has worked as an interpreter for many years. His main areas of research interest comprise Teacher Education, Psychological Issues of ELT, Cooperative Learning, Bilingual and Multilingual Teaching and Teacher Training.

A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF CODE GLOSSES IN INTERNATIONAL AND IRANIAN NEWSPAPERS

Shahla Hosseini

*Khouzestan Department of Education and Training
shahla.news@gmail.com*

Nadia Mayahi

*Sama Technical and Vocational Training College,
Islamic Azad University, Mahshahr Branch,
Mahshahr, Iran
Email: nadiamayahi@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify how code glosses are distributed according to cross-cultural or cross-linguistic preferences and explore the role they play in the construction and attainment of persuasion. For this reason, 240 opinion columns of three Persian newspapers (IRAN, Hamshahri and Ettelaat) and two English ones (NewYork Times and Independent) were selected. Then code glosses were highlighted in the texts and classified based on the Dafouz-Milne' (2008) taxonomy of meta-discourse markers. Findings revealed that code glosses are present in English and Persian newspapers' opinion columns, but there are variations as to the distribution. In addition, two groups of informants were used in order to discover how these markers operate as a persuasive mechanism in English and Persian texts. For the Iranian informants, the text with a high number of these markers and for the English informants, the text with a balanced number of these markers was considered as the most persuasive texts. Results showed that English and Persian informants chose the most persuasive texts according to their cultural preferences. The results are useful for columnists because in order to convince their audience, they should present the propositional material in a way that the audience find more convincing.

KEYWORDS: Code glosses; persuasion; cross-cultural; cross-linguistic

INTRODUCTION

In each written genre, writers try to guide and direct readers through the text. Some genres have a wide audience, and among them are newspapers especially the opinion column. So columnists try to present their writings in such a way that they persuade readers to share the writer's views and reflect the particular conventions that are followed in a given culture by certain features. These features are called metadiscourse markers. Code glosses - a kind of metadiscourse marker - help readers to comprehend the text better. Code glosses explain, rephrase, expand, or exemplify propositional content. Overall, they reflect the writer's expectations about the audience. They include parentheses, punctuation devices, reformulators, and exemplifiers (Hyland, 2007, p.3). Although the presence and function of metadiscourse markers have been examined in a number

of different contexts, little attention has been given to news discourse.

Columns, especially opinion columns, can be considered some of the most adequate examples of persuasive writing (Connor, 1996, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008). By taking the importance of code glosses in newspaper genre especially the opinion column, this study attempts to contrast across English and Persian newspapers opinion columns in order to investigate their role in persuasion of their audiences.

Writers include code glosses to help decode the message, share the writer's views, and reflect the particular conventions that are followed in a given culture. They have a crucial role in the construction and attainment of persuasion (Dafouz-Milne, 2008). Dafouz-Milne (2008) studied how metadiscourse markers, both textual and interpersonal, contribute toward the overall persuasiveness of a text. Dafouz-Milne's study suffered from a number of limitations: a) the small-scale nature of the research and, b) the dynamicity and extra-textual dimension of the notion of persuasion itself. There are various extra-textual reasons that play a decisive role in the judgment of persuasion (the topic, the type of newspaper or the columnist) which were ignored by her. Also, the number of the participants who completed the questionnaire to judge on newspaper's opinion columns was too small. Further, there is no study on code glosses in Persian newspapers, and no study has ever focused on Iranian readers' evaluation of texts which are published in newspapers. Furthermore, Persian students of English who study at university have to pass courses on journalistic texts and it is necessary for them to know the different kinds of metadiscourse markers, it seems that awareness of such devices would be of optimal importance to them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Newspaper

Mass media is a term used to denote a section of the media specifically designed to reach a very large audience such as the population of a nation. "The mass media, which is usually understood to refer to the press, radio and television broadcasting, have become one of the most pervasive phenomenon in our culture" (Thomas & Wareing, 1999, p. 50). The mass media provide the means of access to much information and represent a potentially powerful force in a society (Thomas & Wareing, 1999).

Newspaper is a kind of mass media. Richardson (2008, p. 64) states that "journalism is best approached as an argumentative discourse genre." Newspaper discourse, and opinion column in particular, can be considered as "some of the most persuasive writing in all countries, setting standards for written persuasion" (Connor, 1996, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008, p. 96). The newspaper serves many purposes in the modern society: It informs by supplying facts, figures, scores, prices, charts, maps, photos and illustrations; it educates by going beyond basic facts in the in-depth analysis of columns, commentaries and editorials; and it provides a print marketplace for advertisers and prospective customers.

The online and print editions of the newspaper share some defining features. First, the newspaper is made of diverse content. In addition, they feature editorials, letters to the editor, movie listing, horoscopes, comics, sports, film, interview, recipes, advice column, opinion column, classified advertisement, and a host of other material. Second, newspapers are conventionally packaged. Both the print and online versions are organized according to the content. Third, newspapers are local. Fourth, more than any other medium, the newspaper serves as a historical record, and fifth, newspapers are timely (Dominick, 2009).

Newspapers are divided into two types: Broadsheet newspapers are large-sized newspapers. Broadsheets are considered to be informative and objective, keeping news and opinion or comment firmly apart. They present the reader with serious news, which is supported with detailed and informed analysis and comment on economic, political, social, and world events. Tabloids or the popular newspapers are newspapers whose pages are about half the size of broadsheet newspapers. Typically, they have colorful front pages with many photographs and often very big headlines (Shams, 2007).

Opinion Column

Newspapers give their staff-members as well as their readers an opportunity to express their opinions on current events. That is, besides editorials, there are other opinion articles in newspapers. One such article is the column, which refers to a series of articles by the same person appearing on a regular basis in a newspaper and giving the person's personal opinion on different issues. Columns can be regarded as personal editorials, the purpose of which is to advise, criticize, entertain, analyze, interpret, or comment. They are views behind the news written by people who take an interest in explaining behind-the-scene events. Columns use singular voice (they use the personal "I"). The writers of columns are called columnists, who are either staff members of the newspaper or syndicated columnists, who write for different newspapers. Columnists are sometimes famous and influential, so their columns are often headed by their pictures. Each columnist has his own style. Some try to be funny; others are very serious and use a very formal style (Shams, 2007).

Opinion columns are a main type of analytical writing in newspapers. Franklin (2008, p. 70) states that "the editorial and op-ed (opposite editorial) pages are central to a newspaper's identity". Most of today's British newspapers whether quality, mid-market or tabloid, national, regional or local value and mark out as distinctive forms of opinion journalism. Comment articles are public, mass communicated types of opinion discourse which play a definitive role in the formation and alerting of public opinion, promote social interaction among journalists, readers, and the rest of participants in the language event, and influence social debate (Van Dijk, 1996). All the papers have in common the commitment to designate spaces for opinion expression (Franklin, 2008).

Opinion columns are often found on the page opposite the editorial page. The page is usually labeled *Opinion* or *comment*. Opinion columns may be found elsewhere in the newspaper as well,

especially on the page preceding the editorial page. Opinion columns might be written by columnists who are employed by the newspaper, or by guest writers who have some expertise to share or a specific argument to make (Petroce, 2008, p.1). While op-ed articles are subjective accounts, they are often perceived to carry an objective-like status; that is, they are generally, associated with the opinions of the newspaper as an elite institution, since the author is normally a recognized and regular contributor (Greenberg, 2000).

When evaluating opinion columns, readers are expected to pay attention to whether the arguments made are supported by evidence. A good writer will back up his or her arguments with examples. If there are obvious counter-arguments, these should also be addressed and dealt with (Petroce, 2008, p. 2). Opinion columns, like editorials, express an opinion; but the opinion expressed belongs solely to the column's author, not to the newspaper or to the editorial board. In fact, it is quite common for an opinion column to argue against an opinion expressed in an editorial in the same newspaper (Francis, 2007).

In order to persuade, columnists have to present the propositional material in a form that the potential audience will find most convincing and attractive; furthermore, to succeed, writers need to create a credible textual persona or ethos and develop an appropriate attitude towards their readers and the claims they present. In the construction of this textual persona, metadiscourse plays a vital role (Dafouz-Milne, 2008, p. 96).

Audience

In media studies audience is mostly used as a way of talking about people, either as groups or as individuals (Nightingale & Ross, 2003). All writers need to consider who they are writing for and adjust their prose to meet the needs of readers. They know that readers can always challenge arguments and reject claims and so they must present their ideas in ways that will be seen as both credible and persuasive, using the conventions of the genre to adequately engage their readers (Hyland, 2005). Essentially, writers must both present themselves as competent individuals, expressing a textual voice or community recognized personality, and engage with readers in accepted ways.

Metadiscourse markers

Coherence in discourse can be achieved by different means. Coherence relations that hold together different parts of the discourse are partly responsible for the perceived coherence of a text. More specifically, the recognition of coherence relations by the hearer or reader enables them to assign coherence to a text. Discourse markers guide the text receiver in the recognition of those relations (Taboada, 2006, p.507). In order to be successful, the writer needs to operate at two levels: the level of text (discourse) and the level of metatext (metadiscourse): On one level, the writer supplies information about the subject of the text. On this level he expands propositional content. On the other level, the level of metadiscourse, he does not add propositional material but helps readers organize, classify, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material. Metadiscourse marker is a kind of cohesive devices that help to establish relationships

between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Metadiscourse markers help writers shape their arguments to needs and expectations of their target readers. Metadiscourse helps organize, engage the audience, and signal the writer's attitude. It is the author's overt or covert presence into the discourse to inform and to shape the reader's thoughts (Crismore, 1984, p. 280).

A variety of metadiscourse taxonomies have been proposed (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Dafouz, 2003; Hyland, 1998 a; Vande Kopple, 1997) which propose different metadiscourse categories. Most of these classifications generally organize the linguistic units under the functional headings of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. Textual metadiscourse refers to the organization of discourse, while interpersonal metadiscourse reflects the writer's stance towards both the content in the text and the potential reader.

Textual metadiscourse consists of seven Macro-categories including: a) Logical markers express semantic and structural relationships between discourse stretches, and help readers interpret pragmatic connections by explicitly signaling additive, adversative, and conclusive relationships in the text, b) Sequencers mark particular positions in a series and serve to guide the reader in the presentation of different arguments in a particular order, c) Reminders refer back to previous sections in the text in order to retake an argument, amplify it or summarize some of the previous argumentation, d) Topicalisers explicitly indicate some type of topic shift to the reader so that the argumentation can be easily followed, e) Code glosses explain, rephrase, expand, or exemplify propositional content, f) Illocutionary markers explicitly name the act the writer perform, and g) Announcements refer forward to future sections in the text in order to persuade the reader for prospective argumentation. Interpersonal metadiscourse consists of five Macro-categories: a) Hedges refer to markers that withhold full commitment to the statements displayed in the text, b) Certainty markers express full commitment to the statements presented by the writer, c) Attributors perform a double function in the text, d) Attitude markers express the writer's affective values towards the reader and the content presented in the text, and e) Commentaries help to establish and maintain rapport with the audience by means of rhetorical questions, direct appeals, personalization, and asides.

Recently, Hyland and Tse (2004) have put forth a stronger interpersonal view on metadiscourse, claiming that all metadiscourse categories are essentially interpersonal since they need to take into account the readers' knowledge, textual experiences, and processing needs. Thus, they proposed a change in the terminology adopting Thompson's (2001) label of interactive (instead of textual) and interactional (instead of interpersonal) metadiscourse (as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008).

Code glosses

Code glosses help grasp functions of ideational material (Hyland, 1999; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Rahman, 2004; Vande Kopple, 1997). Code gloss signals are a crucial element of a text's meaning as they relate a text to its context by taking readers' needs, understandings, existing

knowledge, intertextual experiences, and relative status into account (Hyland, 2004, p. 17). They help "explain, rephrase, or exemplify textual material" (Dafouz-Milne, 2008) and are divided into four subcategories: a) Parentheses are words or phrases that are enclosed parenthetically; b) Punctuation devices refer to comma, semicolon, and colon. c) Reformulators are a discourse function whereby the second unit is a restatement or elaboration of the first in different words, to present it from a different point of view and to reinforce the message, and d) exemplifier is a communication process through which meaning is clarified or supported by a second unit which illustrates the first by citing an example (p. 98). Kumpf (2000) classified colons and parentheses as visual metadiscourse. Reformulation is a discourse function whereby the second unit is a restatement or elaboration of the first in different words, to represent it from a different point of view and to reinforce the message. Reformulation is a "process of textual reinterpretation: the speaker or writer re-elaborates a previous fragment of discourse presenting its contents in a different way" (Cuenca & Bach, 2007, p.149). On other hand, reformulation ensures textual cohesion and at the same time facilitates discursive progression because it helps in reducing the possible communicative defects of a text, and it also makes it possible to re-elaborate the conceptual content of some statements previously presented in order to accomplish different functions (Cuenca & Bach, 2007).

Cuenca and Bach (2007) analyzed contrastively the form and use of reformulation markers in research papers written in English, Spanish, and Catalan. The corpus consisted of 395 utterances including periphrastic reformulators. The study showed interesting differences in the form and use of these markers cross-linguistically. In terms of the form and frequency of the markers, English papers used simple fixed markers and had fewer reformulators than Spanish and Catalan. On the contrary, Spanish and Catalan papers included more markers some of which were complex. The study showed that English authors usually reformulate to add more information to the concept (expansion), whereas Catalan and Spanish authors reduce the contents of the implicatures of the previous reformulation. Another finding was that some of specific and typical reformulators in Spanish and Catalan express two or even three moves in Spanish, so they tend to be more ambiguous; on the contrary, English reformulators express one move.

Exemplification is a communication process through which meaning is clarified or supported by a second unit which illustrates the first by citing an example. Lischinsky (2008) states that classical logic and rhetoric have considered examples useful for pedagogic or public debates. It is a current feature of academic writing and a central aspect of exposition, a part of the routine ways in which writers in all fields seek to make their ideas accessible and persuasive. Essentially, it is an appeal to understanding that the writer's beliefs are recoverable from the example: presenting an element of the writer's data or experience to make the abstract more concrete. Focusing on exemplifying and reformulating in academic discourse, Hyland (2007) explored how

professional academic writers monitor their texts for readers to restate information or provide examples as they construct their arguments. The disciplines were selected to allow comparisons across a range of academic knowledge and rhetorical practice, comprising mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, marketing, philosophy, sociology, applied linguistics, physics, and microbiology. The main claim of this paper was that elaboration is a complex and important rhetorical function in academic writing, and that its use varies according to discipline. The analysis showed disciplinary variations in the ways which reformulation and exemplification were expressed and the functions they served.

Persuasion and metadiscourse

In persuasive writing, a writer takes a position for or against an issue and writes to convince the reader to believe or do something. It is also used in essays and other types of writing to get the reader to accept a point of view. In order to convince the reader, the writer needs more than opinion; he or she needs facts or examples to back his or her opinion. The concept of persuasion has often been linked to hedging, emphatics, and metadiscourse in general. Signed or opinion articles are a subclass of persuasive texts.

According to Hyland (1998 b), metadiscourse plays an important part in displaying the writer's communicative intentions and is therefore integral to persuasive writing. He argued that metadiscourse is closely linked to the rules and expectations of a given discipline's discourse community. For example, if a researcher wants his or her arguments to appear persuasive to the readers within given academic community, the linguistic devices he or she chooses need to conform to the conventions of the discipline. Hyland points out metadiscourse in such different communities would also vary. On the basis of his findings, he argued that metadiscourse cannot be separated from its rhetorical context, and the relationship between them is indispensable for the success of academic writing. In another study focusing on expressions of evaluation and standpoint in academic writing, Silver (2003) analyzed the use of the adverbial *evidently* in American research articles published in academic journals of economics and history. He chose the genre due to its persuasive nature. According to him, academic writing essentially involves the making of arguments, or knowledge claims, targeted at the discipline's discourse community, and they need to be made convincingly if the author wants his or her claims to gain the readers' support and attention. Silver's analysis of this epistemic adverbial in the context of history and economics research articles revealed that it can function both as a hedge and a booster. According to Silver, the adverbial *evidently* not only shows the writer's epistemic stance regarding propositions in the text studied, but it also gives an evaluation of what the discipline's value system considers as evidence.

Dafouz-Milne (2008) studied how metadiscourse markers contribute toward the overall persuasiveness of a text. The corpus in her study comprised opinion columns from two newspapers of The Times (English) and the other El País (Spanish). Within the category of interpersonal metadiscourse markers, Dafouz-Milne included the following macro-categories:

hedges, certainty markers, attributors, attitude markers, and commentaries. The results showed that hedges were the most common category of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in both British and Spanish texts. Certainty markers followed as the third most frequent type, right after attitudinal markers and before commentaries. As for the persuasive effect of the texts, the informants' answers indicated that the most persuasive texts were those that had a balanced number of both interpersonal and textual metadiscourse markers. In terms of overall intercultural differences, the Spanish texts were found to contain more textual metadiscourse markers than the English, whereas the situation was the opposite in the case of interpersonal metadiscourse, which was more abundant in the English texts. Dafouz-Milne concluded that the critical factor in producing a successfully persuasive text is to skillfully combine both expressions that weaken the argument (i.e; hedges) and those that strengthen it (i.e; attitudinal markers or certainty markers).

RESEARCH QUESTION

The current study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) To what extent are code glosses used in Persian and English opinion columns?
- 2) Is there any significant difference in using code glosses in Persian and English opinion columns?
- 3) Is the English text as well as Persian text with high degree of code glosses more persuasive than ones with medium or low degree of respective markers?

METHODOLOGY

The present study cast a contrastive look on code glosses in opinion columns of English and Persian newspapers in order to explore how these markers are distributed according to cross-cultural or cross-linguistic preferences and their role in the construction and attainment of persuasion.

Participants

The study was carried out with 60 participants of whom 30 were native speakers of English (British and Irish backgrounds) aged between 25 to 42 and the other 30 were native speakers of Persian aged between 27 to 35. The native speakers of English were accessed via e-mail, and the Persian native speakers were contacted in person. A questionnaire was originally distributed among 45 Persian native speakers and 30 were returned. The same questionnaire was sent to 50 English native speakers, but only 30 of them were returned.

Dataset

The corpus in this study consisted of five newspapers, three Persian newspapers (*Ettelaat*, *Hamshahri*, and *IRAN*) and two English ones (*New York Times* and *Independent*) all of which were chosen because of their status and the political and rhetorical influence they exert in their respective national cultures. The opinion columns of these newspapers were the only sections that were investigated. The columns covered such topics as social and cultural, economics, and politics. Generally 240 columns were analyzed: One hundred-twenty opinion columns of the

Persian newspapers which were published during January and February 2009 and 120 opinion columns of the English newspapers published during January and February 2009 were selected. This quantity was assumed to be adequate to allow the researcher to make valid generalizations.

Instrumentation

This study explored the role of code glosses in the construction and attainment of persuasion and made a contrastive analysis of opinion columns in the use of code glosses as pragmatic devices in Persian and English newspapers. Dafouz-Milne taxonomy (2008) was used as the theoretical framework for the selection of these two metadiscourse devices which covers the functional division of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. This division has offered a variety of subcategories covering both the pragmatic functions of metadiscourse markers and the linguistic devices used to carry out such functions. The taxonomy is shown in the following Tables. As mentioned before, opinion columns are a subgenre of persuasive texts (Van Dijk, 1988, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008) and their final aim is to convince the audience by means of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers. These texts are constant in our daily lives and their mastery is necessary for literate individuals.

Table 1: Textual Metadiscourse Categories

Macro-category	subcategory	Example
Logical markers	Additive	and/in addition/moreover...
Express semantic	Adversative	or/however/but...
Relationships between discourse stretches.	Consecutive	so/therefore/as a consequence...
	Conclusive	finally, in any case
Sequencers		
Make particular positions in a series		first, second/on the one hand... on the other...
Reminders		
Refer back to previous sections in the text		<u>Let us turn to</u> / as was <u>mentioned before</u>
Topicalisers		
Indicate topic shifts		<u>in political terms</u> / <u>in the case of</u> NHS
Code glosses	Parentheses	
Explain, rephrase or Exemplify textual material	Punctuation devices	Tax evasion: it deplored in others but not in oneself.
	Reformulators	in other words/that is
	Exemplifiers	for example/for instance...
Illocutionary markers		
Explicitly name the act the writer performs		I <u>propose</u> / I <u>hope</u> to persuade...
Announcements		
Refer forwards to future sections in the texts		There are many <u>good reasons</u>

A questionnaire was also used and demanded readers to read the selected texts, and then explain their decisions by writing open comments on evaluating the selected English or Persian texts. From each dataset, three texts were selected to be evaluated by the participants. The questionnaire was loosely adapted from Connor (1987 as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008) and Connor and Lauer's (1988, p.146) model (as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008, p. 101) for persuasive writing and contained three basic criteria for evaluating persuasive effect: rational appeals, credibility appeals and affective appeals. Consequently, the number of texts for persuasion comprised three texts in Persian and three texts in English (three opinion columns of each newspapers) with different indices of code glosses.

Table 2: Interpersonal Metadiscourse Categories

Macro-category	subcategory	Example
Hedges		
Express partial commitment	Epistemic verbs	May/ might
To the truth-value of the text	Probability adverbs	Probably/ perhaps
Epistemic expressions	It is likely	
Certainty markers		
Express total commitment		Undoubtedly/clearly
to the truth-value of the text		
Attributors		
Refer to the source of the information		'x' claims that...
Attitude markers		
Express writers' affective values	Deontic verbs	Have to / needs to
towards text and readers	Attitudinal adverbs	Unfortunately/remarkably
Cognitive verbs	Attitudinal adjectives	It is absurd /it is surprising
	I feel / I think /I believe	
Commentaries		
Help to establish writer rapport the text	Rhetorical questions	What is the future of Europe, reader-integration or disintegration? through
Direct address to reader		<u>Dear reader</u>
Inclusive expressions		<u>We all</u> believe
Personalizations		<u>I</u> do not want Diana (<u>ironically</u> for a Spencer) was not of the
Asides		
Establishment.		

Procedure

This study was based on a sample of 240 opinion columns which were selected from five English and Persian newspapers. *Ettelaat*, *IRAN*, and *Hamshahri* represented the Persian newspapers and *New York Times* and *Independent* represented the English press. From each English newspaper, 60 texts were selected during two months. But, for the Persian counterparts, the first twenty

issues of each newspaper during two months were selected for the analysis. Initially the opinion columns, either obtained directly from the electronic versions of the relevant newspapers or manually, were scanned and converted into Rich Text format. Then, word count was run on the corpus to have a rough estimate of the quantity of the data. Since the columns in Persian could not be converted into Rich Text, they were counted twice manually. Next, the texts were carefully read three or four times in order to identify the linguistic signals in focus and key signals that characterize code glosses. To analyze the data quantitatively, the frequency of the code glosses was calculated. About 20 percent of the data was analyzed for the inter-rater reliability and agreement was reached accordingly. Also, for the sake of intra-rater reliability, the data was analyzed two times within about one month interval. Having analyzed the data and presenting the frequencies, in order to see if the possible differences are statistically significant, *chi-square* analysis was administrated.

Table 3: English Texts for Persuasive Effect

English texts	Total meta discourse	code glosses
Text 1	49	8
Text 2	33	4
Text 3	28	5

Table 4: Persian Texts for persuasive effect

Persian texts	Total meta discourse	code glosses
Text 1	25	6
Text 2	52	6
Text 3	69	4

In the second phase of the study, a questionnaire was used in order to attain persuasion on the selected informants. Since, the total corpus consisted of 240 opinion columns with various lengths, 60 texts (30 Persian texts and 30 English ones) of almost the same length were selected as original in order to select three Persian texts and three English ones from among them, and then they were arranged based on the frequency of respective metadiscourse markers. Three texts in English and three texts in Persian were selected for subsequent judgment. One text in English and one in Persian included a high proportion of metadiscourse markers; also, one with a medium proportion, and one with a low proportion from each group of texts were selected. An additional reason for reducing the original corpus was found in the principles of feasibility and availability, since informants could only analyze a limited number of texts without the task becoming too demanding.

To avoid aprioristic influences on the informants, the texts were edited, omitting the names of the authors and newspapers and the titles of the columns. The readers were given a questionnaire in order to rank the texts from 1 to 5, 1 representing the least persuasive text and 5 the most persuasive. They were also invited to explain their decisions by writing open comments. The Persian texts were sent to Iranian informants. English native speakers received the texts through three of my friends who live in America, England, and Holland. After gathering the

questionnaires, the scores given to the questionnaires by the informants' responses were analyzed and then the raw scores of the informants were computed through the SPSS program (version 13) for data analysis. Next, to see if the possible differences are statistically significant, a *t*-test analysis was administrated. Moreover, the responses of the informants to the questions in the questionnaire were qualitatively analyzed. The possible quantitative differences between the opinion columns were also qualitatively investigated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On a general level, the quantitative analysis reveals that English texts used more code glosses than did Persian texts (English, $n=842$, Persian, $n=749$), but their difference was statistically significant. On the whole, the statistical analysis showed that the differences between two languages were statistically significant (see Table 5).

Table 5: Code Glosses in English and Persian Newspapers

Total textual markers	Word Count	Code Glosses (%)
English	92,214	842 (0.004)
Persian	81,152	749 (0.9)
Chi-square		5.436

Critical value= 3.8415

Code glosses in Persian and English newspapers

Regarding code glosses, Results display statistically significant differences with English writers using these explanatory devices much more frequently than do their Persian counterparts. A closer examination in the subcategories of code glosses discloses that punctuation devices were the most frequently used category in both sets of groups: English ($n=354$) and Persian ($n=225$). In fact, punctuation devices were given priority by newspaper columnists in both corpora and the statistically significant difference existed here. Other categories, though not significant, exhibited some differences across the two languages. After punctuation devices, exemplifier markers ranked second with both corpora showing a very similar number. On close examination, the study reveals that expressions like *for example* (*be onvane mesal*) and *for instance* (*baraye mesal*) are the most frequent resource in both corpora. The other exemplifier markers found are *such as* (*Az ghabile*) and *i.e* (*Yani*). Parenthesis markers occupy the third place in terms of frequency of occurrence with Persian texts and the fourth place with English counterpart: (Persian, $n=162$; English, $n=143$). Regarding reformulator markers, Persian and English writers used an almost identical number of tokens (Persian, $n=151$; English, $n=150$). Within the linguistic preferences, English columnists opt for the expression *in other words*, closely followed by *namely* and *that is* while in the Persian data, the constructions *Yani* (namely), *be ebarat digar* (in other words) dominate with 125 instances.

Table 6: Code Glosses in English and Persian Newspapers

Total logical devices markers	parentheses (%)	punctuation (%)	exemplifiers (%)	reformulators(%)
English	143 (16.98)	354 (42.04)	195 (23.15)	150 (17.81)
Persian	162 (21.62)	225 (30.04)	211 (28.17)	151 (20.16)
Chi-square	1.184	28.741	0.631	0.003
Differences	p>0.05	p=0	p>0.05	p=0

Critical value= 3.8415

On a general level, the quantitative analysis reveals that the texts written in *Hamshahri* and *IRAN* columns used a lower number of code glosses than *Ettelaat*. Chi-square analysis revealed that the differences were statistically meaningful. (*Ettelaat*, n=477, *IRAN*, n=162, *Hamshahri*, n=110). Within the English corpus, again, code glosses appeared to be only marginally different. Table 8 exhibits the related figures.

Table 7: Code Glosses in Persian Newspapers

Total Textual Markers	Word Count	Code Glosses (%)
Hamshahri	18,316	110 (0.6)
IRAN	25,403	162 (0.63)
Ettelaat	37,433	477 (1.27)
Chi-square		315.912

Critical value= 3.8415

Table 8: Code glosses in English Newspapers

Total Textual Markers	Word Count	Code Glosses (%)
New York times	40,958	429 (0.01)
Independent	51,256	413 (0.8)
Chi-square		0.304

Critical value= 3.841

Persuasion in English and Persian newspapers

Comparison of the English texts on persuasive effect

Table 9 provides the information about the informants' scores on persuasion for English text one (text with high index of code glosses) and text two (text with medium index of respective markers), and text three (text with low index of respective markers). The comparison of the means of text one and text two showed text two to be more persuasive.

As it is shown in Table 9 *t*-observed was calculated as (-7.300) and *t*-critical was (1.645) at the (df = 58). Therefore *t*-observed was much higher than the *t*-critical of 1.645 at the 0.05 level of significance. So, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the *t*-value confirmed that text two was more persuasive than text one. Comparison of text one and text three revealed the latter to be more persuasive. A statistical *t*-test was also administered. The *t*-value of -6.467 observed for a degree of freedom 58 was greater than the *t* critical value of 1.645 at the

0.05 level of significant. Therefore, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the t value confirmed that text three was more persuasive than text one.

Comparison of the texts continued for text two and text three. As it is shown in the following Table, t -observed was calculated as (-3.013) and t -critical was (1.645) at the ($df = 58$). Therefore t -observed was higher than the t -critical of 1.645 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the t -value confirmed that text two was more persuasive than the text three

Table 9: Results of t -test of English texts on persuasive effect

Texts	N	Mean	SD	t-test
Text 1	30	3.2333	0.62606	-7.300
Text 2	30	4.4667	0.68145	
Text 1	30	3.2333	0.62606	-6.757
Text 3	30	4.0667	0.25371	
Text 2	30	4.4667	0.68145	-3.013
Text 3	30	4.0667	0.25371	

Comparison of the Persian texts on persuasive effect

The comparison of the means of Persian text one (with low proportion of the markers) and Persian text two (medium index of the markers) revealed text two to be more persuasive. The t -value of -6.467 observed for a degree of freedom 58 was significantly above the t critical value of 1.645 at the 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the t value confirmed that text two was more persuasive than text one.

Comparing the mean score of text one (text with low density of the markers) to text three (one with high density of the markers) revealed the text three was more persuasive than the text one. A statistical t -test was administered. The t -observed was calculated as (-7.603) and t -critical was (1.645) at the ($df = 58$). Therefore t -observed was more than the t -critical of 1.645 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the t -value confirmed that text three was more persuasive than text one.

Comparing the mean score of text two (with medium index of the markers) to mean score of text three (with high index of the respective markers) showed that text three was more persuasive than text two. The t -value of 3.008 observed for a degree of freedom 58 was significantly above the t critical value of 1.645 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there was a meaningful difference between the two mean scores, and the t value confirmed that text three was more persuasive than text two. Table 10 reveals the data related to the result of the persuasion effect of Persian texts on informants.

Table 10: Results of t-test for Persian texts on persuasive effect

Texts	N	Mean	SD	t-test
Text 1	30	2.7000	0.70221	-6.467
Text 2	30	3.7667	0.56832	
Text 1	30	2.7000	0.70221	-7.603
Text 3	30	4.4000	1.00344	
Text 2	30	3.7667	0.56832	3.008
Text 3	30	4.4000	1.00344	

The qualitative analysis of the questionnaire on persuasive effect

The informants' comments on the persuasive effect were also analyzed qualitatively. The English native speakers agreed on text with medium index of examples, facts, and comparison as the most persuasive text. In addition, they remarked the use of example, facts, and comparison can be an important way to convince people better. However, Persian native speakers chose the text with high proportion of these markers as the most persuasive text. They did not write any comments on the texts, they exactly wrote the descriptions which were given for each number in the questionnaire.

In general, there was a meaningful difference among English texts with different proportions of code glosses. The English native speakers chose the text with moderate index of discourse markers as more persuasive, followed by text with a high number of these markers. Text with a low index of discourse markers was considered as less persuasive by the English informants. These findings show that the English and Persian texts with high degree of code glosses are not more persuasive than the ones with medium or low degree of code glosses. These findings were in line with Dafouz-Milne's (2008) study. On the contrary, the Iranian informants chose the text with high density of code glosses as the most persuasive text, leaving texts with medium and low proportions of these markers in second and third places of persuasiveness. As a result, for Iranian readers, the higher degree of code glosses, the more persuasive the text will be. These findings contradict Dafouz-Milne's (2008) study in which the Spanish and English informants of her study chose the texts with a medium proportion of metadiscourse markers as more persuasive texts.

It can be concluded that circumlocution is a current figure of speech in Persian literature and one part of the circumlocution is redundancy, which seems it uses much more in Persian literature. In fact, redundancy is part of the aremonial feature of Persian. It seems Iranian people use redundancy in their speech and extend it to their writing. They used to talk much more around a topic and think by more explanation, they can convince the others better. In addition, the use of redundancy has become a habit in their daily life. In the following paragraph which is extracted from the data, the author used redundant phrases whose omissions may not cause any problem in comprehending the text. On the other hand, it seems English native speakers use conciseness in their writing.

CONCLUSION

This study has presented quantitative and qualitative research on the presence and persuasive function of code glosses in a corpus of Persian and English opinion columns. Regarding similarities, the study reveals that code glosses are present in the English and Persian texts. As Dafouz-Milne (2008) states that these similarities can be attributed to the newspaper-genre characteristics of opinion columns that seem to contribute to the national culture and exhibit certain uniformity across languages. Concerning differences, this study suggests that there is some variation across languages in the construction of opinion columns. For instance, the findings show that English authors use more code glosses than Persian writers. It is worth to note that English writers know that these texts address fairly broad audiences and also they are aware that these texts should include some explicit reading cues and examples in order to help audience to comprehend as intended.

As regards the analysis of persuasion, the findings suggested that texts with a balanced number of code glosses items were considered as the most persuasive by our informants, followed by texts with a high number of these markers. The texts considered to be less persuasive of all by our English informants were those with a low index of metadiscourse markers. On the contrary, Persian informants chose the text with high degree of respective markers as the most persuasive one. Texts with medium and low degrees of these markers occupied the second and third places of persuasiveness. In other words, it seems that our readers highly value texts that guide and show consideration towards the audience, by establishing a dialogic tenor without resulting too assertive or patronising.

The results gained from the present study are useful for columnists. In order to convince their audience, columnists should present the propositional material in a way that the audience find more convincing. Metadiscourse markers, especially code glosses can be useful in this way. Also, they should consider the following things when they write an opinion column: 1) Think about their audience. If they are trying to engage the public with new or interesting ideas, make sure they are connecting with the appropriate readers. 2) Do not assume everyone thinks like them. If you assume “everyone knows” something, then you are marginalizing people who may not know. This is your opinion. Stating it as fact limits your credibility. 3) Do not be formulaic. Read, listen and watch to make sure your opinion is relevant. There are many common topics that are staples to the opinion page, and it can be difficult not to regurgitate other people’s opinions. What is their angle? What makes their opinion more interesting than those we have heard before? 4) Be (a little bit) humble. Be willing to be corrected with an argument as equally substantiated as your own. The opinion page creates a dialog with an extensive and sometimes unexpected audience. If your writing employs grandiose statements, generalizations and crass language, you can respect the same attitude in return. 5) Don't be too humble. This is your opinion, and you chose to share it for a reason. If you seem halfhearted or unsure, it will be immediately obvious to the reader and you will have a hard time persuading them, Francis (2007).

The results of the study are useful for newspaper editors, because it makes them devote more

spaces to opinion columns to convince the audiences better. There are some important limitations in this study: a) the number of English and Persian newspapers was not equal, initially, three English newspapers (Independent, New York Times, and Washington Post) and three Persian newspapers (Iran. Hamshahri, and Ettelaat) were chosen, but because of the presidential elections, the link of Washington Post was cut, and I had to compare two English newspapers with three Persian ones. b). The second limitation was the difficult access to the English native speaker. The other limitation was the dynamicity of dimension of the notion of persuasion itself (Dafouz- Milne, 2008).

There are various textual reasons which were not analyzed in this study that play a decisive role in the judgment of persuasion (the topic, the type of newspaper, the number of newspaper, and the columnist). Thus, further studies could offer more insights into persuasion by using a larger corpus, focusing on different disciplines and genres and this may be involve other subjects. For example it would be interesting to contrast English teachers' and students' evaluations with that of Persian teachers' and students' evaluations in order to understand whether their view of persuasive text turns to be the same. There were some important limitations in this study: a) the number of English and Persian newspapers was not equal, initially, three English newspapers (Independent, New York Times, and Washington Post) and three Persian newspapers (Iran. Hamshahri, and Ettelaat) were chosen, but because of the presidential elections, access to the link of Washington Post was not possible, two English newspapers were compared with three Persian ones. b) The other limitation was the dynamicity of the notion of persuasion itself (Dafouz- Milne, 2008).

REFERENCES

- Crismore, A. (1984). The rhetoric of textbooks: metadiscourse, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 16(3), 279–296.
- Cuenca, M. J., & Batch, C. (2007). Contrasting the forms and use of reformulation Markers. *Discourse Studies*, 19(2), 149-175.
- Dafouz, E. (2003). Metadiscourse revisited: a contrastive study of persuasive writing in Professional discourse, *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*, 11, 29-52.
- Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: Across- linguistic study of Newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40(4), 95-113.
- Dominick, J. R. (2009). *The dynamics of mass communication (10th Ed): Media in the digital age*. New York: Mc Graw Hill.
- Francis, C. (2007). Writing an opinion column - Making Sure Your Ideas Matter. Retrieved May 30, 2009, from <http://ezinerarticles.com/?Writing+an+Opinion+Column+Making+Sure+Your+Ideas+Matter+&id=563098>
- Franklin, B. (2008). *Pulling newspapers apart*. Routledge: New York.
- Greenberg, J. (2000). Opinion discourse and Canadian newspapers: The case of the Chinese- Boat people-. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 25(4), 517-537.

- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Hyland, K. (1998 a). Exploring corporate rhetoric. Metadiscourse in the CEO's letter. *Journal of Business Communication*, 35(2), 224-245.
- Hyland, K. (1998 b). Persuasion and context. The pragmatics of academic discourse, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.
- Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Metadiscourse in introductory coursebooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(1), 3-26.
- Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(2), 133-151.
- Hyland, K. (2005). Representing readers in writing: Student and expert practices. *Linguistic and Education*, 16, 363-377.
- Hyland, K. (2007). *Applying a gloss: Exemplifying and reformulating in academic discourse*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kumpf, E. (2000). Visual metadiscourse: designing the considerate text. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 9(4), 401-421.
- Lischinsky, A. (2008). Examples as persuasive argument literature. *Discourse & Communication*, 2(3), 243-269.
- Nightingale, V., & Ross, K. (2003). *Media and audiences*. Berkshire: McGrawHill Education.
- Petroce, M. (2008). Analytic writings. Retrieved November 1, 2008 from <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3090-e.htm>.
- Rahman, M. (2004). Aiding the reader: The use of meta-linguistic devices in scientific discourse. *Nottingham Linguistic Circular*, 18, 30-48.
- Richardson, J.E. (2008). *Analysing newspapers: An approach from critical discourse analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Silver, M. (2003). The stance of stance: A critical outlook at ways stance is expressed and modeled in academic discourse. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 2, 359-374.
- Shams, M. R. (2007). *Reading English newspapers*. Tehran: Jangal.
- Taboada, M. (2006). Discourse markers as signals (or not) of rhetorical relations. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38, 567-592.
- Thomas, L., & Wareing, S. (1999). *Language, society and powering: An introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Vande Kopple, W. J. (1997). Refining and applying views of metadiscourse. *Paper presented at the 48th Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Phoenix, Arizona, USA.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1996). Opinion and ideologies in editorials. *Paper for the 4th International Symposium of Critical Discourse Analysis, Language, Social Life & Critical Thought*. Greece: Athens, 14 th-16th December, 1995.

THE GENERALIZATION OF RELATIVE CLAUSE INSTRUCTION IN THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Farideh Ataelifar

Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran.

Faridehataelifar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The experimental study intended to test the generalization of instruction of one form of relative clause to others in learning English as a foreign language. 150 students were given a pre-test of combining eighteen pairs of sentences, attaching the second sentence as a relative clause to the first one. After scoring the pre-test, chosen from Eckman's paper(1988) consisted of a sentence combining task which was to be performed on eighteen pairs of sentences and the eighteen questions on the pre-test contain three pairs of sentences which are to be combined into resultant sentences containing a relativized subject, three into sentences with a relativized indirect object, and so on, 60 students who were found to have no knowledge of relative clauses in English were randomly assigned to four equal groups, three of which served as experimental groups and one as the control group. Each experimental group was given instruction on a particular type of relative clauses. The subjects were then given a post-test(chosen from Eckman's paper(1988). The task in the post-test was the same as in the pre-test but sentences were different to reduce the effect of the pre-test performance on the post-test performance. From the results of the experiment, it is argued that maximal generalization of learning takes place from structures which are typologically more marked to those structures which are typologically less marked, and not the reverse. Some implications of this interpretation are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Accessibility Hierarchy; Markedness Differential Hypothesis; Generalization Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The theory of language universals maintains that certain linguistic features are present in all world's languages. Universal grammar consists of a highly structured and restrictive system of principles. Associated with some of these principles are certain possibilities of variations, called parameters. As these parameters are fixed, a grammar is determined (core grammar), so that it can tell what languages have in common. These common features are known as statistical universal since they are established statistically by looking at as many languages as possible. An example is relative clauses (RC), one type of dependent clauses introduced by a relative pronoun referring to the main noun the clause depends upon. Keenan and Comrie (1977) found out interesting similarities in how languages combine main and relative clauses together. These

similarities depended on the kind of word in the RC that was used as a link to the main clause. This concept was called the Accessibility Hierarchy (AH). Six types of RCs make up the AH. They can be thought of simply as types 1 to 6:

Type 1. Subjects Clause: "The man who left was John."

Type 2. Object clause: "The car that he crashed was John's."

Type 3. Indirect object clause: "The person that he gave the cheque was John."

Type 4. Object of preposition clause: "The person to whom he gave the cheque was John."

Type 5. Possessive clause: "The man whose book I borrowed was John."

Type 6. Object of comparison clause: "The man than whom I am taller is John."

Complex structures in general and RCs in particular have been the target of several studies. These structures are revealing in the sense that they open new horizons to psycholinguistic research.

From their study of RC construction in a wide range of languages, about fifty of grammatical relations out of which relativization could take place. The proposed universal order which was labeled the AH was as follows:

SU > DO > IO > OBL > GEN > OCOMP

Subject direct object indirect object oblique genitive object of complement

According to this hierarchy it is easier to relativize subjects than relativizing other positions. By the same token direct objects are easier to relativize than indirect objects and the pattern continues in the same way.

Eckman (1977) believed that different strategies used in the acquisition and comprehension of RCs may be due to some other factors such as the degree of difficulty of the aspects of the target language. Considering the assumption that human beings will learn to do things which are less difficult before they learn to do related things which are more difficult, he proposed the idea of markedness differential hypothesis (MDH). More importantly, however, the MDH suggests that it is the most marked aspects of a target language from which it should be possible for a learner to gain maximal generalization of his/her learning.

The Significance of the Study

Considering the grammatical and semantic functions of the RCs, the understanding of the relationship between words and the semantically defining or describing role of RCs for their antecedent nouns helps the students to interpret a text meaningfully. Naturally this will promote both the productive and receptive skills of the learners. So the acquisition of English grammar and RCs as one of its major components can be taken as a requirement for the development of all four skills in those students learning English as a second/foreign language.

For the successful teaching of RCs to students of English as a foreign language, teachers should come to an understanding of the processes involved in acquiring them. Generalization hypothesis proposed by Gass (1981,1982) which is a strategy applied by EFL and ESL students in the

acquisition of RCs can reduce the amount of time required to teach 6 types of RCs. Considering time as an important factor in the acquisition of English, teachers can take advantages of the process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The question whether there is a natural route to language development or whether syntactic structures are acquired in a fixed sequence by children and adults has occupied the minds of many researchers (Krashen 1981, Cook 1985, Comrie 1981, Brown 2007). This question has arisen as a result of such a theory as nativism which is based on the assumption that in the languages of the world the possible grammars are limited by an innately determined set of schemata that result from the biological composition of the human mind. Burns and Richards (2012) argues that certain linguistic forms are more accessible or more salient to the child than others. Thus some structures are learnt sooner than others in a predictable way. This very predictability has provoked a lot of research in the area of first and second language acquisition.

Gass (1979) found that the difficulty for the EFL learners indeed seemed to follow the hierarchy with type 1 as the easiest type and type 6 as the most difficult, regardless of the learners first language. There were one major exception: type 5 (possessive clauses) was much easier than expected, coming between types 1 and 2 in term of difficulty, rather than after type 4. Data on English RC's were gathered from 17 high intermediate and advanced about L₂ learners enrolled in an English language training program at Indian University. The nine native languages of these learners were: Arabic, Chinese, French, Italian, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Japanese and Thai. Her study also suggested that the areas of difficulty for these groups could be predicted on the basis of universal properties of RC's rather than the basis of language specific properties.

Eckman and his colleagues (1988) divided thirty-six EFL students who were enrolled in English as a second language intensive program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee into four groups. All the students were from intermediate or low-intermediate proficiency levels. Each of the subjects was given a written pre-test consisting of a sentence combining task which was to be preformed on twenty-one pairs of sentences. Following the pre-test and the grouping, each group of students received instruction on relative clauses for one class hour. The first group received instruction on only subject relatives, the second on only direct object relatives, and the third group on only object of preposition relatives. The fourth group, the control group, received instruction on sentence combining techniques not related to relative clauses.

Two days after the instruction, the subjects were given the post-test The results of the analysis of the post-test scores indicate that the group which scored the best was the one trained on the object of a preposition, with the object group next, subject group next, and control group last.

Nicholas (1995) pointed out that terrestrial languages follow the pattern of generalization presented by Eckman (1988) for the heads of RCs, first subjects, then direct objects, followed in order by indirect objects, possessors, and comparatives.

Cheung (2002) investigated the development of relative clauses in the interlanguage of native Cantonese learners of English within the framework of Keenan and Comrie's Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (1977, 1979). He also distinguished the features of Cantonese-English interlanguage which may be attributed to language transfer from those which may be considered as universal to second language acquisition.

As observed by Keenan and Hawkins (1987) on English newspaper texts, subject relative pronouns are much more common than direct object ones, themselves being more common than indirect object ones (which confirms Keenan and Comrie's Accessibility Hierarchy). For French relatives, Abeille et al (2002) presented the following results:

Relative pronouns: subject (qui without prep): 6291 (61%); direct object (que, qu'): 1565 (1, 2%); genitive (dont): 1076 (10, 4%); locative (ou'): 782 (7, 6%); indirect object (prep + qui, quoi, lequell): 539 (5, 2%); others (0, 3%). Works on eye movement and understanding rates by Holmes and O'Regan (1981) have shown that que relative clauses are more difficult to process than qui relative ones. Their relative frequencies offer confirmation of this result and call for new experiments involving genitive relative clauses. They have presented that, contrary to English, French relative clauses tend to be attached high (on the first N in a N1 prep (det) N2 sequences), but that the preference is reverse for short relative clauses. Searching their corpus (where relative clauses, like all clauses, tend to be long, with an average of 11 words), they have found a similar preference: 52% relative clauses attach on the first N, in contexts where another N is a structural candidate, and the proportion is reverse for short relative clauses (length less than 6 words): 43%.

Herrman (2005) compared RCs occurring in different dialects of Britain, including the Celtic varieties of Scottish and Irish English. After checking cognitive hierarchies and theories such as Keenan and Comrie's AH (1977, 1979), he gave an overview of RCs in different regions of Britain without making any attempt at drawing another dialect map. Finally, he concluded that all the compared British dialects follow the AH.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It has been argued that in the application of the generalization strategy, learners generalize the structure to other related structures when they are taught only some particular ones. This study determines whether Iranian students who are taught some types of RCs can generalize them to the others which they are not taught and whether such generalization, if any, follows a predictable pattern.

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study comprise 60 Iranian adolescents who were selected from among 150 females attending a foreign language center called Iran Language Institute. To feel firmly confident that the Ss had not received any instruction on the RCs before the study, the researcher gave them a written pre- test consisting of a sentence combining task. The Ss were asked to

combine eighteen pairs of sentences, attaching the second sentence as a RC to the first one. After scoring the pre- test sixty Ss who were found to have no knowledge of RCs in English were sampled as the Ss of the present study.

Instrumentation

Pre-test

The pre- test (Eckman 1988) given to the Ss consisted of a sentence combining task which was to be preformed on eighteen pairs of sentences. The eighteen questions on the pre- test contain three pairs of sentences which are to be combined into resultant sentences containing a relativized subject, three into sentences with a relativized indirect object, and so on. Therefore, for each type of relative into sentences with a relativized direct object, three clauses (6 types), three pairs of sentences were used. The different pairs of sentences were randomly ordered in the test booklet.

Post-test

Five days after the second session of the instruction, the subjects were given the post-test under exactly the same conditions as the pre-test (Eckman 1988). The task in the post-test was the same as in the pre-test but sentences were different to reduce the effect of the pre-test performance on the post-test performance . Because the time interval couldn't make the researcher feel fairly confident that pre-test would have little or no effect, two different but parallel tests were administered as pre- and post-tests.

In order to find out whether the two tests are parallel, a pilot study was conducted with 20 Ss learning English in Shiraz Language Institute. Both tests were administered at the same time then each of them was scored. The mean of each set of scores was computed and a matched (paired) *t*-test was used to compare the means. The observed value of *t* was -0.24 which was not statistically significant at $p < .0001$. The results of the *t*-test was shown in Table 1.

Table 1: the *t*-test for equality of means.

	N	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-test	20	13.40	3.88
Post-test	20	13.45	3.95
P<.0001			

Table 2: Levene's test for equality of variance

Levene's test for equality of variances, <i>F</i> , which is the ratio of the variances of the two exams was shown in Table 2. The ratio of .98 was not statistically significant at $P < .0001$.		Sig
Total Equal Variances assumed Equall Variances not assumed	.98	.02
P<.0001		

The reliability of the tests was calculated by using the Kuder-Richardson formula 20, also referred to as Cronbach's Alpha. A measure of .94 was obtained for the reliability which was

significant at $P < .0001$. The tests were considered to be content valid by the advisor because the content of them was selected appropriately to correspond to the content of the materials to be tested and they were aimed at measuring the appropriate level of the Ss' learning.

Scoring

Each of the pre and post-tests was scored on the basis of whether or not the students produced the correct target sentence. Only errors relevant to the formation of the target relative clause were counted. In fact, most of the errors did not involve miscombinations; rather, the majority of errors involved the structure of the relative clause itself. Since multiple errors on one sentence weren't counted, the maximum number of errors that any subject could make on either the pre- or post- test was 18.

Procedure

After the pre-test was administered, the sixty subjects were randomly assigned to four groups (three experimental groups and one control group). Each group consisted of fifteen subjects. After grouping, each group received some instruction for two sessions as follows: the first group received instruction on subject and direct object relatives, types 1 and 2, the second on indirect object and object of preposition relatives, types 3 and 4, the third group on possessive and object of comparison clauses, types 5 and 6. The fourth group, the control group, was given a placebo lesson on sentence combining techniques that was not relevant to relative clauses.. Each group was given a brief explanation on modifiers and told that they were going to be shown a technique for combining sentences or ideas using one sentence to modify or further describe another. The students in each of the three groups were told that for the purpose of that lesson they would be using the second idea (sentence) to modify the first, and that it would have to be slightly changed in order to become part of the first sentence. Part of the change would be to add a marker, *that* (for people and things), *which* (for things), *who/whom* (for people). Then, in each of the classes, the teacher proceeded to write out quickly on the board pairs of short sentences and a simple sketch illustrating each. These pairs were interrelated and told a short story. These pairs of sentences were controlled so that those used with the first group of students were appropriate for subject and direct object relativization, those used with the second group were appropriate for indirect object and object of preposition relativization, and those with the third group for possessive and object of comparison relativization. Thus for each of the groups, all instruction and examples centered around only two relative clauses types. The students were then instructed to find the phrases in each sentence pair that referred to the same person or thing. They were shown how to substitute a marker for the second co-referential element and move the now-changed second sentence to the correct position in the first.

At this point in each class the students then did an oral exercise in which they listened to seven or eight pairs of sentences, again telling a story (a new story). They were instructed to repeat each sentence pair, first mentally combining them with a relative clause structure as they had just done with the sentences on the board. Again the sentences were controlled so that the students were working only with the relative clause types that were the focus of their group.

The third activity for each class was a written exercise. The students were again given pairs of sentences—another story—and instructed to rewrite each pair, putting the second sentence inside the first as a modifier. This was done individually, with the teacher walking around checking for problems and re-instructing when necessary. The sentences used in all three groups centered around the same stories, ensuring that the lexical content for the groups was nearly identical. The time interval, the teacher, and the method of the instruction for all groups were completely the same. They differed only according to whether the relative clauses that were to be formed involved the specific types of relative clauses which were instructed.

The time interval, the teacher, and the method of the instruction for all groups were completely the same. They differed only according to whether the relative clauses that were to be formed involved the specific types of relative clauses which were instructed.

The subjects were given the post-test under exactly the same conditions as the pre-test five days after the second session of instruction. The task in the post-test was the same as in the pre-test but sentences were different to reduce the effect of the pre-test performance on the post-test performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After scoring, a one - way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the differences between the pre and the post- tests (Table 3).

Table 3: Tests of between- subjects effects

Dependent variable: Post

Source	Type III sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Corrected model	1868.387	4	467.097	140.798	0.000
Intercept	2165.491	1	2165.491	652.748	0.000
PRE	41.537	1	41.537	12.521	0.000
Group	1827.194	3	609.065	183.591	0.000
Error	182.463	55	3.318		
Total	6437.000	60			
Corrected total	2050.850				
P < .05					

Table 3, the ANOVA table, summarized the estimates of populations σ^2 such as S^2_{within} and $S^2_{between}$. Then a common-sense understanding of ANOVA, the comparison of the two estimates was presented as F value. As shown in the table, pre-test was a source of variance in the study and the difference between the pre-test and the post- test was significant at the 0.05 level because the F value was high enough that the null hypothesis can be rejected safely ($12.521 > 2.78$). The four groups were considered as another source of variance. Referring to table 7 and F - distribution table, the difference between the groups in the post-test, the dependent variable, was

statistically significant too ($183.591 > 2.78$). Table 4 displays the results of the ANOVA conducted on the information of table 3. The MS (mean square) column gave the researcher the two variance figures, the MSB and the MSW, which made up the F -ratio. The degrees of freedom were given. The SS (sum of squares) column is the variability found between groups and within groups before they were divided by their respective degrees of freedom. The observed value of F was compared with its critical value in the F -ratio table and it was concluded that the two estimates, S^2_{within} and $S^2_{between}$, were not the same so there was treatment effect in the study ($172.006 > 2.78$).

Table 4: The analysis of variance on pre-and post- test differences

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	sig
Between Groups	1828.183	3	609.394	172.006	0.000
Within Groups	198.400	56	3.543		
Total	2026.583	59			
P< .05					

After analyzing the answers for each of the areas searched for in the study, the final results were recorded in tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Test of Between-Subject Effect

Source	Type III sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	1868.387	4	467.097	140.798	0.000
Intercept	2165.491	1	2165.491	652.748	0.000
PRE	41.537	1	41.537	12.521	0.000
Group	1827.194	3	609.065	183.591	0.000
Error	182.463	3.318			
Total	6437.000	60			
Corrected total	2050.850				
P<.05					
	Paired Differences			T	Sig. (2- tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
Pair 1 Pre-Post	-6.1333	2.69568	.69602	-8.812	.000
P<.05					

Table 6: The Analysis of Variance on Pre and Post-test Differences

	sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1828.183	3	606.394	172.006	0.000
Within Groups	198.400	56	3.543		
Total	2026.583	59			
P.<.05					

As shown in the tables ,pre-test was a source of variance in the study and the difference between the pre and post- tests were significant at the 0.05 level because the F value was high enough that the null hypothesis can be rejected safely ($12.521 > 2.78$). As the results of the study of Eckman

and his colleagues (1998), Cheung (2002), and Herrman (2005) indicated, the present study also found out that the difficulty for EFL learners indeed followed the AH proposed by Keenan and Comrie (1977) regardless of the learners' first language. But the exception of Grass's study (1979), type 5 coming between types 1 and 2 rather than after 4, was not observed in the present study.

The 4 groups were considered as another source of variance. Referring to table 3 and *F*-distribution table, the difference between the groups in the post- test, the dependent variable, was statistically significant too ($183.591 > 2.78$). The *MS* (mean square) column gave the researcher the 2 variance figures, the *MSB* and the *MSW*, which made the *F*-ratio. The observed value of *F* was compared with its critical value in the *F*-ratio table and it was concluded that there was treatment effect in the study ($127.006 > 2.78$). The results of the present paper support the idea of Burns and Richard (2012) that some structures are learnt sooner and easier than the others in a predictable way (Table 6). Also, the difficulty for the EFL learners to learn six types of relative clauses seems to follow a predictable pattern found by Gass (1979). He proved that there was a major exception in the hierarchy of learning relative clauses: type 5 (possessive clause) came between type 1 and 2 in terms of difficulty; however, the results of the current study indicated that Iranian students followed the exact accessibility hierarchy found by Eckman and his colleagues (1988).

CONCLUSION

The result of the study supported the hypothesis that the structure from which one will obtain maximal generalization is the relatively more marked structure than the less marked structure. Thus if one were forced to choose only one RC structure to teach, the structure must be the most marked one, type 6. But it would be incorrect to conclude, on the basis of the results of the present study alone, that the best way to teach RCs is to give instruction of only the most marked structure, that is object of comparison clause.

Moreover, structures should be graded in accordance with the Accessibility Hierarchy of Keenan and Comrie (1979) by authors when they are writing a textbook. The difficulty orders found in this piece of research, confirm the hierarchy found by the above- mentioned authors: subjects are more accessible than objects. Regarding this fact, textbook writers and teachers should provide students, particularly, at the lowest level, with more exercises on complex structures, if any to be used, whose head NPs stand at the lowest level of the Accessibility Hierarchy. Gaining this amount of knowledge from this study, teachers may design their courses and present their material in a more effective way.

Limitations of the Study

The results and findings of the study have methodological implications for further research examining L2 learning. To replicate the current paper, one may add other independent variables such as gender or age which were two limitations of the study. And then test for significance of each factor. Also the interaction of independent variables may be looked to find out which factor has the main effects and consequently is the most important one.

REFERENCES

- Abeille, A. (2002). Syntactic Preferences for Relative Clauses. <http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:3V5UbTPW3PUC:www.ling.sarts.kuleu>.
- Brown, H.D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (5th ed) New York: Pearson Education.
- Burns, A., and Richards, J. (2012) *Pedagogy and Practice in Second Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cheung Ying Ying, C. (2002). The Acquisition of Relative Clauses Construction: in the content of new literary studies. <http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:89y4e1D16C4C:www.hku.hk/linguistic/st>.
- Comrie, B. (1981). *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Cook, V.J. (1985). Chomsky's universal grammar and second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 2-18.
- Eckman, F. (1977). Markedness and the contrastive analysis hypothesis. *Language Learning*, 27, 315-330.
- Eckman, F. (1988). On the Generalization of Relative Clause Instruction in the Acquisition of English as a Second Language. *Applied Linguistic*, 9, 1-20.
- Gass, S. (1979). Language transfer and universal grammatical relations. *Language, learning*, 29, 327 – 344
- Gass, S. (1981). From theory to practice. Paper presented at the 15th Annual TESOL Convention, Detroit, MI.
- Gass, S. (1982). From theory to practice in M. Hines and W. Rutherford (Eds.) *On TESOL 81*. Washington, DC: TESOL.
- Herrman, T. (2005). Relative clauses in dialects of English. <http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:9OF5XoYeSKoC:www.joen.fi/fld/...>
- Keenan, E., & Comrie, B. (1976-1977). Accessibility hierarchy and difficulty hierarchy in the comprehension of relative clauses. *Applied Linguistics*, 16, 45-56.
- Krashen, S. (1981). *Second Language Learning and Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Nicholas, N. (1995). Okrand on bogh and more. <http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:YLEqJepgMjYC:www.klingon.ska.org/...>

The COMPARATIVE EFFECT OF USING LABEL EXTENDING, SUMMARIZING, AND STRIP STORY ARRANGEMENT TASKS ON EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY RETENTION

Elham Fallah

Islamic Azad university of Central Tehran Branch

Elham fallah 1984 @ gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to examine the impact of three different story making tasks (label Extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement) on elementary English as a foreign language (EFL) Learners' vocabulary retention. The participants of this study were 120 EFL learners who were selected from among 12 classes in a branch of Kish language school in Chalous based on their performances on Nelson. The participants were then divided into three experimental groups. One experimental group known as label extending was supposed to make a story based on a picture and a prompt sentence, another experimental group known as summarizing group was supposed to summarize a given story and finally the third experimental group known as strip story arrangement group was supposed to arrange a strip story. All the three experimental groups had to use the newly taught words in their final written drafts. All the participants took part in vocabulary retention post test after the treatment. The three groups' performances on the post test were compared by one-way ANOVA and the results confirmed that there was not any significant difference among the effects of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. This study is of educational value to the teachers in terms of focusing on students' collaboration and creativity in the classroom and shifting the attention from teacher- centered activities to learner- centered ones.

KEYWORDS

Label extending task, strip story task, summarizing task, vocabulary retention

INTRODUCTION

Candlin (1988) viewed vocabulary as an important component in language teaching in terms of organization of syllabuses, the evaluation of learner performance, and the provision of acquisition resources. Furthermore, vocabulary acquisition is crucial to students' traditional language skills. Without enough vocabulary, listening, reading comprehension, and writing are inefficient. As Wilson (1986) mentioned, without grammar very little can be conveyed; however, nothing can be conveyed without vocabulary.

According to Ellis (1997), Knowing the words in a piece of discourse facilitates understanding which in turn allows the grammatical patterning to become more transparent. Ellis (1994) has

noted that lexical errors impede comprehension more than grammatical errors and that native-speaker judges lexical errors as more serious. Reading stories is a way of teaching EFL vocabulary. Garvie (1990) refers to the eloquent witness to the importance accorded to stories. Wodinsky and Nation (1988) investigated the potential contribution that graded readers could make to vocabulary learning and suggest that future research should be done to test to see if such learning and coping actually occurs and what factors influence learning. Different studies have been done on the effects of different types of story making on vocabulary retention; however, the comparative effect of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention (in a written form) seems not to have been investigated before.

The usual approach to vocabulary learning is to present students with a list of words to be mastered, then present them in the context of a text, and then provide exercises to "reinforce" the vocabulary. Research, however, tells us that a great deal of vocabulary acquisition can take place through story hearing, read- alouds, and pleasure reading (Cho & Choi, 2008; Elley, 1991; Krashen, 2004; Mason & Krashen, 2004; Vivas, 1996; Wang & Lee, 2007). The goal of the previous related studies is to determine whether and how much vocabulary can be gained without presenting students with a list of words, and without supplementary exercises, using a method in which target words are presented in the context of a story.

In the present study, using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks may enable new information to be more processed and then retained for a longer time than any other activities designed to achieve the same objective. It also requires all students to use their creativity in label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks by catering for their self-esteem (e.g. by indicating that their participation is worthy).

Moreover, incorporating different story making tasks in the classroom in a cooperative form can shift the focus from teacher-centered activities to learner-centered ones. Besides, making stories encourages students to use their imaginations. Developing the imagination can empower the students to consider new and inventive ideas. It can also contribute to self-confidence and personal motivation as students envision themselves competent and able to accomplish their hopes and dreams. The results of this study may verify whether Iranian EFL learners are able to retain new vocabularies more efficiently by making stories.

The vocabulary of any language is huge, and its acquisition takes time, even for native speakers. From one point of view, vocabulary learning is quite simple. Teachers have to ensure that learners know the basics of the target language, its grammar, phonetics, spelling and vocabulary. Once this threshold is reached, learners are sufficiently autonomous to expand their vocabulary by wide reading, as the learner can take a new text and find it comprehensible and interesting. In this chapter, the review of the issues related to the topic is given under two main sections: the theoretical review of the concepts and definitions, and the practical review of some studies related to the topic of the present study.

What Does It Mean to Know a Word?

According to Simpson and Nist (1997) knowing a word means understanding a word upon recognition and providing appropriate and precise definition that fits the context. They likened knowing a word to an iceberg and believed that memorized definition is often located on the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the surface of the water is a much larger mass of ice which is more important and constructs the underlying proficiency.

Over the years lexical researchers have developed various criteria for understanding what is involved in knowing a word. An early definition divided vocabulary knowledge into two main categories: knowledge of word meaning (generalization, breadth of meaning, precision of meaning) and levels of accessibility to this knowledge (availability and application).

The Historical View Toward Vocabulary

One of the first aspects of the oral approach to receive attention was the role of vocabulary. Several large- scale investigations of foreign language vocabulary were undertaken In the 1920s and 1930s. This has led to the development of principles of vocabulary control, which were very influential in the teaching of English in following decades.

According to Celce-Murcia (2001), in past years vocabulary teaching received less attention because it was thought that vocabulary could simply be left to take care of itself. In the late 1970s and early 1980s and by the late 1980s and early 1990s, vocabulary studies were developing exponentially and vocabulary teaching was coming into its own.

Categorization

Most models of lexical knowledge distinguish between passive/receptive and active/productive vocabularies. Laufer and Nation (2001) proposed the first version of a measure of passive vocabulary fluency, the VORST (vocabulary recognition speed test). Using the VORST, they examined the relationship between fluency and vocabulary knowledge reflected in the passive vocabulary size score, and also the relationship between fluency and frequency of words being accessed.

Implicit and Explicit Learning in Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

If vocabulary learning requires a precise and effortful coordination of form and meaning, it may not optimally occur with an activity like extensive reading that allows the reader to bypass such precision and effort. Learner attention is another crucial variable. In incidental vocabulary acquisition, the learner's attention is focused primarily on communicative meaning, not on form. Krashen's input hypothesis strongly claims that acquisition occurs only when the learner's attention is focused on meaning. According to Ellis (1995) Vocabulary learning requires attention to both meaning and form.

Story Telling

In order to provide successful language learning, Pesola (1991, p. 340) suggested that storytelling is "one of the most powerful tools for surrounding the young learner with language". Including storytelling in the curriculum can improve the level of learning in these four language skills

(Wilson, 1997). In addition, storytelling is a creative art form that has entertained and informed across centuries and cultures, and its instructional potential continues to serve teachers.

A

According to Isbell (2002), many stories that work well with children include repetitive phrases, unique words, and enticing description. As Morrow (2001) has pointed out, story recall allows children to revisit the tale and refine their understanding. It helps children develop concepts about words, print, and books as well as assessing students' current language levels. According to McGee and Richgels (2000), story recall provides children with the opportunity to reorganize the sequence of events, to use the vocabulary of the story and to expand children's comprehension of the world as well.

Application of Stories in Teaching Methodologies

The use of literature to teach second/foreign languages can be traced back to over one century ago. In the nineteenth century, second/foreign languages were taught with the help of the Grammar Translation Method. However, in the seventies, methods such as the Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach did not utilize literature to teach second/foreign languages, and neither did the Notional-Functional Syllabus.

Instructors have realized that literature can be used to reinforce the skills and complement language teaching. Moreover, students can gain insight into literature by gaining entrance to a world familiar or unfamiliar to them due to the cultural aspects of stories, and taking a voyage from the literary text to their own minds to find meanings for ideas, leading to critical thinking.

Benefits of Short Stories

Researchers who advocate the use of short stories to teach ESL/EFL list several benefits of short stories. These include motivational, literary, cultural and higher-order thinking benefits.

Practical Review

In this section, some related studies conducted by different scholars are stated.

Yang, Chi Cheung Ruby (2009) conducted a case study of the use of short stories in a junior secondary ESL classroom in Hong Kong in a small class of 20 junior secondary school students in order to investigate if they become more interested and more confident in English by using short stories. The findings showed that using short stories can make students interested in learning English if interesting stories are selected and if the language used meets the level of the students.

In another study, Ramirez and Belmonte (2007) examined the effects of using digital stories to improve listening comprehension with 220 six- year- old Spanish learners of English. Findings of the study were in favor of the experimental group. The result of the study raised interesting issues related to the use of technology in the context of foreign language learning.

RESEARCH QUESTION

To fulfill the purpose of the present study which was to see whether there were any significant differences between using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. The following question was raised:

Is there any significant difference among the effects of label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention?

METHODOLOGY

In this section, the participants, instrumentation, procedure, design, and statistical analyses will be described.

Participants

In this research, 91 out of 120 elementary students from Kish language center located in Chalous were randomly selected through a homogenizing test of Nelson 050D after being piloted with 43 subjects with the same characteristics. The main participants' scores fell one standard deviation above and below the mean. They were almost equally divided into three experimental groups in the form of three intact classes.

The participants' age range was between 18 to 22, and all of them had already covered the basic levels of the book series "Total English". The participants' English learning experience was at least one year. They had English classes for six hours per week.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study are sequenced as follows:

1. A homogenizing test of Nelson
2. Vocabulary retention post test (Achievement test)
3. Instructional materials (both in written and pictorial forms)
4. Written tasks

Procedure

The procedure of the study is sequenced as follows:

1. The homogenization test of Nelson 050D was piloted with 43 subjects who had the same characteristics as the other subjects of the study (all of them were elementary female). This test was given to the subjects in order to measure its reliability and have a ruler to choose the participants of the main study. It involved 50 multiple choice grammar items and the time allocated to it was 35 minutes. Each item was weighed by a single credit with no negative points for wrong answers. The reliability of the nelson was 0.895. No items were discarded. The mean and standard deviation of the pilot group was calculated (mean= 27.3953; SD=9.2147).
2. After piloting the Nelson test, it was given to 120 participants at the beginning of the course in order to choose the participants of the main study. The time allocated to this test was 35 minutes and was in the form of 50 multiple- choice grammar questions. Each item was weighed

by a single credit with no negative points for wrong answers. The reliability of the Nelson test was 0.718. Besides the mean and standard deviation were calculated (mean= 28.1750, SD=6.9749). Those students who fell one SD below and above the mean and who turned out to be 91 were considered as the main participants of the study. Then a teacher- made vocabulary test involving 70 items on the new words from the books “ Steps to Understanding English” and “ Anecdotes in American English” written by L.A. Hill which were used as the materials for treatment was given to the 91 participants who fell one standard deviation above and below the mean based on the Nelson test in order to establish that the 70 new vocabularies were unknown to the students . When a participant wrote the exact synonym or definition for each vocabulary, that item would be omitted from the test. The time allocated to this test was 35 minutes and it was administered to the participants two days after the administration of Nelson test. Each item was weighed by a single credit with no negative point for wrong answers. The researcher omitted 10 items from the test. The 91 participants were then divided into three experimental groups.

3. In the treatment stage, three different story making tasks including label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement were practiced in the three experimental groups. In all experimental groups, each session started as follows:

First of all the students were taught 60 new words in twelve sessions and in one semester. The teacher used to write some new words on the board for each session. She had to teach some aspects of the words including parts of speech, pronunciation, and synonyms. She also had to elicit some sentences which contained the new vocabularies from the students to make sure that all the subjects had grasped the required information related to the vocabularies. Then she moved to the second stage which was in fact the dividing point of the three experimental groups. In one experimental group namely, strip story arrangement group, the teacher used to split some sequenced sentences of a story which involved the new vocabularies already taught to the participants and wrote them on the board then asked the subjects to rearrange them in their personal drafts.

In another experimental group namely label extending group, instead of providing a split story, the teacher used to stick a picture illustrating a scene of funny characters on the board and provided a prompting sentence of a story then asked the participants to continue the story based on the new words they were taught some minutes before. Finally in the third experimental group namely summarizing group, the teacher asked the participants to summarize a short story including the same new vocabularies. In all three groups, the students were allowed to work collaboratively during the process of doing the tasks for the sake of removing the boredom, but they had to do the final job individually. They also received feedback on their final drafts by the teacher.

4. Finally, a vocabulary retention post test was given to the students one week after the end of the course.

The post test included 60 items on the new words covered during the course. This test was exactly the same teacher made vocabulary test minus the 10 known vocabularies. The means of

the post tests of the three experimental groups were compared together to reject or maintain the null hypothesis.

Design

The design of this study is Quasi experimental. Besides, label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks are the independent variables of this study. The dependent variable is the vocabulary retention. The participants of this study were elementary females; therefore, the subjects' proficiency level, age and gender are the control variables of this study.

Descriptive Statistics of the Proficiency Test Piloting

As the first step, Nelson was piloted. The test included 50 questions on grammar. The test had a total score of 50 and the administration of the test took 35 minutes. This test was administered to a group of 43 elementary EFL learners at Chalous branch of Kish Air language school bearing almost the same characteristics as the target sample. No items were discarded from the test.

Following the piloting of the test, the mean and standard deviation of the raw scores and the reliability were calculated. The mean and the standard deviation of this administration were found to be 27.3953 and 9.2147, respectively. Figure 1 below shows the histogram of the participants' scores on the pilot study of Nelson.

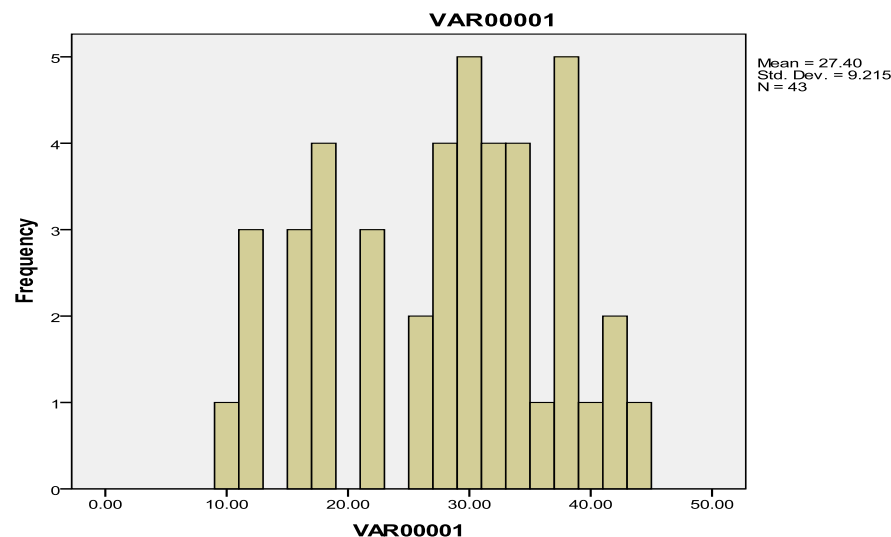


Figure 1: Histogram of the Scores Obtained on Nelson – Pilot Study

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the Nelson in the pilot phase.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Nelson– Pilot Study

	N	Minimum	maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Score	43				
Valid N (listwise)	43	10	43	27.3953	9.2147

Table 2 shows the reliability of the test scores gained by the participants in the Nelson piloting phase. The Cronbach alpha came out to be .895.

Table 2: Reliability of the Nelson – Pilot Study

N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
50	.895

Descriptive Statistics of the Proficiency Test (Homogenization)

The researcher used the piloted test as an instrument for homogenizing the participants of the study. The standard general proficiency test (Nelson) was administered among 120 elementary learners. These participants were already placed at the mentioned level according to the placement test of the language school. However, to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects, only 91 participants of the study from among 120 candidates whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean on this proficiency test were chosen. The descriptive data (Table 3) of this standard test for those 120 candidates are demonstrated below.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Total Scores on the Nelson – Main Administration

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TOTAL	120	9.00	48.00	28.1750	6.9749
Valid N (listwise)	120				

Considering the results, the mean of the scores for the 120 subjects came out to be 28.1750 and the standard deviation came out to be 6.9749. Therefore, those participants whose score fell one standard deviation above and below the mean, were those who participated in the main study. This resulted in 91 participants who were randomly divided into the three experimental groups. The reliability of Nelson in this actual administration for homogenization of the participants was estimated as well (Table 4). An index of .718 reassured the researcher of the reliability of this test.

Table 4: Reliability of the Nelson – Main Administration

N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
50	.718

Dividing the Participants into the Experimental Groups

From among the 120 students who took the test, the researcher selected the 91 who scored between 21.20 and 35.14 on the test and then randomly divided them into three experimental groups.

Post-test (Vocabulary Achievement Test)

Once the treatment was completed, the researcher administered a vocabulary achievement test serving as a post-test among the three groups of experimental. The test included 60 items on the new words covered during the course. This test was exactly the same teacher made vocabulary test minus the 10 known vocabularies.

Descriptive Statistics of the Vocabulary Post Test

The test was administered at the end of the treatment to the 91 participants of the study in the three experimental groups. Table 5 below displays the descriptive statistics for this administration in all groups with the means being 31.50, 28.03, 25.64 for the three experimental groups, respectively.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Groups' Total Scores on the Post-test

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. Error
Total	Label extending	30	31.5000	12.26082	2.23851	0.393	0.427
	Summarizing	30	28.0333	10.83889	1.97890	0.302	0.427
	Arrangement	31	25.6452	7.46346	1.34048	0.347	0.421

Figures 2, 3 and 4 display the distribution of scores for each of the three experimental groups, respectively.

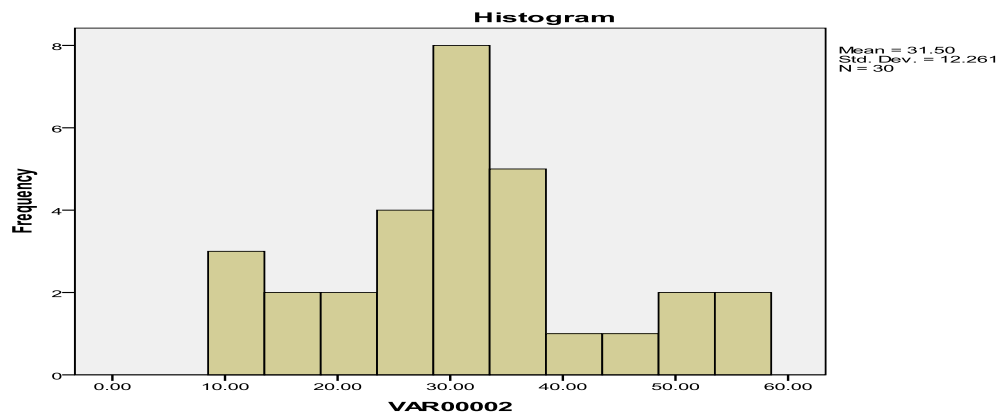


Figure 2: Histogram of the label extending Group's Scores on the Post-test

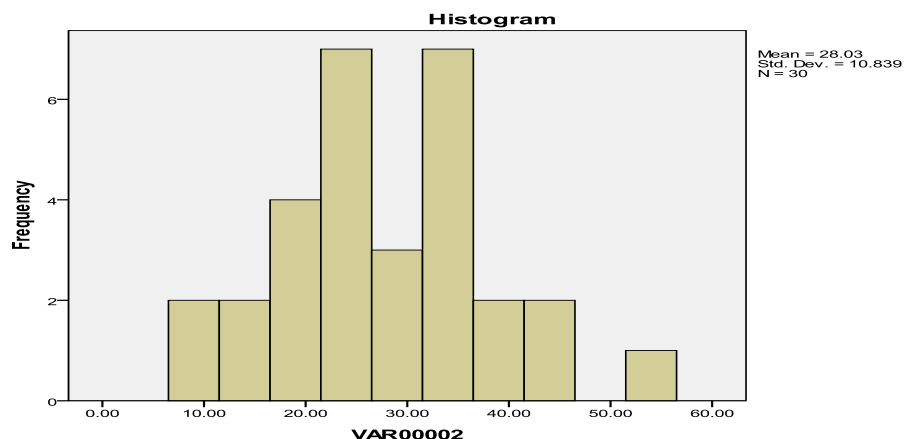


Figure 3: Histogram of the summarization Group's Scores on the Post-test

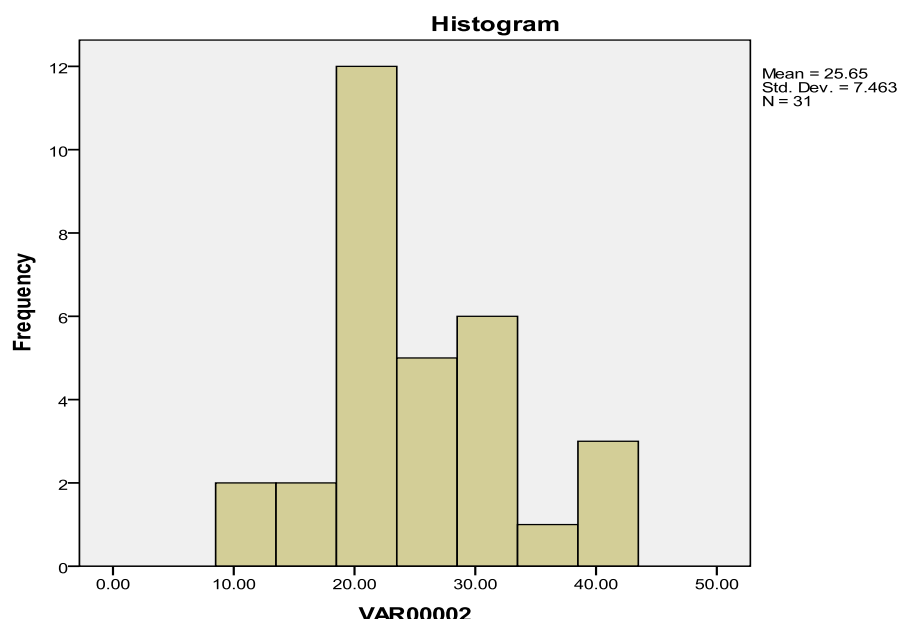


Figure 4: Histogram of the strip story arrangement Group's Scores on the Post-test

Testing Hypothesis 1 of the Study

The first null hypothesis of the study stated that:

H₀₁: There is not any significant difference among the effects of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

To test this hypothesis, an ANOVA was run to compare the mean scores of the three experimental groups.

Note has to be taken that in order to be able to run ANOVA, the normality of the distribution of scores on post-test within each group had been checked (Table 7) and since the three values .920 (.393/.427) for the narration group and .707 (.302 / .427) for the summarizing group and .824 (.347/.421) for the arrangement group fell between -1.96 and 1.96, running ANOVA was legitimized.

As the other condition for running ANOVA, homogeneity of variance was also checked by Levene's test (Table 8) and the p value did not become significant ($p = .089 > .05$), and thus, homogeneity of variance was assumed. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 6 and the results of ANOVA are demonstrated in Table 10.

Table 6: Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Sig.	df2	df1	Levene Statistic
.089	88	2	2.484

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Means of Experimental Groups on Post-test (Vocabulary Retention)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for mean	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Label extending	30	31.5000	12.26082	2.23851	-2.9079	9.8412
Summarizing	30	28.0333	10.83889	1.97890	-9.8412	2.9079
arrangement	31	25.6452	7.46346	1.34048	-12.1778	.4681
total	91	28.3626	10.52248	1.10306		

As Table 7 demonstrates, the highest mean score was obtained by the label extending group, then the summarizing group. The lowest mean score was obtained by the arrangement group. However, to check whether the differences were significant or not ANOVA was run.

Table 8: ANOVA Results on Post Test (Vocabulary Retention)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	527.470	2	263.735	2.459	.091
Within Groups	9437.563	88	107.245		
Total	9965.033	90			

As Table 8 indicates, the ANOVA results showed that not enough evidence was observed to reject the null hypothesis ($F_{(2,88)} = 2.459$, $p = .091 > .05$) meaning that there is not any significant difference among the effects of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention.

Discussion

Interpretation of the findings of the study with regard to the related literature is given in this part. The effects of story making on vocabulary retention are first addressed.

Based on the statistical analyses, not enough evidence was observed to reject the null hypothesis yielding that there is not any significant difference among the effects of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. However, the findings do not imply that the three different story making tasks did not have any influence on EFL learners' vocabulary retention since the participants of the study performed well on the vocabulary achievement test compared to the beginning of the course.

The findings of the study are in line with Lao and Krashen (2000) who presented the results of a comparison between a group of students that read literary texts and a second group that read non literary texts at a university in Hong Kong. The group who read literary texts showed improvement in vocabulary and reading comprehension. In the present study, elementary students also benefitted from story making tasks as a kind of literary activity.

Young (1996) points out to the use of children's stories to introduce critical thinking to college students. In order to provide successful language learning, Pesola (1991) views storytelling as one of the most powerful tools for surrounding the young learner with language. Wilson (1997) believes that the curriculum can improve the level of learning in the four language skills.

CONCLUSION

As it was stated in the previous sections, not enough evidence was observed to reject the null hypothesis claiming that there is not any significant difference among the effects of using label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks on EFL learners' vocabulary retention. It means that the three different story making tasks had almost the same effects on the vocabulary retention of the three experimental groups.

Pedagogical implications

Findings related to the present study may have some implications for teachers in that incorporating label extending, summarizing, and strip story arrangement tasks in the classroom can shift the focus from teacher- centered activities to learner- centered ones. It also requires collaborative work and creativity among students.

The findings have also some implications for syllabus designers. Murdoch (2002) believes that if stories are selected and exploited appropriately, they will provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses for learners at different levels of proficiency.

Suggestions for further study

Regarding the limitations of this study and the importance of some issues discussed fully throughout the study, some gaps and new ideas are found which can give good insights and pave the way for future studies:

1. This study investigated the impact of story making conditions on vocabulary retention of elementary EFL learners. Other language proficiency levels can be studied.
2. Other studies can compare other story making tasks, e.g. finding the main plot of the story, personalizing the stories and so on.
3. Other studies can investigate or compare the impact of story conditions in an oral mode.
4. The present study was confined to female students. Other studies can be carried out in coeducational or male settings.
5. The present study was confined to a private language school. Other studies can be carried out in public schools.
6. Other studies can focus on collecting qualitative data as well as quantitative one.
7. Other studies can investigate the impact of the three story conditions using a control group.

Limitations of the study

Like many other studies, the present study suffered from some limitations.

The present study was confined to a private language school in Chalous. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to EFL students in public schools. The researcher had to work just with

female students which will probably decrease the generalizability of the study to the males or coeducational situations.

REFERENCES

- Candlin, C. N., & Murphy, D. (1988). *Language learning tasks*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Celce Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as second or foreign language (3rd edition)*. The United States of America: Heinle & Heinle, a Division of Thomson Learning.
- Cho, K-S., & Choi, D-S. (2008). Are read-alouds and free reading "Natural Partners". *Knowledge Quest*, 36(5), 1-5.
- Elley, W. (1991). Acquiring literacy in a second language: the effect of book _ based programs. *Language learning*, 41, 375-411.
- Ellis, N. C. (1994). Vocabulary acquisition: The implicit ins and outs of explicit cognitive mediation. In N. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of language* (pp. 211-282). London: Academic Press.
- Ellis, R. (1995 b). Modified input and the acquisition of word meanings. *Applied Linguistics*, 16, 409-41.
- Ellis, N. C. (1997). " vocabulary acquisition: word structure, collocation, word class". In : Schmitt, Norbert & Michael Mc Carthy (eds.). *vocabulary: Description, acquisition and pedagogy*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 122-139.
- Garvie, E. (1990). *Story as vehicle: Teaching English to young children*. Clevedon: Multicultural Matters, Ltd.
- Isbell, R. (2002). *Telling and retelling stories – learning language and literacy*. *Young Children*, 57(2), 26–30.
- Krashen, S. (2004). *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Lao, C. Y., & Krashen, S. (2000). The impact of popular literature study on literacy development in EFL: more evidence for the power of reading. *System*, 28, 261-270.
- Laufer, B., & Nation, P (2001). *Passive vocabulary size and speed of meaning recognition*. *Eurosla Yearbook*. 7-28.
- Mason, B., & Krashen, S. (2004). Is form-focused vocabulary instruction worth while? *RELC Journal*, 35(2), 179-185.
- McGee, L. M., & Richgels (2000). *Literacy's beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Morrow, L. M. (2001). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write (4th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Murdoch, G. (2002). Exploiting well- known short stories for language skills development. *IATEFL LCS SIG Newsletter* 23, 9-17.
- Pesola, C. A. (1991). Culture in the elementary foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 24(4), 331–346.
- Ramirez, D.& Belmonte (2007). " Using digital stories to improve listening comprehension with Spanish young learners of English ". *Language learning and Technology Journal*, 12 (14), 1-8.

- Simpson, M.I., & Nist, S. L. (1997). *Developing vocabulary concept for college thinking* (2nd ed). New York, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Vivas, E. (1996). Effects of story reading on language. *Language learning*, 46, 189-216
- Wang, F-Y., & Lee, S-Y. (2007). Storytelling is the bridge. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 3(2), 30-35.
- Wilson, P.T., & Anderson, RC. (1986). What they don't know will hurt them: the role of prior knowledge in comprehension. In J.Orasanu (Ed), *Reading comprehension: from research to practice* (pp 31-48). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Elbaum Associates
- Wilson, J. A. (1997). *A program to develop the listening and speaking skills of children in a first grade classroom*. University of Virginia. Boode Vali. U. S department of education. Office of educational research and improvement. Educational resources information center (ERIC).
- Wodinsky,M., & P. Nation (1988) Learning from graded readers. *Reading in a foreign language*, 5 (1), 155-1.
- Yang, C.C.R (2009). A case study of the use of short stories in a junior secondary ESL classroom in Hong Kong. *The international journal of learning*, 16 (1), 35- 50.
- Young, A. (1996). Introducing critical thinking at the college level with children's stories. *College Teaching*, 44(3), 90.

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF MALE AND FEMALE CANDIDATES' ERRORS IN WRITING AND SPEAKING MODULES OF IELTS

Vahede Nosrati

MA in TEFL, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
Email: vahede.nosrati@gmail.com

Mahdieh Nafisi

MA in TEFL, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran
Email: m_nafissy@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study was set out with the aim of investigating the errors of IELTS candidates in writing and speaking modules in order to know the source or the cause of the errors. To this end, sixty IELTS candidates from Pardis Danesh Institute, Tehran, Iran, who took part in a mock IELTS test participated in the present study. To achieve the aforementioned purpose the obtained data were analyzed to identify the type and frequency of the grammatical errors as well as cohesion and coherence errors made by the participants. Moreover, a comparison was made among male and female candidates to find out the differences between the type and the frequency of their errors. In order to discover grammatical errors of the learners, the researchers followed the steps identified by Corder (1981), and in order to analyze the cohesion and coherence errors, they used Halliday and the Prague School of Linguistics' topic structure analysis approach to coherence, and Halliday and Hasan's approach to cohesion. The results indicated that inappropriate choice of noun is the most frequent error which is occurred in participants' performance regarding the grammatical analysis of the data. Furthermore, the analysis of cohesion and coherence errors indicated that candidates have more problems regarding the fluency of their utterances. And finally, data analysis revealed that although there is no great difference among male and female candidates regarding the total number of errors, male candidates made more errors than females on the whole. The findings of the present study can have implications for researchers, teachers, and learners in order to develop understanding of the second language acquisition process. Therefore, they can benefit the results by being aware of the learners' most frequent errors in the process of language learning and focus their attention on the features that may help the learners to have fewer errors in the production of the second language and assist them to become more successful language learners.

KEYWORDS: Error Analysis, Cohesion, Coherence, Grammatical Errors, IELTS Test.

INTRODUCTION

Error analysis in particular is one of the aspects of second language learning processes which has received much attention from researchers. Early researches on error analysis were focused on

collecting and classifying errors. It is unavoidable to make error in language acquisition, and making error is not seen as something negative or destructive, rather they are significant in that they are evidence of how learners acquire language. They occur when the learner is unable to self-correct, and deviates target language system (Brown, 1987).

Error Analysis is valuable and helpful in second language learning because it is a reliable indicator of the problematic areas to learners, teachers, syllabus designers, test developers, and textbook writers. Remedial exercises can be designed to focus more attention on the 'trouble shooting' areas (Keshavarz, 1999). It is a type of linguistic analysis that is concerned with the errors learners make. It involves a comparison between the errors made in the target language and that target language itself (Ellis, 2008). It is an activity to identify, classify and interpret the errors made by someone in speaking or in writing and it is carried out to gain information on common difficulties faced by someone in speaking or in writing English sentences. Early on, researches focused on learners' errors, developing procedures for identifying, explaining, describing, and evaluating them. These studies revealed that learner's errors are systematic and that they reflect the stage of the development that a learner has reached (Corder, 1967; Corder, 1974; Ellis, 2008). An important finding was that learners seem to go beyond the available input, producing errors that show they actively construct rules, which although not target like, guide their performance in the second language.

Error analysis provides teachers and researchers with a priceless source of information. It offers information on learners' errors which in turn helps teachers to correct learners' errors and also enhances the effectiveness and usefulness of their teaching. Michaelides (1990) declares that the systematic analysis of learner's errors can be of countless value to all those involved, i.e., learners, teachers, test developers, and the researchers. For teachers it can offer a clear and reliable picture of her/his learners' knowledge of the second language.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of second language learners' errors has been contended by numerous studies. According to Corder (1974), learners' errors are significant in three ways. First to the teacher, it can reveal how far the learner has progressed and what remains to be learnt. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn.

Despite the increase in scholarship devoted to error analysis (Ahmadvand, 2008; Brown, 2006; Chen, 1996; Cotton & Wilson, 2008; Darus, 2009; Jabbari & Fazilatfar, 2012; Nezami, 2012; Ying, 1987), analyzing the candidates' errors in writing and speaking modules of IELTS have received relatively little attention and also researchers did not account for the effect of gender on learners' errors. And also, there has been little research on errors in written English compared with the studies that have concentrated on reading and phonology even within the limited field of error analysis. The study to be done is supposed to shed light on the issue of error analysis, and on the second language learning process.

Purpose of the Study

Based on the literature, the study of error is of paramount importance for researchers, teachers, and learners in order to develop understanding of the second language acquisition process. There is a need for students to recognize the significance of errors which occur in their writing and speaking, to fully grasp and understand the nature of the errors made. The present study will be carried out with the aim of identifying the errors of IELTS candidates in writing and speaking modules in order to know the source or the cause of the error and how the students can learn from their mistakes in order that they will not make some errors repeatedly.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Errors comprise a significant portion of a learner's language performance and they provide important insights into the processes of second language acquisition. Explanation of errors will have to be multi-dimensional and include factors beyond the observable characteristics of the errors (Cotton & Wilson, 2008; Darus, 2009; Jabbari & Fazilatfar, 2012; Nezami, 2012). Researchers indicate that errors are caused by competence factors (lack of knowledge of the rules) rather than performance factors (fatigue and inattention). Corder (1967) defines errors as systematic deviations which occur due to the learner's still developing knowledge of the second language rule system; errors are considered as any deviation from a selected norm of language performance. There are different types of errors: global errors, local errors, developmental errors, interlingual errors, ambiguous errors, and grab bag errors (Ellis, 2008; James, 1985; Lee, 1980). Global errors are errors that affect overall sentence organization and they may significantly hinder communication, while local errors affect a single element in a sentence; previous studies revealed that errors which significantly hindered communication were of a certain type (Global errors) and those did not hinder communication were of another type (Local errors). Global errors violate the whole structure of an utterance and for this reason may make it challenging and difficult to process.

Developmental errors are errors similar to those made by children learning target language as their first language. On the other hand, interlingual errors are similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language. Ambiguous errors are those that can be classified equally well as developmental or interlingual, so they are either developmental or interlingual. And finally, those errors which are neither developmental nor interlingual are called grab bag errors (Darus, 2009; Ellis, 1994; Lee, 1980; Olsson, 1973; Richards, 1985; Wiley, 2010). Furthermore, Corder made a distinction between non-systematic and systematic errors. Nonsystematic errors appear in learners' native language. Corder names these 'mistakes' and asserts that they are not vital to the process of language teaching and learning. He uses the term 'errors' for the systematic ones, which happen in a second language.

Definition of Error Analysis

Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that is concerned with the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language and that target language itself (Ellis, 2008). It is an activity to identify, classify and interpret the errors made by someone

in speaking or in writing and it is carried out to obtain information on common difficulties faced by someone in speaking or in writing English sentences.

Carl James, in his *Errors in Language Learning and Use*, describes Error Analysis as “the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language” (James, 1998). He states that error analysis will investigate what people do not know and how they try to cope with them. Corder states that Error Analysis is different from ‘performance analysis’ in that the “performance analysis is the study of the whole performance data from individual learners, whereas the term EA is reserved for the study of erroneous utterances produced by groups of learners” (Corder 1975 cited in James 1998). It is crucial to make a distinction between error and mistake. To recognize errors and mistakes, the consistency of learner’s performance should be checked. Corder, (1967) introduces a criterion that helps to make such a distinction: it is the self-correction criterion. A mistake can be self- corrected, and modified, but an error cannot. Errors are ‘systematic,’ and are occurred repeatedly without being organized by learners. The researchers choose to work on learners’ errors and not their mistakes.

Importance of Error Analysis

At first sight, focusing on learners’ errors rather than their success may seem unusual and odd. However, focusing on errors can be useful in that they are an indicator of learner language, raising the central question of ‘why do learners make errors?’; error analysis is also useful for teachers to know what the problematic areas are in order to give remedial instructions. And finally, making errors may in fact help learners to learn when they monitor and self-correct the errors they make (Ahmadvand, 2008; Brown, 2006; Darus, 2009; Ellis, 1994; Lee, 1980; Olsson, 1973; Richards, 1985; Wiley, 2010).

In second language learning, as Corder observes, the learners’ errors are indicative of the state of the learners’ knowledge, and of the ways in which a second language is learned. Corder (1974) distinguishes three types of error according to their systematicity: Pre-systematic, Systematic, and Post-systematic errors. Other experts like Dulay and Burt (1974) classified the errors into three broad categories: Developmental, Interference, and Unique errors. Ellis (2008) argues that classification of errors helps us in diagnosing learners’ language problems at any stage of their development. Corder (1967) says that the presence of errors indicates that language learning is taking place. He points out that errors can give significant understanding into how a learner learned a language. The reasons and sources behind errors are manifold. Cooper (1977) states that “language deviations are not random but systematic and reflect an implicit hypothesis to the nature of language being learned”.

Procedures of Error Analysis

James (1998) identifies four stages for error analysis. The first stage is error detection which spots the error itself. The second stage is error location in which the informer locates the error. The following stage is error description and the learner’s language system is described. And finally, the last stage is error categorization or classification. Corder (1974, cited in Ellis 1994) suggests a complex way of getting to the problems that analysts face when trying to identify errors. Ellis states that the proposed procedure “[...acknowledges the importance of

‘interpretation’ and distinguishes three types: normal, authoritative, and plausible”. The distinctive types displayed refer to different interpretations of errors made by the analysts. Corder (cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 46) identifies five steps in error analysis which includes: collection of a sample of learner language, identification of errors, description of errors, explanation of errors, and evaluation of errors. After collecting an authentic and reliable sample of learner language, the analyzer must identify the errors. To identify errors, learners’ sentences are compared with what seem to be the normal or correct sentences in the target language which correspond with them. Sometimes this is fairly straightforward. When all the errors have been identified, they can be depicted and described. In this stage errors are described whether they are overt or covert, and then they are classified into different types. There are numerous ways for categorizing errors. One way is to classify errors into grammatical errors. Another way might be to try to identify the general ways in which the learners’ sentences differ from the target-language sentences. Classifying and describing errors are of great help to diagnose and detect learners’ language learning problems at different stages of their development (Ellis, 1997). An overt error is easy to identify because the sentence is not well-formed and there is an obvious deviation in its form, but covert errors appear in sentences which are superficially well-organized and well-formed (Corder, 1971).

The first two steps in error analysis, identification and classification, are preliminaries to the much more demanding task of explaining why errors occur. In this step sources of errors are examined. Learners’ errors can have several sources like transfer of first language knowledge into second language, overgeneralization, omission, and interlingual causes. The final stage in error analysis is error evaluation which is done with the aim of helping learners learn second language. General and local errors are distinguished here; some errors can be considered more crucial and serious (global errors) than others because they are more likely to hinder communication. Teachers, syllabus designers, and test developers will want to focus their attention on these errors.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is seeking to answer the following questions:

RQ1. What are the most frequent grammatical errors made by IELTS male and female candidates?

RQ2. What are the most frequent cohesive and coherence errors made by IELTS male and female candidates?

RQ3. Are there any significant differences regarding types and frequencies of errors among male and female candidates?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Sixty IELTS candidates who took part in a mock IELTS test participated in the present study. For the purpose of the current study, the participants’ performances on Task 2 of the writing module along with section 3 of the speaking module of the mock IELTS test were selected. The

participants were from Pardis Danesh Institute in Tehran. Some of the participants took part in the mock IELTS test in October 2013 while the others took part in the aforementioned test in January 2014. Their age range was 20-35. The participants were 30 males and 30 females.

Instrumentation

The data for the present study was the IELTS candidates' performance on Task 2 of the writing module along with section 3 of the speaking module of the mock IELTS test. The writing sections were analyzed by the researchers using error analysis methodology. Moreover, the speaking part was recorded and transcribed by the researchers followed by error analysis to realize and calculate the frequency of the errors made by the participants.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure started in October 2013 and is ended in February 2014. Sixty IELTS candidates were chosen from Pardis Danesh Institute, Tehran, Iran. First the participants took part in a mock IELTS test. Then the researchers collected their performance on the task 2 of the writing module and section 3 of the speaking module. Afterwards the researchers analyzed the content of the participants' writings. At first, they analyzed the data to discover grammatical errors of the learners by following the steps identified by Corder (1981, cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 46) in order to recognize the errors and frequency with which they were made by the participants. Subsequently in order to analyze the cohesion and coherence of the participants' performance on task 2 of writing module, the researchers uses Halliday and the Prague School of Linguistics' topic structure analysis approach to coherence, and Halliday and Hasan's approach to cohesion. The same procedure was carried out for analysis of the section 3 of the speaking module.

Data Analysis Procedure

For analyzing the collected data, the researcher followed the steps identified by Corder (cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 46) which includes: Collection of a sample of learner language, Identification of errors, Description of errors, Explanation of errors, and Evaluation of errors.

Grammar Analysis

To know the description of the grammar errors in the students' writing and speaking, the researchers identified the grammar errors, and classified them into 6 aspects: Verbs, Nouns, Conjunctions, Articles, Pronouns, and Prepositions. The following table shows the classification of the grammatical errors which have been used in this study:

Category	Subcategories					
Verbs	Missing	Tense	Singular/Plural	Incorrect Positive Form	Incorrect Negative Form	Gerunds, Infinitive, Participles
Nouns	Missing	Singular/Plural	Inappropriate Choice			
Conjunctions	Missing	Misplaced	Inappropriate Choice			
Articles	Missing	Superfluous	Inappropriate Choice			
Pronouns	Missing	Superfluous	Inappropriate Choice			
Prepositions	Missing	Superfluous	Inappropriate Choice			

Cohesion and Coherence Analysis

For analyzing learners' coherence and cohesion errors, the researcher uses Halliday and the Prague School of Linguistics' topic structure analysis approach to coherence, and Halliday and Hasan's approach to cohesion. Topic structure analysis (TSA) is an approach to analyzing coherence. It has been used to identify different categories of thematic progression, the most common being sequential progression where the rheme of one sentence becomes the theme of the next (a-b, b-c, c-d), and parallel progression where the theme of one clause becomes the theme of the next or subsequent clauses (a-b, a-c, a-d). Alternatively, in extended parallel progression, the first and the last topics of a piece of text are the same but are interrupted with some sequential progression (a-b, b-c, ad). Topic-based analysis involves analyzing the ways in which topics evolve and change over a stretch of text (Cotton & Waltson, 2008). Analysis of cohesion must include an approach which identifies the explicit lexical and grammatical items which bind a text together. The most influential approach to cohesion to date was developed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) who identified five distinct categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion (Cotton & Waltson, 2008).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study are reported in three parts. The first part of this section deals with the result of the grammatical analysis of the errors in the students' writing and speaking and calculation of the frequency with which they occur. The second part deals with the frequent cohesive and coherence errors made by IELTS male and female candidates. Finally, the third part consists of the differences regarding types and frequencies of errors among male and female candidates.

RQ1: Grammatical analysis of the errors in the students' writing and speaking performance on a mock IELTS test

The researchers identified the grammar errors, and according to Corder (cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 46), classified them into 6 features: Verbs, Nouns, Conjunctions, Articles, Pronouns, and Prepositions. Each of these categories consists of some subcategories which were analyzed and the frequency of their occurrences in the participants' performance was calculated and reported in the Table 1.

Table 1 represents the observed errors made by participants and the frequency with which they were attended to. The errors in each category are arranged from the most frequent to the least frequent one. On the whole, 948 errors in the writing and speaking performance of the participants were observed in the data. As the table presents, the error category which was most frequently attended to was the *Noun* category in which the subcategory of *Inappropriate Choice* was the most frequent error made by participants that was identified in about 14% of the errors. Making *singular/plural* error in category of Nouns occurred 135 times. *Missing Nouns* and *Missing Conjunctions* were the next two error categories which were identified in students' performance. These four error types were the ones that were presented the most in the data. All in all, most of the errors occurred in the category of *Nouns*. The second category in which the most errors were recognized was *Verbs*. *Prepositions* and *Conjunctions* were also among the errors

that have been observed the most in the analyzed data. The rest of the errors are listed in the table. As it can be seen, *Incorrect Negative Forms* is attended to less than other errors.

Table 1: The observed Grammatical Errors Made by the IELTS Candidates

N	Category	Subcategories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Nouns	Inappropriate choice <i>E.g.: They can (create) their food.</i>	140	14.7
		Singular/plural <i>E.g.: They care about their (childs).</i>	135	14.2
		Missing <i>E.g.: Get much (more) time than before.</i>	75	7.9
2.	Verbs	Tense <i>E.g.: many years ago there (are) small restaurants.</i>	57	6
		Gerunds, Infinitive, Participles <i>E.g.: The only thing they can do (to resolving) this problem is raising the cost of food.</i>	56	5.9
		Singular/Plural <i>E.g.: The teachers (wasn't) kind.</i>	50	5.2
		Missing <i>E.g.: Fast food (is) usually very delicious</i>	42	4.4
		Incorrect Positive Form <i>E.g.: To teach them how (can they) have a healthy diet.</i>	14	1.5
		Incorrect Negative Form <i>E.g.: She (don't) have to cook.</i>	6	0.6
3.	Prepositions	Inappropriate Choice <i>E.g.: It's better (to) children to rely on themselves.</i>	38	4
		Superfluous <i>E.g.: Characters of children determined (in) before 7 years old.</i>	37	3.9
		Missing <i>E.g.: It's hard to learn all (of) them.</i>	30	3
4.	Conjunctions	Missing <i>E.g.: The reality is (that) the real junk foods are fast foods.</i>	72	7.5
		Inappropriate Choice <i>E.g.: They start their school (and) their age is not good for starting school.</i>	17	1.7
		Misplaced <i>E.g.: If we ask (and) them.</i>	10	1
5.	Articles	Missing <i>E.g.: They have to go to (the) restaurant.</i>	56	5.9
		Inappropriate Choice <i>E.g.: To play (an) musical instrument.</i>	15	1.5
		Superfluous <i>E.g.: (a) small groups of</i>	14	1.4
6.	Pronouns	Missing <i>E.g.: The people must know that (they) must change this condition.</i>	46	4.8
		Inappropriate Choice <i>E.g.: Everyone could publish (their) beliefs.</i>	31	3.2
		Superfluous <i>Education, in Iran's context, (it) is an essential part of people's life.</i>	7	0.7
Total			948	100

RQ2: Analysis of Cohesive and Coherence Errors Made by IELTS Male and Female Candidates

According to topic-based structure analysis method (Watson, 2004), at the first the analyzed texts were broken into 3 units; introduction, body, and conclusion. Then in each unit, the researchers investigated the sentence structures, dependent, independent clauses, incomplete and paralleled structures, and ellipted words and sentences. In the second stage, the key concepts in each text were identified based on topic-based method; words with interactional functions (e.g. I guess) and textual functions (e.g. reasoning) were recognized. In the next stage the relationships between key concepts were detected and linked together based on the degree of the concept relatedness. Finally, the overall cohesion and coherence were measured to find out the comprehensibility and acceptability of the text. In order to analyze the candidates' coherence errors, Halliday's topic structure analysis was utilized and the sequential theme-rheme progression was identified. In the analysis of the performance of the students in the writing and speaking tests, 6 types of cohesion and coherence errors were identified and categorized by the researchers. The extracted errors included:

1. *Fluency*: It is assessed based on the candidates' errors such as mispronunciation, substitution, self-correction, using of hedges and omissions. It also refers to the comprehensiveness and appropriateness of their utterances.
2. *Cohesive devices*: It refers to the linking words or phrases in a sentence which make the text coherent. The examples of cohesive devices are however, in conclusion, hence, at last, eventually, finally, rarely, normally, at first, moreover, and further. Each one of these examples can be used to begin a sentence or to link together the sentences.
3. *Conveying the Message*: It refers to the clarity, being to the point, simplicity and intelligibility of the utterances and sentences.
4. *Logical progression*: It refers to the choice of words and sentences considered to be logical and reasonable according to the condition and situation in which they are performed.
5. *Background knowledge and Experience*: It refers to the personal experiences, bringing examples and what a person already knows about the topic.
6. *Theme-rheme Progression*: It refers to the sequential progression where the rheme of one sentence becomes the theme of the next (a-b, b-c, c-d), and parallel progression where the theme of one clause becomes the theme of the next or subsequent clauses (a-b, a-c, a-d).

Table 2: Cohesive and Coherence Errors Made by IELTS Candidates

Number	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Fluency	93	25
2.	Cohesive devices	79	21.7
3.	Conveying the Message	58	15.9
4.	Theme-Rheme Progression	52	14
5.	Logical Progression	46	12.6
6.	Background Knowledge and Experience	36	9.8
Total		364	100

Table 2 demonstrates the observed cohesion and coherence errors made by IELTS candidates and the frequency with which they were attended to. 6 types of errors were distinguished and categorized by the researchers. The errors are arranged from the most frequent to the least frequent one. In general, 364 errors of cohesion and coherence in the writing and speaking performance of the participants were identified in the data. As it is presented in the table, the error which was most frequently attended to was the *Fluency* which was recognized in 25% of the errors. Making error in usage of *cohesive devices (linking words or phrases)*, occurred 79 times. *Conveying message* and *Logical progression* were the next two error categories which were identified in students' performance. These four error types were the most frequently occurred errors discovered in the participants' performance. The rest of the errors are listed in the table. As it can be seen, the *background Knowledge and Experience* is attended to less than other types of errors.

RQ3: A Comparison of the Observed Errors and Frequencies of Errors among Male and Female Candidates

To answer the third question of the present study regarding the difference concerning the types of errors made by male and female candidates, the researchers compared male and female candidates' errors and the result is presented in table 3.

Table 3: A Comparison of the Observed Errors and Frequencies of Errors among Male and Female Candidates

Gender	Error Category	frequency	percentage
Male	Grammatical	532	40.5
	Cohesion & Coherence	163	12.4
Female	Grammatical	416	31.7
	Cohesion & Coherence	201	15.3
	Total	1312	100

As it is shown in table 3, male candidates made more grammatical errors than females, while female candidates made more cohesion and coherence errors. As it is obvious from the data represented in table 3, on the whole male participants made 695 error types while females made 617 types of errors. Totally, 1312 error types were identified in candidates' performance in which 40% of grammatical errors were male candidates' errors. On the other hand male participants made less cohesion and coherence errors than females and 15% of errors were made by females in the category of cohesion and coherence.

Discussion

As it is stated by Corder (1981), errors made by learners are significant and can provide us with important information in three ways, first of all it is important for teachers regarding the fact that error analysis can disclose how far the learners has progressed and what still remains to be learned. Secondly, the researchers will be provided by evidence of how the language is learned or acquired and what type of strategies and processes used by the language learners in discovery of the language. Finally, they are essential to the learner himself, because we can consider the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. Moreover, as it is mentioned before, according to Ellis (2008) classification of errors helps us in recognizing and analyzing learners' language problems at any stage of their development.

Besides, studying errors is of supreme significance for teachers, researchers, and learners in order to expand their understanding of the second language acquisition process. This study also aimed at identifying the errors of IELTS candidates in writing and speaking modules in order to be acquainted with the source or the cause of the error and how the students can learn from their mistakes in order that they will not make some errors repeatedly. Furthermore, the current study considered the role of gender in making errors and to see if there exist any difference regarding types and frequencies of errors among male and female candidates.

As it was indicated in the results of the grammatical analysis of the data, the error category which was most frequently attended to was the *Noun* category in which the subcategory of *Inappropriate Choice* was the most recurrent error made by participants. One probable reason for this result can be due to educational system in Iran in which the teachers and administrators yet pursue traditional approaches for grammar teaching, and despite all innovations in this field they still follow the steps and principles of GTM by using deductive approaches for teaching grammatical rules and forget to pay enough attention to pragmatic approaches and the language use which seems to play an important, essential role in learning a second language.

Another reason can be the cultural differences and the effect of first language culture, learners' unfamiliarity with the pragmatic of the target language and L1 interference that lead the learners to use inappropriate nouns in specific situations, which make their utterances unintelligible and unacceptable. Moreover, in the context of Iran's educational system, nouns usually decontextualized and represented to the learners without indication of an appropriate context in which they can be utilized.

This result is not compatible with Murrow's inference (2004), in which the result of the study revealed that errors relating to use of *Verbs* far outweighed any other category. Moreover, it concluded that Confusion between parts of speech, for example adjectives used as adverbs, was the next most common error. In addition, the result revealed that the second category in which the most errors were recognized was *Verbs* in which the subcategory of *Tense* occurred the most in participants' performance. This result is in line with Hourani's deduction (2008), in which he analyzed the common grammatical errors in the English writing and concluded that students find a difficulty when and how to use the tense and the form of the verb more frequently than other types of errors. So far, many studies have been conducted regarding the role of coherence and cohesion in pragmatics (Wolska, 2008; Witte & Faigley, 2008; Dontcheva-Navratilova & Povolná, 2009; Toolan, 2013), there seems that there is a need for inclusion of pragmatic instruction in the classrooms in order to have more comprehensible and coherent utterances.

The second part of data analysis regarding the cohesion and coherence error analysis demonstrated that the error which was most frequently attended to was the *Fluency*. This can be because of the lack of opportunities to practice the language in real context and not having enough exposure to language in use in language classes, this can happen because English in Iran is considered as a foreign language rather than a second language and outside the classrooms students will not be provided by enough chance to practice what they have learned in order to become more fluent. More prominently, as it was stated most of the language institutes still

follow traditional approaches to teaching English which focuses on accuracy rather than fluency and as a result learners may be less fluent than accurate.

Also, the result indicated that students have problems regarding *conveying the message* appropriately and *logical progression* of their utterances. This can be due to students' lack of awareness of pragmatics. This result is well-matched with Povolna (2012), who argued that pragmatic awareness approach to teaching intended to develop a gradual awareness of the difference between the foreign-language-learners' performance and that of capable users of the language, that is to say native speakers of English. Tomlinson (1994, cited in Pavolna 2012), also believed that as a result of pragmatic awareness challenging features of suitable language use can be recognized and their acquisition facilitated.

Eventually, the third part of the result section which is a comparison of the observed errors and frequencies of errors among male and female candidates demonstrated that as a whole male candidates made more errors than females, on the other hand female candidates although have less errors concerning the total number of errors but they have more cohesion and coherence errors than males. This can be because of the fact that females according to Holmes (1995), and McMillan (1977) intended to have more accurate utterances and Women's language is more indirect, less blunt, and has more prestigious forms. Also, as it is stated by Lackoff (1975) and Holmes (1995), Women used more hedges and tag questions than men which may cause this error type. Besides, Since 1970s many scholars such as Deborah Cameron, Penelope Eckert, Janet Holmes, Deborah Tannen, Robin Lakoff, and others began research in language and gender and concluded that men and women use language differently. The result of this section is in line with Saeed, Ramazan, Gujjar & Iqbal's inference (2011), who concluded that women being better language learners than men.

Like all other studies, this study also suffers some shortcomings. The main shortcoming of this study can be the limited number of participants. With larger population and analyzing more learners' performance, other problems and differences among participants can be distinguished which is worth taking into account. Besides, the participants were not homogenized and the researchers did not consider the possible differences in participants' background knowledge, their age, and level of language proficiency which may lead to dissimilar outcomes. Moreover, since the participants took part in a mock IELTS test, they may not represent their best performance because they have considered it just as a preparatory examination not a real one. The analysis of the genuine IELTS examination may supply us with a different result which is worth considering.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study sought to investigate the errors of IELTS candidates in writing and speaking modules in order to know the source or the cause of the error. The study aimed to analyze and identify the frequent grammatical errors made by male and female candidates who took part in a mock IELTS examination. Moreover, the current study attempted to examine the most frequent cohesive and coherence errors made by aforementioned participants. Likewise, this study was

conducted to indicate the possible differences regarding types and frequencies of errors among male and female candidates.

The results of the current study indicated that inappropriate choice of noun is the most frequent error which is occurred in participants' performance regarding the grammatical analysis of the data. Also, the result revealed that students have more problems in producing correct forms of nouns, verbs, prepositions and conjunctions. On the other hand, *Incorrect Negative Forms* is observed less than other errors.

Furthermore, the analysis of cohesion and coherence errors indicated that candidates have more problems regarding the fluency, comprehensiveness and acceptability of their utterances. Moreover, the last part of the data analysis revealed that there is no great difference among male and female candidates regarding the total number of errors although male candidates made more errors than females on the whole. Besides, data analysis showed that females made more cohesion and coherence errors than male candidates.

The findings of the present study can have implications for candidates, teachers, test developers and researchers. Being acquainted with the areas that they may have more difficulties and problems, candidates can concentrate on those areas and try to improve their abilities and knowledge concerning these problematic features. This can raise their awareness concerning the challenges of the language learning process. Teachers can also make use of this information in order to become aware of the second language acquisition process. They will be acquainted with the problems and difficulties that the learners may face in the process of language learning and it make them effective teachers who can equip the learners with a more efficient instruction so that the learners become aware of the significant criteria that a proficient speaker attends to while performing on writing and speaking tests.

In addition, the result of the present study can be utilized by test developers as a guide according to which they can focus on these analyzed areas in which students may have more or less problems and develop their tests according to the learners' needs. Moreover, researchers can also benefit the results of the current study by providing them with information about the learners' most frequent errors in the process of language learning and focus their attention on the features that may help the learners to have less errors in the production of the second language and assist them to become more successful language learners.

Several studies can be performed to further examine the type and frequency of the errors made by candidates. Initially, the same study can be replicated with more participants or with another framework as a base for data analysis. Also, it is worth considering role of other factors such as participants' background knowledge and their level of language proficiency, also the strategies and styles employed by the participants while performing on the tests can be taken into account. Besides, other factors such as participants' personal characteristics, their anxiety and motivation can be considered as significant issues that may affect their performance.

Finally, as it is stated by Corder (1981), learners' errors are significant not only for the teachers and researchers but also they are indispensable to the learners themselves, because it is believed that learners use making of errors as a device in order to learn.

REFERENCES

- Ahmadvand, M. (2008). *Analyzing errors of Iranian EFL learners in their written productions*. Accessed on 05/12/2013, from <http://moslem17.googlepapers.com/AnalysingerrorsofIranianEFLlearners.pdf>.
- Basturkmen, H. (2002). Clause relations and macro patterns: cohesion, coherence and the writing of advanced ESOL students. *English Teaching Forum*, 40(1), 50-56.
- Boroomand, F., & Rostami, A. A. (2013). A gender-based analysis of Iranian EFL learners' types of written errors. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 2(5), 79-92.
- Brown, A. (2006). Candidate discourse in the revised IELTS Speaking Test . National Library of Australia, cataloguing-in-publication data, *IELTS Research Reports*, 6(1), 2-3.
- Brown, D. (1987). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Prentice Hall Regents.
- Chen, J. F. (1996). Gender differences in Taiwan business writing errors. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 2(10). Accessed on 20/11/2013, from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Chen-GenderDifs/>.
- Chiu, C. (2008). An investigation of gender differences in EFL college writing. *Proceedings of the BAAL annual conference 2008* (pp. 25-26). Accessed on 20/11/2013, from <http://www.baal.org.uk/proc08/chiu.pdf>.
- Corder, S. P. (1967). The significance of learners' errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5(4), 161-169.
- Corder, S.P. (1974). *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. London: Longman.
- Cotton , F. & Wilson, K. (2008). An investigation of examiner rating of coherence and cohesion in the IELTS Academic Writing Task 2. *IELTS Research Reports*, 12.
- Darus, S., & Subramaniam, K. (2009). Error analysis of the written English essays of secondary school students in Malaysia: A case study. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(3), 483-495.
- Dulay, F., & Burt, M. K. (1972). *Theories of Second Language Learning*, Edward Anorl Publishers: London.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Fatemi, M. (2008). *The relationship between writing competence, language proficiency and grammatical errors in the writing of Iranian TEFL sophomores*. Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy's thesis, Sains Malaysia University.
- Gustilo, L., & Magno, C. (2012). Learners' errors and their evaluation: The case of Filipino ESL writers. *Philippine ESL Journal*, 8(9), 96-113.
- Halliday, M.A., & R. Hassan. (1985). *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective*. Deakin University: Victoria.
- Hamdi Asl, S., & Dabaghi, A. (2012). Gender differences in Iranian EFL students' letter writing. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 1(7), 155-169. Accessed on 27/1/2014, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/ijalel.v.1n.7p.155>.

- Hourani, Y., & Taiseer, M. (2008). *An Analysis of the Common Grammatical Errors in the English Writing made by 3rd Secondary Male Students in the Eastern Coast of the UAE*. Masters' thesis for Institute of Education of the British University in Dubai.
- Jabbari, A. A., & Fazilatfar, A. M. (2012). The role of error types and feedback in Iranian EFL classrooms. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(1), 135-148. Accessed on 27/1/2014, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v2n1p135>.
- Jalali, H., & Shojaei, M. (2012). Persian EFL students' developmental versus fossilized prepositional errors. *The Reading Matrix*, 12 (1), 80-97.
- James, C. (1998). *Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis*. London: Longman.
- Keshavarz, M. D. (1999). *Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis*. Tehran: Rahnama Press.
- Khodabandeh, F. (2007). Analysis of students' errors: The case of headlines. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 3(1), 6-21.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M. (1991). *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. London: Longman.
- Lee, N. (1980). Notions of error and appropriate corrective treatment. *Papers in linguistics and language teaching*, 13, 55-69.
- Murrow, P. (2005). Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing - indicators for curricula enhancement. Accessed on 1/2/2014, from <http://2010.matsue-ct.ac.jp/tosho/kiyou40/pdf/k-report02.pdf>.
- Nezami, A., Najafi, M. (2012). Common error types of Iranian learners of English. *English Language Teaching*, 5 (3), 160-170. Accessed on 1/2/2014, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n3p160>.
- Olsson, M. (1973). The effects of different types of errors in the communication situation. *Journal of Svartvik*, 1, 53-161.
- Richards, J. C. (1985). *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. London: Longman.
- Saeed, A., Ramazan, M., Gujjar, A., & Iqbal, J. (2011). Gender Differences and L2 Writing. *Language in India*, 11(7), 1-10.
- Tahririan, M. H. (1986). Error awareness and advanced EFL learner's performance. *RELC Journal*, 17 (2), 41-54. Accessed on 20/12/2013, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/003368828601700203>.
- Watson, R., Thienpermpool, P., & Keyuravong, S. (2004). Measuring the coherence of writing using topic-based analysis. *Assessing Writing*, 9(2), 85-104.
- Wiley, J., & Sons, L. (2010). Grammatical and context-sensitive error correction using a statistical machine translation framework. Published online in *Wiley InterScience* <http://interscience.wiley.com>.
- Ying, S. Y. (1987). *Types of errors in English compositions by Chinese students: A research for interlanguage*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Zhang, S. (2007). Analysis and classifications of common errors in spoken and written English caused by Chinese university students' lack of English grammatical knowledge. *US-China Foreign Language*, 5(5), 1-5.

LOGICAL MARKERS IN NEWSPAPER OPINION COLUMNS

Shahla Hosseini

*Khouzestan Department of Education and Training
Email: shahla.news@gmail.com*

Nadia Mayahi

*Sama Technical and Vocational Training College,
Islamic Azad University, Mahshahr Branch,
Mahshahr, Iran
Email: nadiamayahi@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to identify the distribution of logical markers according to cross-cultural or cross-linguistic preferences. The corpus of this study consisted of 240 opinion columns of three Persian newspapers (IRAN, Hamshahri and Ettelaat) and two English ones (New York Times and Independent). Different logical markers were highlighted in the texts and classified based on the Dafouz-Milne's (2008) taxonomy of metadiscourse markers. The results showed that logical markers are present in English and Persian newspapers' opinion columns, but there are variations as to the distribution. The results has implications for columnists and gives them ideas on how to logical markers effectively to convince their audience by presenting the propositional material in a way that the audience find more convincing. It can also be useful for Persian students of English who have to pass courses on journalistic texts at university and it is necessary for them to know different kinds of metadiscourse markers.

KEYWORDS: Logical markers; cross-cultural; cross-linguistic

INTRODUCTION

In written genres, writers try to guide and direct readers through the text. Newspapers, especially the opinion columns have a wide audience. So columnists try to persuade their readers to share the writer's views using certain features called discourse markers. Logical markers as a kind of metadiscourse marker helps readers to comprehend the text better. They express semantic and structural relationships between discourse stretches and help readers to interpret pragmatic connections by explicitly signaling additive (and, further more), adversative (but, however), consecutive (so, therefore), and conclusive relationships (finally, in sum).

Although metadiscourse markers have been studied in a number of different contexts, little attention has been given to news discourse, and especially to logical markers which can help to persuade readers in English and Persian opinion columns. Newspaper columns are some of the most adequate examples of persuasive writing (Connor, 1996, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008).

Logical markers are used to help readers decode messages, share the writer's views, and reflect

the particular conventions that are followed in a given culture and play a crucial role in the construction and attainment of persuasion. Textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers contribute toward the overall persuasiveness of a text (Dafouz-Milne, 2008). There is no study on logical markers in Persian newspapers. The present study provides insights into the use of logical markers by using a large corpus of English and Persian opinion columns.

LITRATURE REVIEW

Newspaper opinion columns

Mass media is a term used to denote a section of the media specifically designed to reach a very large audience such as the population of a nation. Mass media has become one of the principal means through which people gain access to a large part of our information about the world, as well as to much of our entertainment. Newspaper is a kind of mass media. "Newspaper discourse is one of the most persuasive writing in all countries, setting standards for written persuasion" (Connor, 1996, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008, p. 96). Shams (2007) believes that newspapers educate by going beyond basic facts in the in-depth analysis of columns, commentaries and editorials; and they provides a print marketplace for advertisers and prospective customers.

The online and print editions of newspapers share some defining features. First, newspapers are made of diverse content. In addition, they feature editorials, letters to the editor, movie listing, horoscopes, comics, sports, film, interview, recipes, advice column, opinion column, classified advertisement, and a host of other material. Second, newspapers are conventionally packaged. Both the print and online versions are organized according to the content. Third, newspapers are local. Fourth, more than any other medium, newspapers serve as a historical record, and fifth, newspapers are timely (Dominick, 2009).

Newspapers vary in terms of circulation. Circulation is the total number of a newspaper distributed to subscribers and vendors in one day. Some newspapers are nationally published; some are published locally. Some newspapers are published twice a week, once a month, four times a year, or even less often. However, most newspapers are published every day (daily newspapers). Also newspapers differ in focus. General-circulation newspapers print materials of interest to a broad audience, while special-interest papers target a more specific audience (Shams, 2007).

Newspapers offer their readers an opportunity to express their opinions on current events. Columns refer to a series of articles by the same person appearing on a regular basis in a newspaper and present the person's personal opinion on different issues. They are views behind the news written by people who take an interest in explaining behind-the-scene events. Singular voice (they use the personal "I") is used in columns. Columnists are either staff members of the newspaper or syndicated columnists who write for different newspapers. They may talk about their personal interests and personal agenda. They also have their own styles. Some try to be funny; others are very serious and use a very formal style (Shams, 2007).

All news is subjective. Personal columns make this subjectivity overt. Personal columns work when the voice speaks in particularly original tones. They may be witty, controversial, culturally eclectic, conversational, whimsical, ironic, confessional, authoritative, subversive, and irritating. The reader enters into a kind of relationship with the writer. Personal column styles, language, and tones are also appropriate to their newspapers. There are many forms of personal columns. They may be straight opinion or involve a small amount of journalistic research (Keeble, 1998). One of the major columns of newspapers is opinion column. They target a wide audience and are among the most persuasive writing in all countries (Reah, 1998).

When reading an editorial or an opinion column, it is helpful to imagine that the writer is engaged in a debate with his or her readers. The writer is trying to persuade readers or convince them that a certain point of view is the correct one. There are, however, important differences between editorials and opinion columns. An editorial is generally written on behalf of the entire newspaper. It represents the point of view of not just the writer, but of the newspaper at large. In reality, of course, not everyone at the paper will agree with any given editorial. But in principle, an editorial speaks for the newspaper as an institution, not just the person who has written it (Petroce, 2008)

Columnists need to use the propositional material in a way that their audience will find most convincing and attractive; Moreover, writers have to create a credible textual persona or ethos and develop an appropriate attitude towards their readers and the claims they present, if they want to be successful in persuading their readers. Metadiscourse markers play a crucial role in the construction of this textual persona (Dafouz-Milne, 2008, p. 96).

Logical markers

Metadiscourse markers are a kind of cohesive devices that help to establish relationships between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). They shape the writers' arguments to the needs and expectations of their target readers. Metadiscourse helps organize, engage the audience, and signal the writer's attitude. It is the author's overt or covert presence into the discourse to inform and to shape the reader's thoughts (Crismore, 1984, p. 280). Coherence relations that hold together different parts of the discourse are partly responsible for the perceived coherence of a text. Coherence is achieved by different means. According to Taboada (2006) discourse markers guide the text receiver in the recognition of those relations. In order to be successful, the writer needs to operate at two levels: the level of text (discourse) in which the writer supplies information about the subject of the text, and the level of metatext (metadiscourse) in which the writer does not add any propositional material but helps readers organize, classify, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material.

A variety of metadiscourse taxonomies have been proposed (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Dafouz, 2003; Hyland, 1998; Vande Kopple, 1997). Most of these taxonomies organize the linguistic units under the functional headings of textual discourse - the organization of discourse - and interpersonal metadiscourse - the writer's stance towards both the content in the text and the potential reader.

Dafouz-Milne (2008) studied both textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers. She included the following macro-categories: hedges, certainty markers, attributors, attitude markers, and commentaries. She further divided the category of hedges up to three subcategories: epistemic verbs, probability adverbs, and epistemic expressions. The results showed that hedges were the most common category of interpersonal metadiscourse markers in both British and Spanish texts. Dafouz-Milne concluded that the critical factor in producing a successfully persuasive text is to skillfully combine both expressions that weaken the argument (i.e; hedges) and those that strengthen it (i.e; attitudinal markers or certainty markers).

Logical markers as a category of textual metadiscourse markers express semantic and structural relationships between discourse stretches, and help readers interpret pragmatic connections by explicitly signaling additive, adversative, and conclusive relationships in the text. Vande Kopple calls them connectives which function as signposts to guide readers that construct appropriate representations in memory. They help show readers how the parts of texts are related to one another (Vande Kopple, 1997, p. 2).

In academic writing, there are terms or phrases that express the logical relationships between different things. These important *signposts* serve as signals for the meaning of the text and the writer uses them to organize the text in order to make his point clear. These words are called linking words, connectors, discourse markers or signal words. Linking words (also called transitional devices, logical connectors or connecting words) help the reader follow the logical meaning and structure of the text (Vande kopple, 1997).

Hyland and Tse (2004, p. 168) categorize logical markers in terms of transitions and frame markers. Dafouz-Milne (2008, p.97) states that logical markers express semantic and structural relationships between discourse stretches. Characteristically, connectives are not syntactically integrative elements in the clause; they are peripheral to it. Connectives serve to make that relationship obvious so that the reader may interpret it in accordance with the writer's intended meaning (Rahman, 2004, p. 45). Martin and Rose (2003, p. 110) state that "conjunctions serve as logical connections between figures, adding them together, comparing them, sequencing them in time, or explaining their causes, purposes or conditions".

A few studies have been done on logical markers. Dorgeloh (2004) examined the use of sentence-initial *and* in Modern English written language as compared to Early Modern English. He argued that the function of the discourse marker *and* in interactive discourse applies to connecting written sentences as well, and the reluctance with which it is used today in most written registers has not evolved entirely by chance. Results showed that the use of sentence-initial conjunction varies largely across genres. Findings also have relevance for the relation between discourse coherence and discourse type. While *and* potentially supports speaker continuity both at an ideational and at a pragmatic level, a written discourse type defined by a pragmatic function, such as the argumentative or expository type prevailing in modern science, apparently requires connections to be more explicit and semantic in kind. At various stages in the analysis, it has become obvious that quantitative data are not always sufficient to determine the discourse function of a particular linguistic phenomenon.

Yeung (2009) investigated the meaning and use of *besides* by studying expert corpora, dictionary definitions, and examples, as well as comparing and contrasting the experts' use with that of the Hong Kong Chinese learners of English. Yeung believes that the use of connectives has always been a trouble spot for Second Language Learners of English. There may be various reasons for this, one of them is the lack of awareness of how *besides* functions as a discourse marker. The study showed that connectives should be understood not only in terms of their semantic meanings but are better grasped through an appreciation of their pragmatic and stylistic functions in actual contexts of use.

Waring (2009) studied the adverb *also* with the aim to investigate the intricate operation of *also* in actual interaction. The actual interaction dealt with in this article pertains specifically to the institutional contexts of graduate seminar and television forum, where the central activity concerns the exchange of ideas or pursuit of positions. The supplementary data set included seven sessions of roundtable discussions on current affairs. He focused on the semantic features of *also* (i.e. additive and likewise) which are strategically deployed to accomplish different interactional goals in either a disjunctive or a disaffiliative environment. He showed that the additive feature of *also* can be activated to function in a disjunctive environment to achieve the appearance of coherence, and accordingly, to legitimize one's speaking rights. In addition, the semantic meanings of *also* are strategically employed to build coherence and to modulate the force of one's contribution in specific sequential environments. He stated that *Also* functions at the level of discourse.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are logical markers used in Persian and English opinion columns?
2. Is there any significant difference in using logical markers in Persian and English opinion columns?

METHODOLOGY

In this study, logical markers in opinion columns of English and Persian newspapers are compared in order to explore how these markers are distributed according to cross-cultural or cross-linguistic preferences.

Dataset

The corpus in this study consisted of five newspapers, three Persian newspapers (*Ettelaat*, *Hamshahri*, and *IRAN*) and two English ones (*New York Times* and *Independent*) all of which were chosen according to their status and the political and rhetorical influence they exert in their respective national cultures. The opinion columns of these newspapers which covered social and cultural, economics, and politics topics were investigated. Generally 240 columns were analyzed: One hundred-twenty opinion columns of the Persian newspapers which were published during January and February 2009 and 120 opinion columns of the English newspapers published during January and February 2009 were selected. This quantity was assumed to be adequate to allow the researcher to make valid generalizations.

Instrumentation

A contrastive analysis was made between the opinion columns of Persian and English newspapers in the use of logical markers as pragmatic devices. Dafouz-Milne taxonomy (2008) was used as the theoretical framework for the selection of these two metadiscourse devices which covers the functional division of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. This division has offered a variety of subcategories covering both the pragmatic functions of metadiscourse markers and the linguistic devices used to carry out such functions. Opinion columns are a subgenre of persuasive texts (Van Dijk, 1988, as cited in Dafouz-Milne, 2008) and their final aim is to convince the audience by means of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers.

Procedure

A sample of 240 opinion columns from five English and Persian newspapers was selected for the study. The selected Persian newspapers were *Ettelaat*, *IRAN*, and *Hamshahri* and the English press was *New York Times* and *Independent*. To reduce the impact of time and possible changes in the writing styles, the English and Persian columns (120) published between January and February 2009 were selected. From each English newspaper, 60 texts were selected during two months. But, for the Persian counterparts, because there were three newspapers, the first twenty issues of each newspaper during two months were selected for the analysis.

The electronic version of the English newspapers and the hard copy of the Persian newspapers were used. Initially, the opinion columns, either obtained directly from the electronic versions of the relevant newspapers or manually, were scanned and converted into Rich Text format. Then, word count was run on the corpus to have a rough estimate of the quantity of the data. Since the columns in Persian could not be converted into Rich Text, they were counted twice manually. Next, the texts were carefully read three or four times in order to identify the linguistic signals in focus and key signals that characterize logical markers. To analyze the data quantitatively, the frequency of the two categories across each dataset was calculated. About 20 percent of the data was analyzed for the inter-rater reliability and agreement was reached accordingly. Also, for the sake of intra-rater reliability, the data was analyzed two times within about one month interval. Having analyzed the data and presenting the frequencies, in order to see if the possible differences are statistically significant, *chi-square* analysis was administrated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative analysis reveals that the texts written in Persian used a higher number of logical markers than did the texts in English (Persian, $n=7087$, English, $n=4879$). While Persian and English both relied more on logical markers for coherence, Persian managed to overtake English in the use of logical markers. On the whole, the statistical analysis showed that the differences between the two languages were statistically significant (Table 1). The fact is that the difference between the two languages may show that Persian tends to go greater lengths establishing coherence in the text, hence providing more guidance for the readers to comprehend the purpose of the text.

Table 1: Logical markers in English and Persian Newspapers

Total textual markers	Word count	Logical markers (%)
English	92,214	4879 (2.5)
Persian	81,152	7087 (3.9)
Chi-square		407.426

Critical value= 3.8415

A closer investigation of the two languages is possible if the *subcategories* of the respective metadiscoursal elements are also taken into account. As Table 2 shows, the two languages differ in the way they prioritize the respective subcategories. English capitalizes maximally on the 'additive' (61.74%) and minimally on the 'conclusive markers' (0.66%). Persian also uses 'additive' (82.4%) as the first priority, which is more frequent than its English counterpart. In fact, Persian texts abound in the use of additive markers (n=5842) to link ideas.

Table 2: Logical markers in English and Persian Newspapers

Total logical devices markers	Word count	Additive (%)	Adversative (%)	Consecutive (%)	Conclusive (%)
English	92,214	2989 (61.74)	1412 (29.16)	408 (8.42)	70 (0.66)
Persian	81,152	5842 (82.4)	742 (10.46)	471 (6.6432)	32 (0.45)
Chi-square		3447.754	208.403	4.515	14.157
Differences		p<0.05	p=0	p<0.05	p=0

Critical value= 3.8415

As a general rule, it seems that both languages find 'additives' central to text's persuasiveness. Also, Persian texts use conclusive markers as the last priority which is slightly less frequent than its English counterpart. English texts almost make greater use of conclusive elements. Furthermore, it is revealed (Table 2) that English and Persian assume the second place for adversatives. But English writers use these markers more frequently than Persian ones, so the English texts prefer the use of adversatives (n=1412) to construct arguments. Also, both corpora used consecutive markers as the third priority, and Persian texts used more consecutive markers than English ones. The analysis, generally speaking, shows that the differences between the Persian and the English writers involve the use of all logical markers with greater distinction in the use of additives and adversatives. The *chi-square* analysis revealed that the difference was significant for the respective markers. On a general level, the quantitative analysis reveals that the texts written in *Ettelaat* used a high number of logical markers than the texts in *Hamshahri* and *IRAN* (*Ettelaat*, n=3828, *IRAN*, n=1876, *Hamshahri*, n=1383).

Table 3: Logical markers in Persian Newspapers

Total Textual Markers	Word Count	Logical markers (%)
Hamshahri	18,316	1383 (7.5)
IRAN	25,403	1876 (7.38)
Ettelaat	37,433	3828 (15.22)
Chi-square		1415.462

Critical value= 3.8415

Within the English corpus, again, variations were observed in using logical markers in *New York Times* and *Independent*, and this variation was statistically significant. Table 4 exhibits the related figures.

Table 4: Logical markers in English Newspapers

Total Textual Markers	Word Count	Logical markers (%)
New York times	40,958	2256 (5.5)
Independent	51,256	2623 (5.11)
Chi-square		27.606

Critical value= 3.841

The quantitative analysis reveals that on a global level, both English and Persian texts in this corpus include a great number of logical markers. The presence of logical markers is natural since these items function as connectors providing cohesion to the texts because without these connective devices, texts would be unreadable. Comparing the total number of logical markers by both sets of writers, the study found that Persian texts use more logical markers than English ones. The fact that the difference between the two languages is more salient in the use of logical markers may show that Persian texts tend to establish more coherence in the texts, so they provides more guidance for the reader to comprehend texts better.

In spite of this quantitative difference, there is nevertheless an interesting difference in the distribution of logical subcategories included in this study. Statistically speaking, the difference in the use of the first two subcategories (i.e., additive and adversative markers) is considerable. The analysis showed that the Persian texts had a significantly greater number of additive discourse markers than the English texts. The results for the Persian writers may show Persian rhetorical conventions, which seem to favor a progressive argumentation strategy, building up evidence of the same type, clause by clause, and hence, the need for many additive markers.

Note the following examples – from the Persian and the English data – and notice the argumentation involved in the English sample.

(1) Persian:

Banabarin vazifeyearab va keshvarhaye mosalman ast ke a faghat be khatere anche dar ghaze rokh dadeh, balke be khatere hefze amniyat, movzee motefavet **va** behtar az gozashte etekhaz konnand **va** in vahdate kamel tamamiye javame arbi **va** eslami ra dar yak didgahe moshtarak mitalabad; melati ke bayad dar moghabele in dardha **va** khatarat beistad **va** dar asase esteratezhee khod tajdide nazar konad ta chashm andazi jedi ra baraye moghabele ba tajavozate ehtemali tarsim konad **va** bedanad ke amniyate eslami dar khatar ast.

(2) English:

Who owns this hotel? The struggle for hegemony over the modern Arab world is as old as Nasser's Egypt. But what is new today is that non-Arab Iran is now making a bid for primacy — challenging Egypt **and** Saudi Arabia. Iran has deftly used military aid to **both** Hamas **and** Hezbollah to create a rocket-armed force on Israel's northern **and** western borders. This enables Tehran to stop **and** start the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at will **and** to paint itself as the true protector of the Palestinians, as opposed to the weak Arab regimes.

English writers seem to favor a progressive argumentation strategy, building up evidence of the same type, word by word, and hence, the need for many additive markers. But comparing the use of additive and adversative markers in the two corpora, it was found that both text types rely on more additive markers than adversative markers to link ideas (e.g. *and/va*, *moreover/alave bar in*, *furthermore/alave bar in ...*). Persian texts use the additive connector *va* more than other additives, and English texts use the additive connector *and* more than other additives. A grammatical explanation of the high presence of additive markers in the Persian and English corpora could be the average length of sentences; English and Persian writers prefer to produce longer sentences conjoined by additive markers. The two examples below extracted from the data exhibit how English and Persian writers use the additive markers in order to make long sentences. The English writer uses the additive marker *and* to join the phrases in a progressive argumentation.

(3) English:

Obama shot back at a Virginia meeting of House Democrats — the very lawmakers who had saddled the package with party favors **and** shipped it off to the hostile Senate. He accused the Republicans of having “false theories of the past” **and** “phony arguments,” of playing “petty politics” **and** “gamesmanship” **and** just plain “nit-picking.” He seemed hostile **and** snaky. It wasn’t a good look for a man who promised to change the tone in Washington.

The Persian author constructs his rationale listing a set of reasons that head in the same direction by means of additive markers: *and/va*, *in addition to/alave bar in*, *also/ hamchenin*. Comparing the second subcategory (adversative markers), English texts included more adversative markers than their Persian counterparts.

(4) Persian:

(...) *in siyaset mitavanad chand tasir bar eghtesad keshvar begozarad, hazineh tamamshodeh kalaha dar keshvar ra kahesh midahad ke be kaheshesh nerhke tavarom khahad shod va_sababe afzayesh taghaza baraye niroye kar va afzayesh forsathaye shoghli jadid dar keshvar mishavad ke be kaheshesh nerkhe bikari komak khahad nemod. Alave bar inha in siyaset mitavanad afzayesh dastmozdha ra ba afzayeshesh bahrevari motanaseb konad ke yek siyasete zede tavaromi mahsub migardad.*

Regarding consecutive markers, Persian writers build more on consecutive devices than the English ones, but the difference was not significant. The frequent consecutive marker which was used by English writers was *so* which was followed by *therefore* and the more frequent one which was used by Persian writers was *banabarin*. The example below extracted from the data shows how the English author builds his argument on the Obama's response to the economic crisis using a contrastive approach and consequently employing the adversative marker *but*.

(5) English:

(...) So far the Obama administration's response to the economic crisis is all too reminiscent of Japan in the 1990s: a fiscal expansion large enough to avert the worst, **but** not enough to kick-start recovery; support for the banking system, **but** a reluctance to force banks to face up to their losses. It's early days yet, **but** we're falling behind the curve.

Regarding conclusive devices, the English texts make use of conclusive markers twice more than the Persian texts. This shows that English writers reach a conclusion when they start an argument

but Iranian writers only consider the connection of ideas. The examples below mark the differences between the two languages. The English author uses the conclusive marker *all in all* and *after all* and *in any case* to conclude the discussion.

(6) English:

All in all, the centrists' insistence on comforting the comfortable while afflicting the afflicted will, if reflected in the final bill, lead to substantially lower employment and substantially more suffering. But how did this happen? I blame President Obama's belief that he can transcend the partisan divide — a belief that warped his economic strategy. **After all**, many people expected Mr. Obama to come out with a really strong stimulus plan, reflecting both the economy's dire straits and his own electoral mandate.

(7) English:

The teens — ranging from sixth graders to high school seniors — come to the center for a variety of reasons. Some do so because they live in overcrowded apartments, others because they need a quiet place to study or want help with their homework, and still others because they want to hang out with their friends. With its open door policy, it may seem that anyone — even a teen who might be a bad influence — might frequent the center, but Reyes said center staffers discourage that by acting in an unwelcoming manner toward a teen who is using bad language or engaging in unacceptable behavior. "We don't tolerate it, and they go out," Reyes said. In some cases, she might try to get the teen help, by hooking them up with a drug and alcohol program or by just talking to their parents. **In any case**, her main goal is to make the center a positive option for teens.

In the above example, the author explains teens' reasons to come to center and the services that the center staffers present to them; then he concludes center manager's aim by using the conclusive marker *in any case*.

(8) Persian:

In gone tadabir mitavanad chehre karihe esraeel ra bar jahaniyan ashkar konad; chehreye yak eshgalgare ghatel ke kodakan ra hadaf gerefte va ba be atash keshidane amakene maskoni be vasileye bombhaye fosfori, jang ra edame dad east. Hameye inha ba hamkariye kasani anjam shod east ke dar kenare in rejim istadeand va dam bar nemiavarand. Banabarin vazifeye arab va keshvarhaye mosalman ast ken a faghat be khatere anche dar ghaze rokh dade, balke be khatere hefze amniyate mosalmanan, movzee motafavet va behtar az gozashte ettekhez konnand **va** in vahdat kamele tamamiye javame arabi va eslami ra dar yek didgah moshtarak mitalabad; melati ke bayad dar mogabele in dardha va khatarat beistad va bar asase esteratezhiye khod tajdide nazar konad ta chashm andazi jedi ra baraye moghabele ba tajavozate ehtemali tarsim konad va bedanad ke amniyate eslami dar khatar ast, aya chenin kari anjam midahand?

In the above example, the Persian author could use the conclusive marker *behar hal* (in any case) instead of *va* (and). This shows that the Persian authors interested in additive markers, even sometimes, use this marker in a wrong place.

CONCLUSION

This study has presented quantitative and qualitative data on the presence of logical markers in a corpus of Persian and English opinion columns. Regarding similarities, the study reveals that logical markers are present in both English and Persian texts, although there are variations regarding their distribution. As Dafouz-Milne (2008) states that these similarities can be

attributed to the newspaper-genre characteristics of opinion columns that seem to contribute to the national culture and exhibit certain uniformity across languages. Concerning differences, this study suggests that there is some variation across languages in the construction of opinion columns. The findings showed that Persian writers used more additive markers than English ones and concerning the second subcategory of logical markers, i.e. adversative markers, English writers used more of these markers than Persian ones. As Dafouz (2003) proposed differences in the use of additive and adversative markers may be due to the way cultures construct argumentative texts. Persian authors add justification to the original idea via additive markers. In contrast, the English authors make a higher use of adversative markers in order to contrast the pros and cons of an argument which is stated in an opinion column.

In this study, logical markers in opinion columns of international and Persian newspapers have been studied. The results gained from the present study are useful for columnists. Opinion column is a kind of persuasive writing, so the columnists should be able to convince their readers that her or his opinions are correct. In order to convince their audience, they should present the propositional material in a way that the audience find more convincing. Metadiscourse markers, especially logical markers can be useful in this way.

There are some important limitations in this study: a) the number of English and Persian newspapers was not equal, initially, three English newspapers (Independent, New York Times, and Washington Post) and three Persian newspapers (Iran. Hamshahri, and Ettelaat) were chosen, but because of the president elections, the link of Washington Post was cut, and two English newspapers with three Persian ones were compared.

There are various textual reasons that were not analyzed in this study (the topic, the type of newspaper, the number of newspaper, and the columnist). Thus, further studies by using a larger corpus could offer more insights into the use of logical markers. Logical markers can also be studies focusing on different disciplines and genres and this may involve other subjects.

REFERENCES

- Crismore, A. (1984). The rhetoric of textbooks: metadiscourse, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 16(3), 279–296.
- Dafouz, E. (2003). Metadiscourse revisited: a contrastive study of persuasive writing in Professional discourse, *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*, 11, 29-52.
- Dafouz-Milne, E. (2008). The pragmatic role of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse markers in the construction and attainment of persuasion: Across-linguistic study of Newspaper discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40(4), 95-113.
- Dominick, J. R. (2009). *The dynamics of mass communication (10th Ed): Media in the digital age*. New York: Mc Graw Hill.
- Dorgeloh, H. (2004). Conjunction in sentence and discourse: sentence initial *and* and Discourse structure. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 1761-1779.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.

- Hyland, K. (1998). Exploring corporate rhetoric. Metadiscourse in the CEO's letter. *Journal of Business Communication*, 35(2), 224-245.
- Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(2), 156-177.
- Keeble, K. (1998). *The newspapers hand book*. New York: London.
- Martin, J.R., & Rose, D. (2003). *Working with discourse: Meaning beyond the clause*. London: Continuum.
- Petroce, M. (2008). Analytic writings. Retrieved November 1, 2008 from <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3090-e.htm>.
- Rahman, M. (2004). Aiding the reader: The use of meta-linguistic devices in scientific discourse. *Nottingham Linguistic Circular*, 18, 30-48.
- Reah, D. (1998). *The language of newspapers*, Routledge: London.
- Shams, M. R. (2007). *Reading English newspapers*. Tehran: Jangal.
- Taboada, M. (2006). Discourse markers as signals (or not) of rhetorical relations. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38, 567-592.
- Vande Kopple, W. J. (1997). Refining and applying views of metadiscourse. *Paper presented at the 48th Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Phoenix, Arizona, USA.
- Waring, H. Z. (2009). Also as a Discourse Marker: its use in disjunctive and disaffiliative environments. *Discourse Studies*, 5(3), 415-431.
- Yeung, L. (2009). Use and misuse of besides: A corpus study comparing native speakers' and learners' English. *System* 37, 330-342.

THE EFFECT OF SELF DIRECTED LEARNING STRATEGIES ON INTROVERT VS. EXTROVERT IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

Amir Reza Nemat Tabrizi, PhD

Department of English Language, Payame Noor University, I. R. of Iran
arnemati@pnu.ac.ir

Narges Forouzan, MA student

Department of English Language Teaching, Payame Noor University, Qeshm, I. R. of Iran
n.forouzan912@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the effect of self directed learning (SDL) strategies on introvert and extrovert Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension. To this end, 20 extrovert and 20 introvert students were selected from among a total population of 75 intermediate EFL students based on Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) (1964). Twenty students were also put into the third group as the control group. While in the control group we focused on Teacher Directed Learning (TDL), in the experimental groups we focused on explicit teaching of SDL strategies, in the course of teaching reading. The IELTS Reading Test was administered as the pretest and posttest before and after the study, which took 16 sessions in six weeks. The results of the study showed that the experimental groups outperformed the control group. It was also shown that SDL strategies had a more significant impact on introvert – rather than extrovert - students' reading comprehension. We hope that language teachers try to consider the personality types of their students in the course of pursuing their teaching objectives.

KEYWORDS: Self directed learning strategies, reading comprehension, extrovert, introvert

INTRODUCTION

In today world classes learners are different and so have different goals and learn in different ways (Brown, 1987). Therefore, teachers may not have the sufficient knowledge to handle all these differences. Handling such classes exacts techniques and strategies. One way to solve this problem could be allowing the learners to accept the responsibility of their own learning which, according to Hiemstra (1994), could lead to autonomy. It is in such a context that language-learning strategies (LLSs) have emerged as a means of achieving learner autonomy in the process of language learning (Benson & Voller, 1997; Oxford, 1990). A number of researches have shown the significant contribution of language learning strategies to effective language learning (Cohen & Weaver, 1998; Oxford, 1996). The belief is that learners need to act independently in order to improve their informational needs. Recently, the significance of self-directed learning (SDL) strategies, which are part of (language) learning strategies, is coming to vogue.

Merriam and Caffarella (1999) confirm that SDL has been a major focus of adult education since last decades.

Over the last few decades, we have witnessed an influential shift within the field of education, in general, and language teaching and language learning, in particular resulting in greater stress on learners and learning process in lieu of on teachers and teaching products. Furthermore, today, as Richard and Rodger (2001) also confirm, teaching method is not considered as the most important factor in determining the success or failure of language teaching and learning. The belief is that language teachers should try to make their students less dependent on the teachers and reach a level of autonomy (Tamada, 1996; Wenden, 1991). Therefore, it is suggested that teachers take advantage of the differences in today students' learning styles and personality types for contributing to more successful learning. Emerging developments in the field of L2 teaching and learning such as distance learning, andragogy and SDL emphasize the role of the independent learner in the language learning process.

SDL has its roots in adult learning. By distinguishing learning by adults from learning by children, Knowles (1968) made a great contribution to the concept of SDL. Based on the concept of andragogy, SDL has been described as a process in which individuals take responsibility for their own learning, try to realize their own learning needs, and set goals. In such process, as Knowles (1975) put it, learners should also make decisions on resources and learning strategies and assessing the value of the learning outcomes. In their study, Costa and Kallick (2003) described self-directed learners as those who are self-managing, self-monitoring and self-modifying.

From among the factors which cause individual differences, personality types are the most important one. According to Kirby (1984) the term personality type was started to use when researchers tried to find the ways to match teaching methods and instructional materials to the need of each learner. Numerous studies (Pintrich, Roser, & Degroot, 1994; Wigzell & Al-Ansari; 1993) have found that personality types influence academic achievements. Personality is generally conceived of as composed of a series of traits such as extroversion/introversion, neuroticism/stability, and it is typically measured by means of some kind of self-report questionnaire (Ely, 1986; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964). Studies have revealed that the most eye-catching personality dimension attracting researchers' focus in the L2 field has always been extroversion/introversion (Dorneye, 2005). According to Heaven (1989) as opposed to extroverts, introverts seek ideas from internal sources such as brain storming, personal reflection and theoretical exploration. Before starting any kind of activities, introverts prefer to think about it, to work alone and enjoy solitary studying. Eysenck (1965) believes that while extroverts hate reading or studying by them, introverts are enthusiastic about books rather than people, and they enjoy planning ahead.

This study investigated the relationship between SDL strategies and introvert-extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. We believe that by knowing students' personality types, teachers are able to guess students' needs in English and can decide to select some specific activities and avoid some other unnecessary activities. The rationale behind the study was that

the personality of learners constitutes a major factor contributing to success or failure in language learning. To cite an example, Naiman, et al. (1978) investigated learners' personality factors and found out that in "good language learners," extroversion is helpful in learning the language. However, as Ellis (2008) put it, it is somewhat surprising to find that the research that has investigated personality factors and L2 learning is quite scanty and, in many ways, unsatisfactory.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

No one can deny the significant contribution of reading ability to academic, career, and life success in today world context of information. As Akyol (2006:29) put it, reading is a complex dynamic process that makes nonverbal communication between writer and reader possible. According to Rivers (1968), reading is an important skill for English language learners as it contributes effectively to language learning, especially in countries where language learners do not have the opportunity to communicate with native speakers in person but have access to the written form of that language. On the other hand, the major purpose of most of those who are involved in the field of language teaching/learning, whether they are working on reading or any other skills, is to facilitate the process of teaching/learning. It is in such a context that, nowadays, the focus of researchers has been shifted towards the importance of learners' personal differences and their possible influence on the learning process and accordingly, on learning results.

One of the main objectives in foreign language learning area is to enhance awareness about students' personal differences. As noted and as Brown (2000) also confirms, this is because the success of second language learning is due not only to cognitive factors but also to affective and personality factors of the learners, among which personality is of greater importance. It is in such a context that the paramount importance of personality factors such as introversion and extroversion has come to light in recent years (Dornyei, 2005). They play an important role in the overall performance of language learning in general and in reading comprehension performance in particular.

Findings of researchers show that considering personality factors in planning and presenting education can improve learning processes. However, besides to personality factors, the instructional options of teachers also play a crucial role in developing language learning in general and reading comprehension in particular. One of the most significant of such options is the explicit teaching of SDL strategies, chief among which are metacognitive strategies. This study addresses this area.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As Grabe (2004, p19) believes "reading comprehension implies processing efficiency, language knowledge, extensive practice in reading, cognitive resources in working memory to allow critical reflection, appropriate purposes for reading, and strategic awareness". Language learning strategies are special activities taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more

enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990). Most of language learning strategies assist learners to take responsibility in their learning process and learn independently. It is in lieu of such importance attributed to learning strategies that SDL strategies have recently received much attention of researchers. Exploration of these strategies has helped learners use processes to improve their skills in a L2 or FL. According to Oxford (1997), these strategies can be affected by variables like motivation, attitude, gender, learning styles, and personality type like extroversion and introversion. As it will be described, utilization of SDL strategies has been found to contribute effectively to learners' performance in language learning.

Busch (1982) explored the relationship between introversion-extroversion and English language proficiency of 105 adult school and 80 junior college learners in Japan. A Japanese version of EPI and a nationally standardized English test, consisting grammar / vocabulary, reading, aural comprehension, and dictation, were used to collect the data. In general, no significant relationship was found between extroversion and language measures. Only, pronunciation, a subcomponent of the oral test, was significantly and negatively correlated with extroversion.

Lightbown and Spada (2006) state that many classroom teachers believe that in second or foreign language learning, extroverts are more successful than introverts, particularly in their communicative ability. In a study, Dewaele and Furnham (2000) found that extroversion is inextricably linked with fluency in second language (L2) production. Also, based on the findings of several studies, extroverts were found to be superior to introverts in short-term memory. Among them is the finding of Eysenck (1981) that to retrieve information from long-term memory introverts need more time than extroverts do. Eysenck believes that this difference could be driven from the overarousal of the introverts. He concluded that introverts would not get the advantage in conducting the tasks that involve processing of several items of information.

Ehrman and Oxford (1995) did a study investigating the relationship between personality type and language learning strategies with a larger sample. This study also showed that extroverts are different from introverts because of using more social strategies. Furthermore, Ehrman and Oxford (1990) found an important relationship between extroversion/introversion and learner strategies of 20 adults learning Turkish as a foreign language. They found that extroverts preferred social strategies such as asking for clarification, and functional practice strategies such as seeking practice opportunities outside of class while introverts preferred to learn alone and avoid social contacts and spontaneous situations. Ehrman and Oxford mentioned that "users of social strategies tend to be open about their thoughts and feelings and... they are realistic and down-to-earth in their learning" (p.375).

Wakamoto (2000) studied the relationship between extroversion/introversion and language learning strategies of 222 Japanese EFL learners. He found that functional practice strategies and socio-affective strategies significantly correlated with extrovert learners. He also found that with introverts, he could see no preferred language learning strategies. He concluded that extrovert learners will ask for clarification more readily than introverts, so they improve their

chances for input needed for developing an interlanguage. The results of analyses of Gan's (2008) study showed that communication strategies correlated with extroversion although this correlation did not reach the significance level. In this study Gan tried to investigate the impact of extroversion on pronunciation, communication strategies, vocabulary and language patterns of L2 learners in Hong Kong. He concluded that extroverts seemed to employ communication strategies more than introverts.

Wakamoto (2007) examined the impact of extroversion/introversion and associated learner strategies on English language comprehension. He found that extrovert Japanese EFL learners used socio-affective strategies more frequently than introvert ones. Millot and Cranney (1973) in a study on relationship between personality type and learning style in reading comprehension found a significant link between personality types of introversion, intuition and perceiving and learning style. In another study, Kiany (1997) investigated the relationship between extroversion and English proficiency of 237 Iranian postgraduate students studying in English-speaking Countries. He used Persian version of EPQ; and TOEFL, IELTS, MCHE, and cloze tests. The results of his study showed a negative and a significant relationship between extroversion and TOEFL subcomponent of reading comprehension. That is, he found that more extroverted learners tended to have lower scores on the reading comprehension. This study also showed that introverts performed better than extroverts at least in receptive proficiency tests and general academic achievement.

In another study by Phongnapharuk's (2007), 25 students, who registered in the first semester of an English reading and writing course, were selected. The study involved the use of applied metacognitive strategies via CALL to enhance English reading and writing abilities. Phongnapharuk found a significant correlation between metacognition, as one of the important elements of SDL strategies, and students' English reading abilities. Later, Wichadee (2007, 2011) attempted to investigate this issue by (1) providing a learning contract which required learners to take the responsibility of their own learning, and (2) developing a SDL instructional model in order to improve reading ability of undergraduate students. He reported that the learning contract and his SDL model helped the students significantly improve their reading ability. In the two latter studies students were embroiled in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning. These studies, then, suggest that there is a direct relationship between SDL and reading comprehension. Needless to say that a number of other researches in the related literature show positive relationships between SDL and reading comprehension (Khodabandehlou et al., 2011; Kim, 2010; Zarei & Gahremani, 2010; Meshkat & Hassanzade, 2014).

But research on the relationship between SDL strategies and reading comprehension with respect to personality type is not sufficient. In the present study we addressed this gap in the related literature in a hope to put our findings into teaching practice of second language in order to facilitate the development of second language reading comprehension teaching. The present research, as such, investigated the effect of explicit teaching of SDL strategies on introvert vs. extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to identify the effect of self-directed learning strategies on introvert vs. extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension, the following research questions were raised:

Q1: Do Self-directed learning strategies have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Q2: Do Self-Directed learning strategies have any effect on introvert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Q3: Do Self-directed learning strategies have any effect on extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Q4: Do Self-directed learning strategies have more effect on introvert than extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Based on the above questions, the related null hypotheses were formulated as well.

METHODOLOGY

Design

In the present study while SDL is the independent variable, reading comprehension is the dependent variable. Introvert and extrovert personality traits are also as moderator variables. Due to the fact that two groups receive treatment while the other group (control group) does not receive such treatment and that we have pretest and posttest before and after the study, the design of this study is a pretest posttest control group design, which is a scientifically sophisticated method. It provides a method of investigation to derive basic relationships among phenomena under controlled condition or, more simply, to identify the conditions underlying the occurrence of a given phenomenon.

Participants

Sixty male and female intermediate EFL learners studying English in Parsian Language Institute in Lamerd, Fars, in Iran participated in this study. All the participants were native speakers of Persian and their age ranged between 15-20 years. These participants were selected through conducting the IELTS Reading Test from among a total population of 75 learners in the same language school. It should be noted that the number of the females was more than the male students (34 female students and 26 male students). Then, they were randomly divided into three groups: one control (n=20) and two experimental (group 1, 20 introverts; group 2, 20 extroverts).

Instrumentation

To accomplish the objectives of this study, two tests (pre and posttests) and a questionnaire regarding personality type were administered.

Testing Materials

The IELTS Reading Comprehension Test

Seventy five students were assessed through an IELTS reading comprehension test before the study in order to have 3 homogenized groups of 20 participants each, based on their scores in the

pretest. The same IELTS test was given after the study, after a-16-session practice, to see the impact of TDL and SDL strategies on the control and experimental groups. The test was similar both in format of the questions and their level for the three groups. The test consisted of 3 parts with a total of 13 questions:

Part A: included 4 items that participants were supposed to choose the most suitable heading for each section/paragraph from the list of headings.

Part B: included 5 multiple-choice questions for the participants to answer.

Part C: included 4 items for the participants to identify True/False/Not Given alternatives.

Learners had 25 minutes to answer the questions. It should be mentioned that this test was used for two reasons: Firstly because it is internationally valid, reliable and easy to administer. Second, because there are raters who can reliably and validly score students' reading skill, since experienced teachers who specifically teach IELTS preparation courses develop an ability to "guess" students mark with an acceptable degree of precision. Each subject was rated by three different raters, prior to and after the treatment sessions.

Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), (1964)

Eysenck personality inventory questionnaire was used in the present study. This measure is an internationally reliable instrument which has been translated and validated in Iran (Kiany, 1997). The EPQ is an established and popular personality test with a world-wide usage. The test consists of 90 Yes/No questions, which measure psychological factors of Extroversion (E), Neuroticism (N), and Psychoticism (P). It also has a Lie (L) scale which aims at identifying possible faking on the part of the subject. Twenty one items are related to Extroversion. However, the whole questionnaire was taken by the subjects to avoid violation of the reliability and validity. The Yes/No answers were supposed to be given based on the usual way of acting or thinking of an individual. The researcher used the Farsi version in order for the respondents to answer the questionnaire more accurately. The answer key and the standard rating scales and procedures were also provided in the battery.

Instructional Materials

Interchange3, 3rd edition

The main text book used in this research was interchange 3 by Jack C. Richards with Jonathan Hall and Susan Proctor. This textbook was used in Iran Parsian institute in Lamerd for intermediate learners and it consists of 16 units which are divided into four terms. The main purpose of this book is to integrate reading, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, speaking, and writing. Every unit of this book also contains a reading comprehension text.

Selected Reading Books

These books contain reading pages of different genres and are graded from elementary to upper-intermediate level, using the syllabus devised by Linda Lee and Eric Gundersen. Since the level of students in this study is intermediate, intermediate level was chosen. The main texts used in this research included various reading texts suitable for intermediate learners. They consisted of 15 reading texts which were taught during 16 sessions in one semester. The main

content of these texts was learning reading texts and the purpose was to learn and practice texts with various topics such as foods, communication, friendship etc. The content of the passages was the same for three groups. In experimental groups, these texts were taught to the learners by resorting to various SDL strategies.

Procedure

In the first step, the IELTS reading comprehension test was piloted with 20 students with similar characteristics to that of the main participants of the study in order to confirm its reliability. Then the test was implemented for the purpose of homogenizing the sample of the study and to make sure that the study enjoys homogeneous participants with respect to their English language reading comprehension. That is, sixty participants whose scores fell one Standard Deviation (1SD) below and above the mean were selected, out of 75, as the main participants of the study. After selecting the main participants, an attempt was made to figure out their personality type. The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire was administered and the results were analyzed. The EPQ distinguished the extrovert and introvert participants resulting 36 extroverts and 24 introverts. The participants, then, were randomly assigned into two experimental groups (20 extroverts and 20 introverts) and a control group (n=20).

While the control group underwent instruction on TDL over 16 sessions, the students in the experimental groups underwent instruction on SDL. The classes met three times in a week, each session lasting for 90 minutes. The groups were under the supervision of the same instructor. In the treatment period, SDL strategies, taken from Abdullah (2001), were used, as in the following:

The teacher assisted the participants in realizing their learning needs, setting their learning goals, applying appropriate strategies, and evaluating their learning outcomes. Throughout the course, the teacher tried to highlight the students' awareness of their responsibilities in the course of learning. During the course of experimentation the participants in the experimental groups were encouraged to participate in making decisions about what is to be learned, when and how it should be learned, and how it should be evaluated. The teacher avoided correcting the students' local errors in order to encourage SDL among them. This strategy led them to feel secure during learning. Afterwards, the teacher tried to encourage students to monitor their own learning. She made it possible by requiring them to reflect on what they did. The teacher also tried to help them to think about their needs and abilities. They were also encouraged to choose appropriate skills and strategies for their learning. The students were said to alter their learning strategy if the strategy at hand had failed.

The fact is that when we assisted students to expand awareness about their own thinking and learning processes, we were helping them think about the effectiveness of the strategies they use in reaching the goals they have set. This way, we were contributing to their metacognitive strategies. Block (2004) believes that, the use of a long-term metacognitive strategy of planning what is to be done, monitoring our progress, and evaluating the results is an effectual way of helping students take more control of their own thought and feeling processes. In order to encourage SDL in our reading classes (experimental groups), we asked learners to read and

underline unknown words without looking up the meaning in dictionary; use contextual clues to guess the general meaning; skip unnecessary unknown words; and break them up into root, prefix and suffix. We also showed them how good readers interpret their reading and what they do when they do not comprehend. We explained that good readers do not move directly through a text without stopping to consider whether the text makes sense based on their own background knowledge, or whether their knowledge can be used to help them understand confusing or challenging materials. They draw on prior knowledge and experience to help them understand what they are reading and are thus able to use that knowledge to make connections. By teaching students how to connect to text they were able to better understand what they were reading. Accessing prior knowledge and experiences is a good starting place when teaching SDL strategies, because every student has experiences, knowledge, opinions, and emotions that they can draw upon.

Finally, in order to measure the participants' reading comprehension ability after the treatment, all of the participants were given the same IELTS Reading test as the posttest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First we wanted to see if TDL has influenced the reading comprehension of the participants in the control group.

Table 1 (a): Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	E1	15.4500	20	2.62528	.58703
	E2	15.9000	20	2.61373	.58445

Table 1 (b): Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	E1&E2	20	.881	.000

Table 1 ©: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	E1-E2	-.45000	1.27630	.28539	-1.04733	.14733	-1.577	19	.131

E1: The reading comprehension of the participants in the control group before the study.

E2: The reading comprehension of the participants in the control group after the study.

As p-value (0.131) in Paired Samples Test is more than 0.05, the assumption of the equality of the average of the reading comprehension of the students in the control group before and after the study is not rejected. This means that the reading comprehension of the students in the control group do not have significant difference before and after the study. As it is shown in Table 1, there is no significant difference in the average of the reading comprehension of the participants in the control group before and after the study.

At this stage we wanted to see if SDL strategies have influenced the reading comprehension of the introvert participants in the first experimental group.

Table 2 (a): Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	F1	13.0000	20	3.24443	.72548
	F2	16.2500	20	1.83174	.40959

Table 2 (b): Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	F1&F2	20	.753	.000

Table 2 ©: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	F1–F2	-3.25000	2.22131	.49670	-4.28960	-2.21040	-6.543	19	.000

F1: The reading comprehension of the introverts in the experimental group before the experiment.

F2: The reading comprehension of the introverts in the experimental group after the experiment.

As p-value (0.000) in Paired Samples Test is less than 0.05, the assumption of the equality of the average of the reading comprehension of introvert students in the two groups before and after the study is rejected. This means that the reading comprehension of the introverts in the two groups have a significant difference before and after the study. Also with regard to the fact that the difference between the average of reading comprehension of the introverts in the two groups before and after the study is negative so it could be concluded that the average of the reading comprehension of the introverts after the experiment has been more than that of before the experiment (Table 2). To put it another way, SDL strategies have had positive impact on the reading comprehension of the introvert students.

Finally, we wanted to see if SDL strategies have influenced the reading comprehension of the extrovert participants in the second experimental group.

Table 3 (a): Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	T1	14.4500	20	2.43818	.54519
	T2	15.7000	20	1.62546	.36346

Table 3 (b): Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	T1&T2	20	.647	.002

Table 3 ©: Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	T1-T2	-1.25000	1.86025	.41596	-2.12062	-.37938	-3.005	19	.007

T1: The reading comprehension of the extroverts, in the second experimental group, before the experiment.

T2: The reading comprehension of the extroverts, in the second experimental group, after the experiment.

As p-value (0.0007) in Paired Samples Test is less than 0.05, the assumption of the equality of the average of the reading comprehension of extrovert students in the two groups before and after the study is rejected. This means that the reading comprehension of the extroverts in the two groups have significant difference before and after the study. Also with regard to the fact that the difference between the average of reading comprehension of the extroverts in the two groups before and after the study is negative so it could be concluded that the average of the reading comprehension of the extroverts after the experiment has been more than that of before the experiment (Table 3). To put it another way, SDL strategies have had positive impact on the reading comprehension of the extrovert students.

But as we consider the data more closely, it becomes evident that the difference in the average of the reading comprehension of extrovert students is less than the difference in the average of the reading comprehension of introverts, in the two groups before and after the experiment. This means that SDL strategies have had more positive impacts on introverts rather than extroverts. That is to say introverts have gained more benefits out of explicit teaching of SDL strategies in their reading course.

Discussion

The results of the present study are in contrast with the findings of researchers like Nikoopour and Amini Farsani (2010) which showed that learners with extrovert and introvert personality types did not show any significant difference regarding the use of language learning strategies. But

our findings are in congruent with the findings of a number of other researchers (Wigzell & Al-Ansari; 1993; Pintrich, Roser, & Degroot, 1994; Kiany, 1997; Dwyer, 1998). However, besides to personality factors, the instructional option (i.e., explicit teaching of SDL strategies) we focused upon in this study played a crucial role in developing reading comprehension of the participants. This is also in parallel with the findings of a number of other researches in the related literature that showed positive relationships between SDL and reading comprehension (Kim, 2010; Zarei & Gahremani, 2010; Khodabandehlou et al., 2011; Meshkat & Hassanzade, 2014).

In our study, we noticed that the more self-directed the reader, the more successful s/he has been. That is to say, introverts were generally better readers than extroverts. While extroverts seemed to hate reading or studying by them and preferred social strategies such as asking for clarification, and were more willing to be involved in discussion based and general activities, introverts preferred activities which required careful attention for comprehension. They preferred to think about the texts at hand, and enjoy solitary studying by learning alone and by avoiding social contacts. They liked planning ahead, monitoring their progress, and evaluating the results. In sum, they were in the habit of taking more control of their own learning.

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the effect of self directed learning (SDL) strategies on introvert and extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. It was found that:

SDL strategies have significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.
SDL strategies have significant effect on introvert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.
SDL strategies have significant effect on extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.
SDL strategies have more significant effect on introvert rather than extrovert Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

The results of this research show that considering personality types like extroversion / introversion in planning and presenting education can improve learning processes and consequently reading comprehension achievement meaningfully. Furthermore, the results show that introverts seemed to have taken full advantage of SDL strategies in their reading comprehension course. It seemed that they were willing to be more self directed.

We believe that by knowing students' personality types, teachers are able to guess students' needs in English and can decide to do some useful activities and avoid some other useless activities. We suggest teachers to pay more attention to the significance of explicit teaching of particularly SDL strategies in the course of teaching reading comprehension. We would also like to suggest researchers to investigate the effectiveness of SDL strategies with regard to other skills and subskills.

Finally, it should be mentioned that as with any other study, this inquiry too had few research limitations. First, this study was conducted at Parsian institute in Lamerd, in Iran. Second, the

sample were narrowed down to merely one institute' students. Thus, more researches are needed in similar situations to support the findings and to find more about self-directed learning strategies impacts on the students' performances. Third, our time was limited; maybe more time was needed to have more accurate and comprehensive results. Forth, our sample was limited to 60 EFL Learners only. Fifth, self-directed learning strategies could be applied to different language skills and subskills, whereas it was limited to merely EFL learners' reading comprehension in this study.

REFERENCES

- Akyol H. (2006). *Türkçe öğretim yöntemleri*. [Turkish teaching methods]. Ankara: Kök
- Benson, P., & Voller, P. (Eds.). (1997). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. London: Longman Group Ltd.
- Block, C. (2004). *Teaching comprehension: The comprehension process approach*. Pearson Education, Inc. Texas Christian University.
- Brown, H. D. (1987). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, JC: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. San Francisco: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Busch, D. (1982). Introversion-Extraversion and the EFL Proficiency of Japanese Students. *Language Learning*, 32 (1), 109-132.
- Cohen, A. D., Weaver, S. F., & Li, T. (1998). *The impact of strategic-based instruction on speaking a foreign language*. In A. Cohen. *Strategies in learning and using a second language* (pp. 107-56). London: Longman.
- Costa A., & Kallieks, B. (2003). *Assessment strategies for self-directed learning*. Thousand Oaks, C.A: Corwin
- Dewaele, J. M., & Furnham, A. (2000). Personality and speech production: A pilot study of second language learners. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 28(2), 355-365. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(99\)00106-3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(99)00106-3)
- Dornyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner. Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dwyer, K.K. (1998). Communication apprehension and learning style performance: Correlation and implication for teaching. *Communication Education*, 17(2), 137- 148.
- Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1990). Adult language learning styles and strategies in an intensive training setting. *Modern Language Journal*, 74(3), 311-327.
- Ehrman, M. E., & Oxford, R. (1995). Cognition plus: Correlates of language learning success. *Modern Language Journal*, 79(1), 67-89. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05417.x>
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ely, C. (1986). An analysis of discomfort, risk taking, sociability, and motivation in the L2 classroom. *Language Learning*, 36, 1-25.
- Eysenck, H., & Eysenck, S. (1964). *Manual of the Eysenck personality inventory*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Eysenck H J. (1965). *Facts and fiction in psychology*. London: Harmondsworth, Penguin.

- Eysenck, H. J. (1981). *General features of the model: A model for personality*. Berlin: Springer.
- Gan Z. (2008). *Extroversion and group oral performance: A mixed quantitative and discourse analysis approach*. June 19, 2010, Retrieved from Grabe W. 2001. Reading- writing relations. Theoretical perspectives and instructional Hadley AO.2003. Teaching language in context. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Grabe, W. (2004). Research on teaching reading. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 24, 44-69.
- Heaven, P. (1989). Attitudinal and personality correlates of achievement motivation among high school students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 11(7), 705-710.
- Hiemstra, R. (1994). *Self-directed learning*. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), The international encyclopedia of education (2nd ed.), Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Khodabandehlou, M., Jahandar, S., Seyedi, G., & Mousavi Dolatabadi, R. (2011). The impact of self-directed learning strategies on reading comprehension. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, 3(7), 1-19.
- Kiany, G. (1997). *Extraversion and Pedagogical Setting as Sources of Variation in Different Aspects of English Proficiency*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). University of Essex, United Kingdom.
- Kim, R. (2010). *Self-directed learning management system: Enabling competency and self-efficacy in online learning environments*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, the Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, Los Angeles.
- Kirby, J.R. (1984). *Cognitive Strategies and Educational Performance*. New York: Academic Press
- Knowles, M. (1968). Andragogy, not pedagogy. *Adult Leadership*, 16, 350-352.
- Knowles, M. (1975). *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. New York: Association Press.
- Knowles, M. S. (1975). *Self-directed learning*. New York: Association Press.
- Lightbown PM, Spada N. (2006). *How languages are learned: Oxford handbook for language teachers* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Merriam, S., & Caffarella, R. (1999). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (2nded.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Meshkat, M., & Hassanzade, A (2014). Effect of self-directed learning on the components of reading comprehension, *RAIs*, 4(2), 2-15.
- Millot, R., & Cranney, A. G. (1973). Personality correlates of college reading and study skills. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 8(3), 33
- Naiman, N., Frohlich, M., Stern, H. H., & Todesco, A. (1978). *The good language learner: Research in education*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Institute for Studies in Education.
- Nikoopour, J., & Amini Farsani, M. (2010). On the relationship between language learning strategies and personality types among iranian efl learners, *Journal of English Studies*, 1(1), 81-101.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Oxford, R. L. (1996). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Cairo, Egypt: Anglo-Egyptian.
- Oxford, R. L. (1997). Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Learning, and Interaction: Three Communicative Strands in the Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81, 443-456.

- Phongnapharuk, C. (2007). *Applying metacognitive strategies via computer-assisted language learning to enhance English reading, summary writing abilities and self-directed learning of expanding level students*. Unpublished master's thesis, Chiang Mai University.
- Pintrich, P. R., Roeser, R., & De Groot, E. (1994). Classroom and individual differences in early adolescents' motivation and self-regulated learning. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 14(2), 139-161.
- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language Teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tamada, Y. (1996). *The review of studies related to language learning strategies*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 404857. Washington, DC: Department of Education.
- Wakamoto, N. (2000). Language Learning Strategy and Personality Variables: Focusing On Extraversion and Introversion. *IRAL*, 38(1), 71-81.
- Wakamoto, N. (2007). *The impact of extraversion/introversion and associated learner strategies on English language comprehension in a Japanese EFL setting*. Department of curriculum, teaching and learning: Ontario Institute for studies in education of the University of Toronto.
- Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Wichadee, S. (2007). Impacts of self-directed learning activities on students' English proficiency and self-directed learning ability. *ICER*, 23(2), 191-203.
- Wigzell, R., & Al-Ansari, S. (1993). The pedagogical needs of low achievers. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 49(2), 302-315.
- Zarei, A., & Gahremani, K. (2010). On the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension. *TELL*, 3(10), 1-20.

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EFL TEACHER'S CRITICAL THINKING AND THEIR SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE

Maral Azizi

*MA in TEFL, Fars Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Fars, Iran
Maralazizi25@gmail.com*

Azam Azizi

*MA in TEFL, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Zahedan, Iran
Azamazizi1764@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to investigate the relationship between English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' critical thinking and their spiritual intelligence among 70 Iranian EFL teachers with respect to gender. The objective was to find out whether critical thinking ability has any significant relationship with teachers' spiritual intelligence. The 70 EFL teacher (35 females, 35 males) aged between 23 and 40 years old with a range of between 1 and 17 years of teaching experience from private language institutes or public schools in Shiraz, Iran, were administered SISI-24, the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory developed by D. King (2008) and Honey's Critical Thinking Questionnaire developed by Honey's (2004). The results obtained through using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation showed that there were significant positive correlations between teachers' spiritual intelligence and critical thinking. The results of multiple regressions showed that SI, CSE and CET can predict CT. Furthermore using T-Test, it was found that with respect to gender, teachers were significantly different on their scores on SI and female teachers' SI levels were higher than males', however there were no significant differences among male and female participants' CT. Besides demonstrating the benefits of utilizing critical thinking and spiritual intelligence to create a safe environment for student learning, this study also highlights the roles of these variables in language teaching.

KEYWORDS: Spiritual Intelligence (SI), Critical Thinking (CT), EFL Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly teachers are influential factors in educational contexts which can effectively motivate learners, produce interesting and pleasurable learning activity and moreover increase the students' academic achievement, as Campbell (2000) indicated one of the influential key factors in the process of language teaching and learning is teacher. In line with the importance of teachers, individuals who think critically can ask appropriate questions, gather relevant information efficiently and creatively, sort through this information, reason logically from this information, and come to reliable and trustworthy conclusions about the world that enable him to live and act successfully in it (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996a).

Furthermore with the development of technical society, educational system needs more effective and creative teachers who can think critically, since critical thinking poses essential questions about the nature of knowledge and reasoning. As Freeley and Steinberg (2000) stated critical thinking is "the ability to analyze, criticize, and advocate ideas; to reason inductively and deductively; and to reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from unambiguous statements of knowledge or belief" .

Robert Ennis (Norris & Ennis, 1989) defines critical thinking as "rational reflective thinking concerned with what to do or believe". According to this definition we can conclude that the capacity to bring reason is deeply interconnected with our beliefs and actions. However critical thinking doesn't lead to success unless it covers virtually any situation and to figure out the logic of whatever is happening in that situation.

In current literature, issues related to human's interior or underlying potentials of mind and consciousness are partially neglected in educational contexts. Following the exciting results of studied about Multiple Intelligences (MI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI), Spiritual intelligence (SI) is emitting new demands in educational contexts. Zohar and Marshal (2000) entitled "*SQ: the ultimate intelligence*" defined SQ as the intelligence with which we ask fundamental questions and with which we reframe our answers. Emmons (2000) illustrated SQ as the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment. Spiritual intelligence can be described as a set of adaptive mental capacities that based on non-material and transcendent aspects of reality, specifically those which are related to the nature of one's existence, personal meaning, transcendence, and heightened states of consciousness (King, 2008). On the other hand, there are many investigations that confirm the effectiveness of critical thinking on different aspects of second or foreign language learning, however these research mostly focus on learners performances such as their language proficiency or skill development. Moreover the previous studies on teacher's critical thinking reveal that there is a significant positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking ability and their pedagogical success. According to these studies high levels of critical thinking are related to high levels of teacher success as evaluated by EFL learners. It means that more successful EFL teachers are the ones who have benefited from critical thinking abilities. The more critical thinking the EFL teacher is the more successful he/she in his/her teaching career. (Birjandi, 2010; Ghaemi, 2011).

However the available literature in Iran is admittedly low on empirical research on the relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and spiritual intelligence. As such, the scarcity of research in this area necessitates undertaking a precise study in this area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Thinking

Our actions to a large extent are affected by the quality of our thought. Critical thinking is a way of thinking about different issues or situations which analyzes or assesses thinking by questioning and clarifying the problems. Paul (1985) defines critical thinking as "learning how to ask and answer questions of analysis, synthesis and evaluation". Dr. Steven Brookfield (1987) stated that

critical thinking involves two interrelated processes: “identifying and challenging assumptions, and imagining and exploring others.” He also added that “Critical Thinking involves recognizing and researching assumptions that undergird thoughts and actions.”

Although Siegel (1988) defines critical thinking as “the educational cognate of rationality”, and a critical thinker as one who is “appropriately moved by reasons”, he explains about a concept of critical thinking which involves a critical spirit. According to him, critical thinking indicates dispositions, personality inclinations, habits of the mind, and traits of character (Siegel, 1988, 2003).

Facione (1990) defines critical thinking as “purposeful, self regulatory judgment which results in the interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference as well as the explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which judgment is based”.

Critical thinking can be considered from different perspectives. If we want to look at critical thinking as a cognitive process we can refer to Diane Halpern (1996) definition:

“Critical thinking is the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desirable outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal directed .the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihood, and making decisions when the thinker is using skills that are thoughtful and effective for the particular context and type of thinking task.”

CT also has been viewed as more than cognitive perspective, Pithers and Soden (2000) assert that critical thinking encompasses a number of abilities such as identifying a problem and the assumptions on which it is based, focusing the problem, analyzing, understanding and making use of inferences, inductive and deductive logic, and judging the validity and reliability of assumptions and sources of data.

Rudd, Baker, and Hoover (2000) expanded these definitions and asserted that critical thinking is a “reasoned, purposive, and introspective approach to solving problems or addressing questions with incomplete evidence and information for which an incontrovertible solution is unlikely”. Scriven and Paul (2004) defined critical thinking as, “that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them.”

Ricketts and Rudd (2004) describe three dimensions of critical thinking disposition:

- Cognitive Maturity: students’ predisposition to looking for opportunities to use reasoning; anticipating situations that require reasoning; and confidence in reasoning ability.
- Engagement: students’ predisposition to be intellectually curious and desire to know the truth.
- Innovativeness: students’ predisposition to being aware of the complexity of the problems; being open to other points of view; and being aware of their own and others biases and predispositions.

Radhakrishnan (2009) stated the characteristics of a critical thinking teacher as below:

- He asks pertinent questions to see whether his students have learned or not.
- He assesses statements and arguments.
- He is able to admit a lack of understanding or information.
- He has a sense of curiosity.
- He is interested in finding new solutions for becoming teaching problems.
- He is able to clearly define a set of criteria for analyzing ideas.
- He is willing to examine beliefs, assumptions, and opinions and weigh them against facts.
- He listens carefully to others and is able to give feedback.
- He sees that critical thinking is a lifelong process of self assessment.
- He suspends judgment until all facts have been gathered and considered.
- He looks for evidence to support assumption and beliefs.
- He is able to adjust opinions when new facts are found.
- He looks for proof.
- He examines problems closely.
- He is able to reject information that is incorrect or irrelevant.

Previous research reveals that students' perceptions and interpretations of the academic environment have a certain disposition towards their approaches to learning, and this in turn affects their learning outcomes (Entwistle & Tait, 1990). Young (1980) also believed that if teachers use appropriate instructional methods and curriculum materials, students will improve their critical thinking skills.

Ruminski and Hanks (1995) put emphasize on teachers' ability to think and teach critically. They asserted that teachers should have a clear concept of critical thinking before they become involved in the process of teaching and evaluation.

Spiritual Intelligence

Psychologist Robert A. Emmons in 1999 studied SI. He, who had been studying personality traits and examining virtues applied Gardner's criteria of identifying intelligences and organized neurological, developmental, evolutionary and psychological evidence. He reviewed the empirical literature in the psychology of religion and concluded that SI is a distinct intelligence. Emmons listed five core characteristics of SI:

1. The capacity to transcend the physical and material.
2. The ability to experience heightened states of consciousness.
3. The ability to sanctify everyday experiences.
4. The ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems.
5. The capacity to be virtuous.

He emphasized the relevance of spirituality and its importance for mental health and subjective well-being. In a research done on emotional intelligence Goleman (1995) stated that one's success is related to high emotional and spiritual intelligence. As Danah Zohar (2000) said in the book *Connecting with our Spiritual Intelligence*, "It provides a context for our actions, as well as the way we assess whether one course of action or one life-path is more meaningful than another.

SQ is the necessary foundation for the effective functioning of both IQ and EQ. It is our ultimate intelligence.”

Spiritual intelligent or spiritual quotient is a set of abilities people use to apply, manifest, and embody spiritual resources, values, and qualities to enhance daily functioning and wellbeing (Amram, 2007).

There has been done some research on this issue which addresses students’ actions towards their surroundings. According to Nafis (2007) with a good and pure soul, students will be able to keep good attitudes and able to practice a lingual well as this will enable them to control themselves from doing things that are wrong in term of values and norms which could influence a well behaved norm. Saidy et al, (2009) claims that Spiritual Intelligence is seen as a factor that influences students’ language skills and the awareness of the needs to enhance secondary students’ language skills through emotional and spiritual balance should be given emphasis in the current educational system. Hassan (2009) asserted that students with high levels of SQ are more confident in taking an action and more sensitive towards their surroundings.

On the other hand, some researchers believe that spirituality should be part of language teaching. Palmer (1999, 2003) suggested that spirituality should be part of a classroom teacher’s training and practice. McGreevy and Copley (1999) presented a number of guidelines for doing so, including a focus on the arts, making the classrooms and school a place of beauty, taking time to ponder profound issues and questions that students want to address, and involving students in service learning projects. Kessler (2000) introduces seven gateways to the soul that teachers can use as part of their classroom practice. Each of the pathways Kessler identified received attention from other researchers.

According to King’s (2008) model of spiritual intelligence, SI is as a set of mental capacities which contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the nonmaterial and transcendent aspects of one’s existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual states and it has four main components: (1) critical existential thinking, (2) personal meaning production, (3) transcendental awareness, and (4) conscious state expansion.

Critical Existential Thinking (CET) is the ability to ponder critically on different meanings, purposes, and other existential or metaphysical issues. And existential thinking is commonplace in definitions of both spirituality and spiritual intelligence (Zohar & Marshall, 2000). Personal Meaning Production (PMP) is the capacity to engender personal meaning and purpose in physical and mental experiences. Transcendental Awareness (TA) is the ability to go beyond personal limitations, and be aware of transcendent dimensions of the self, of others, and of the physical world. Conscious state expansion (CSE) is the capacity to expand the state of consciousness and to reach pure consciousness.

With regard to above mentioned issues and the growing interest and prominence of both CT and spiritual intelligence and the scarcity of research in this area the present study was undertaken to

see whether Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking is related to their spiritual intelligence. To this end, the present study aims to; first, investigate the relationship between SI and CT, second, to investigate whether there are any differences in teachers on SI and CT scores with respect to gender.

RESEACRH QUESTIONS

In order to achieve the purpose of the study the following research question was poised:

Q: Is there any significant relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and their spiritual intelligence?

Based on the above-mentioned research question, the following null hypothesis was raised:

H0: There is no significant relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and their spiritual intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participant in this study consisted of 70 EFL teacher (35females, 35 males) aged between 23 and 40 years old with a range of between 1 and 17 years of teaching experience. The participants were selected from private language institutes or public schools in Shiraz, Iran. The institutes were chosen based on accessibility.

Instruments

SISI-24

SISI-24, the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory, is a 24 item questionnaire developed by D.King (2008) that contains 4 factors / Subscales: Critical Existential Thinking (CET), Personal Meaning Production (PMP), Transcendental Awareness (TA) and Conscious State Expansion (CSE). Responses are provided on a 5-point continuous likert scale anchored by 0 (Not at all true of me) and 4 (Completely true of me). In order to eradicate possible misunderstandings or confusion on the side of the subjects, the translated version of the SISI-24, the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory was used to collect information on students' spiritual intelligence. The questionnaire's reliability and validity were satisfactory according to a research conducted by Raghibi (2010), the questionnaire's reliability coefficient was 67% and its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 89%. The overall reliability for SISI for this study using Cronbach's Alpha turned out to be 0.82.

Critical Thinking Questionnaire

Alongside the spiritual intelligence questionnaire, the translated version of Honey's (2004) critical thinking questionnaire was administered to the participants to evaluate the skills of analysis, inference, evaluation, inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. The questionnaire included 30 multiple choice items followed by five alternatives consisting of never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always. The reliability of the questionnaire according to Naieni (2005) was .86 by. The overall reliability for Critical Thinking Questionnaire for this study using Cronbach's Alpha was 0.84.

Procedure

To gather the required data, the following steps were taken. The participants were EFL teachers who were working in Shiraz public schools or language institutions. Firstly all the teachers were provided with an oral description of the objectives of the test and the two questionnaires. To avoid any misunderstandings, the researcher used the translated versions of the two questionnaires. Then they were given the Honey's Critical Thinking Questionnaire, to evaluate teachers' critical thinking ability, along with the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory, to measure teacher's spiritual intelligence. The teachers were requested to select the most appropriate answers to the questions. The questionnaire administration took approximately 15 minutes. Teachers were asked to fill out the questionnaires at home in their free time and submit it to the researcher within a week. Having collected the two completed questionnaires, the researcher analyzed the data and extracted the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

In this section, the results of the study are presented and discussed. The descriptive analysis of the participants' SISI-24 and Honey's critical thinking questionnaire are presented in Table1. As the table indicates, the participants were 70 English teachers. The minimum and the maximum scores on SISI are 53 and 93 respectively. The overall mean and SD of the participants on SISI are 75.71 and 11.00 respectively. The participants' scores ranged from 56 to 110 on Critical Thinking Questionnaire. The overall mean and SD of the participants on Critical Thinking Questionnaire are 86.81 and 11.91.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for SQ, CT and reading comprehension scores

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
SI	70	40.00	53.00	93.00	75.7143	11.00085	121.019
CT	70	54.00	56.00	110.00	86.8143	11.91308	141.922

Based on the results illustrated in Table 2, the mean scores for SI subscales utilized by participants are 22.21 (TA), 21.27 (CET), PMP (16.20), CSE (15.72).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Participant's Performance on Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transcendental Awareness	70	22.2143	3.98873
Critical Existential Thinking	70	21.2714	5.67456
Personal Meaning Production	70	16.2000	3.06736
Conscious State Expansion	70	15.7286	3.12967

SI and CT

In order to test the relationships between teachers SI and CT, a series of Pearson Product-Moment Correlations was run (table 3). The results indicated that there were significant positive correlations between CT and SI ($r = .92$, $p < 0.01$) and CT and SI subscales: CT and TA

($r = .277$, $p < 0.05$), and CT and CSE ($r = .542$, $p < 0.01$) and CT and CET ($r = .923$, $p < 0.01$) and CT and PMP ($r = .675$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3: Correlations

	CT	SI	TA	CSE	CET	PMP
CT Pearson Correlation	1	.92**	.277*	.542**	.923**	.675**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.020	.000	.000	.000
N	70	70	70	70	70	70

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

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

To analyze the data further, Regression Analysis was conducted (table 4). The results indicate that teachers' total score of SI ($\beta = .855$, $t = 4.556$, $p < .01$), CSE ($\beta = -.167$, $t = -2.378$, $p < .05$), and CET ($\beta = .360$, $t = 3.318$, $p < .01$) are positive predictors of the dependent variable (CT).

Table 4: Regressions Coefficients(a)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	26.089	3.765		6.929	.000
SI	.926	.203	.855	4.556	.000
TA	-.347	.223	-.116	-1.557	.124
CSE	-.636	.267	-.167	-2.378	.020
PMP	-.480	.271	-.124	-1.775	.081
CET	.757	.228	.360	3.318	.001

a. Dependent Variable: CT

The results revealed that the model containing scores of CT test can predict 86 percent of the teachers' spiritual intelligence. In this part of research $R^2 = 0.86$, indicating that 86% of the variance in CT is explained by the independent variable SI (table 5). The R value is 0.84 which indicates the correlation coefficient between teachers' CT and spiritual intelligence.

Table 5: Regression Analysis Model Summary for SI Predicting CT

Model	R	R Square
1	.92	.86

a. Predictors: (constant), SI

b. Dependent Variable: CI

Teacher Differences on SI and CT with Respect to Gender

To explore whether there were significant SI and CT differences among teachers with respect to gender, a series of independent t-test analyses was conducted (table 6). The results indicated that, with respect to gender, teachers were significantly different on their scores on SI (t

=11.761 , $df = 61.3$, $p < .05$), however there are no significant differences among male and female participants' CT ($t = 11.610$, $p > .05$).

Table 6: Comparison of Means, Standard Deviations and T-Values of Teachers on Their SI and CT Subscales Scores by Gender (N=70)

Gender	Male (N = 35)		Female (N = 35)		t	sig
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
SI	66.7714	5.20794	84.6571	7.33622	11.761	.004
CT	77.1714	7.12694	96.4571	6.76645	11.610	.46

Discussion

Critical thinking has been one of the prevailing concepts in language teaching. According to Halpern (2003) Critical thinking is one of the cognitive abilities that "increase[s] the probability of a desirable outcome... the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions". Today the importance of critical thinking is acknowledged in different educational fields, According to Schaefersman (1991) all education must involve not only 'what to think', but also 'how to think'.

Asking questions, inventing new ways of teaching, creating effective techniques and adapting your knowledge in new situations and circumstances in teaching context require a critical teacher. According to Nunan and Lamb (1999) Critical thinking teachers are ones who are capable of monitoring, critiquing and defending their actions in planning, implementing and evaluating language programs. On the other hand spirituality is an integral part of our life which affects human development in numerous fields. We expect teachers to create a safe environment for students' learning.

For the relationship between CT and SI the results showed that spiritual intelligence had a significant relationship with CT and the variation in teachers' spiritual intelligence can be explained by taking their CT into account. Therefore, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis of the study which stated that there is no significant relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and their spiritual intelligence. Teachers' total score of SI, CSE and CET were positive predictors of CT. More specifically, the multiple regression analysis demonstrated that two of the four components of spiritual intelligence as defined by King (2008), namely 'Critical Existential Thinking' and 'Conscious State Expansion' are significantly positively correlated with CT scores. The size of this correlation indicates that generally high levels of critical thinking are related to high levels of spiritual intelligence as evaluated by EFL learners. Or the more critical thinking the EFL teacher is the more spiritual intelligent in his career. This is hardly surprising since both teachers' critical thinking and spiritual intelligence addresses numerous questions of 'how's', 'what's' and 'why's'. The questioning ability of teachers helps them improve their teaching effectiveness (Richards, 1990). All the findings from the previous studies have revealed that critical thinking plays an important role in teachers' success. A study done by Ghaemi (2011) revealed that there is a significant relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and their teaching success.

According to Scriven and Paul (2004) critical thinking is “that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them.” According to this definition critical thinking refers to one's internal world as an individual, i.e., people's internal or spiritual values.

On the other hand both critical thinking and spiritual intelligence address human ability in solving problems. According to Rudd, Baker, and Hoover (2000) critical thinking is a “reasoned, purposive, and introspective approach to solving problems or addressing questions with incomplete evidence and information for which an incontrovertible solution is unlikely”. Emmons in 1999 defines spiritual intelligence as the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems. With respect to gender, teachers were significantly different on SI, with females reporting higher SI levels, however there were no significant differences among male and female participants' CT.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study confirm the important role of critical thinking and spiritual intelligence in language teaching. It is concluded that those EFL teachers that have higher levels of SI are more critical thinkers. The current study revealed that almost 86 percent of those teachers who benefited from CT abilities have higher spiritual intelligence. The present study also investigated the role of gender on teachers' spiritual intelligence and critical thinking ability. It was found that female teachers' SI levels were higher than males', however there were no significant differences among male and female participants' CT.

The relationship between CT and spiritual intelligence suggests that teachers' ability to analyze, creative and deduce, and solve problems is related with how deeply they think. Spiritual experience enables a teacher to cope with demanding situations in teaching and choose creative new solutions.

The study underlines the importance of critical thinking and spiritual intelligence in English language teaching. The results also imply that more work needs to be done towards measuring the relationship between both SI and CT in ELT. Future research should focus on measuring a larger and more representative and diverse sample of the EFL teacher population, among middle, and high school level teachers. This may find differences in spiritual intelligence and critical thinking among different teaching levels. Concerning the importance of spiritual intelligence in all aspects of life, it is necessary for teachers to increase their information about spiritual intelligence and ways to develop it particularly among students in ELT context.

Although the researcher has made a lot of attempts to minimize the pitfalls of this study, there are some limitations: the population of this study was limited to one city, only Shiraz. Hence, it might not be the true example of EFL teachers and thus the results cannot be generalized thoroughly. The other limitation was that the population of the research was small, only 70 EFL teachers so it was not appropriate to generalize the researches' results to other groups.

REFERENCES

- Amram, Y., & Dryer, C. (2007). *The Development and Preliminary Validation of the Integrated Spiritual Intelligence Scale (ISIS)*. Palo Alto, CA: Institute of Transpersonal Psychology Working Paper. Retrieved from <http://www.geocities.com/isisfindings/>
- Birjandi, P., & Bagherkazemi, M. (2010). The Relationship between Iranian EFL Teachers' Critical Thinking Ability and their Professional Success. *English Language Teaching*, 3 (2).
- Brookfield, S. D. (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging adults to explore alternative ways of thinking and acting*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass and England: Open University Press.
- Campbell, L. M. (2000). *The unspoken dialogue: Beliefs about intelligence, students, and instruction held by a sample of teachers familiar with the theory of multiple intelligences*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The Fielding Institute, United States.
- Center for critical thinking. (1996a). *A brief history of the idea of critical thinking*. Retrieved from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/aboutCT/briefhistoryCT.shtml>
- Emmons, Robert A. (1999). *The Psychology of Ultimate Concerns: Motivation and Spirituality in Personality*, Guilford Publications.
- Entwistle, N., & Tait, H. (1990). Approaches to learning, evaluations of teaching and preferences for contrasting academic environments. *Higher Education*, 19, 169-194.
- Facione, P. A. (1990). *Critical thinking: A statement of expert consensus for the purposes of educational assessment and instruction*. Millbrae, CA: California Academic Press.
- Freely, A. J., & Steinberg, D. L. (2000). *Argumentation and debate: Critical thinking for reasoned decision-making*. Stamford: Wadsworth.
- Ghaemi, H., & Taherian, R. (2011). The Role of Critical Thinking in EFL Teachers' Teaching Success. *MJAL*, 3(1).
- Goleman, D. P. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ for Character, Health and Lifelong Achievement*. Bantam Books, New York.
- Halpern, D.F. (1996). *Thought and knowledge: An introduction to critical thinking* (3rd ed). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Halpern, D. F. (2003). *Thought and knowledge: An introduction to critical thinking* (4th ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hassan, A. (2009). Emotional and Spiritual Intelligences as a Basis for Evaluating the National Philosophy of Education Achievement. *Research Journal of International Studies*.
- Honey, P. (2000). *Critical thinking Questionnaire*, Retrieved from: <http://www.PeterHoney.com>.
- King, D.B. (2008). *Rethinking claims of spiritual intelligence: A definition, model, & measure*. (Unpublished master's thesis), Trent University, Peterborough, ON, Canada.
- Nafis, M.M. (2007). *Yakin Diri 9 Jalan Cerdas Emosi dan Cerdas Spiritual*: Selangor, PTS Millenia Sdn. Bhd
- Norris, S.P., & Ennis, R. (1989). *Evaluating critical thinking*. Pacific Grove, CA: Midwest Publication.
- Nunan, D., & Lamb, C. (1999). *The self-directed teacher: Managing the learning process*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Paul, R. W. (1985). Bloom's taxonomy and critical thinking intervention. *Educational Leadership*, 42(8), 36–39.
- Pithers, R. T., & Soden, R. (2000). Critical thinking in education: A review. *Educational Research*, 42: 237–249.
- Radhakrishnan, C. (2009). *Critical Thinking & Practical Strategies to promote it in Classroom*. Retrieved from: <http://chettourhorizonsforteaching.blogspot.com/2009/03/critical-thinking-practicalstrategies.html>
- Raghibi, M., Bakhshani, N. M, & Moallemy, S.(2010). *Investigation of simple and multiple betweenmenthal health.Spiritual intelligence and dysfunctional attitudes*. (MSc[Thesis]).Zahedan, University of Sistan andBaluchestan.
- Richards J.C. and Nunan D., *Second language teacher education*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990.
- Ricketts, J. C., & Rudd, R. D. (2004). The relationship between critical thinking dispositions and critical thinking skills of selected youth leaders in the national FFA Organization. *Journal of Southern Agricultural Education Research*, 54(1), 21-33.
- Rudd, R., Baker, M., & Hoover, T. (2000). Undergraduate agricultural student learning styles and critical thinking abilities: Is there a relationship? *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 41(3), 2-12.
- Ruminski, H. J., & Hanks, W. E. (1995). Critical thinking lacks definition and uniform evaluation criteria. *Journalism and Mass Education Educator*, 50(3), 4–11.
- Saidy, E. P., Hassan, A., Abd. Rahman, F., Ab. Jalil, H., Ismail, I.F., & Krauss, S. E. (2009). Influence of Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence from the National Education Philosophy towards Language Skills among Secondary School Students. *European Journal of Social Sciences*,9(1).
- Scriven, M. & Paul, R. (2004). *Defining Critical Thinking*. Retrieved from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/aboutCT/definingCT.shtml>
- Schafersman. (1991). *An introduction to critical thinking*. Retrieved January 1, 2010 from: www.freeenquiry/criticalthinking.html
- Siegel, H. (1988). *Educating reason: Rationality, critical thinking, and education*. New York: Routledge.
- Young, R. E. (1980). *Testing for critical thinking: issues and resources*. In R. E. Young (Ed.), *New directions for teaching and learning: fostering critical thinking*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Zohar, D., & Marshall, I. (2000). *SQ: Connecting with our spiritual intelligence*. New York: Bloomsbury.

THE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF SILENT WAY ON THE BASIS OF KARDS MODEL

Mohammad Naghizadeh (Corresponding author)

*Ph. D Candidate in Applied Linguistics, Department of Foreign Languages,
Sheikhbahae University, Isfahan, Iran
Email: naghizademohammad@gmail.com
Phone number: +989309526569*

Mohammad Reza Talebinejad

*Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
mrezatalebinejad@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study addressed critically the question: why is it that a method like silent way hasn't become so popular among language teachers? To find answer to this question, Silent Way has been evaluated on the basis of KARDS (knowing, analyzing, recognizing, doing, seeing) model modules and parameters. KARDS model has been proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2012) as an exclusive alternative modular framework which seeks an education plan for a global society and calls for restructuring of language teacher education to incorporate process-based multidirectional cyclical modules aimed at preparing teachers to be 'strategic thinkers, exploratory researchers and transformative intellectuals. To achieve the goal of the study, we have reviewed Silent Way in details in order to see whether the modules and parameters of KARDS model are satisfied by using this method in education plan or not. At the end, we have come to the conclusion that most of the parameters are not satisfied or are partially satisfied. The findings of the studies led us to some worthwhile insights in teaching language. The most striking one is that clearly we have shown in what respects silent way cannot fulfill the requirements of teaching language for a global society. Another insight coming from the study can be the consideration of this study as a model for language teachers to evaluate the way they teach language in their particular context. Finally, the positive aspects of silent way that were in compliance with KARDS model were also mentioned; therefore, teacher can take them into consideration and use them if they are appropriate for their own situation.

KEYWORDS: KARDS Model, Silent Way, Critical Evaluation, Globalization.

INTRODUCTION

"Why should I speak when my student can?"

"Tell me and I forget, Teach me and I remember, Involve me and I learn"

The above mottos remind us a method of language teaching introduced by Caleb Gattegno in the early 1970s. This method is called "**Silent Way**" which is well known for the use of colored

sticks called cuisenaire rods and for the approach to the teaching of initial reading in which sounds are taught by colors.

This method, however, was not used for a long time; moreover, was not even widely used at its own time. The question that arises here is why is it that the methods like silent way appear and then disappear within a short period of time. To put it in another way, what rationale lies behind the fact that some methods do not receive lots of appeal and attention among language practitioners? To seek the answer a critical view at the principles and assumptions of the method is called upon. To have a critical view at any method, a kind of sophisticated theoretical framework or scientific theory and model is undoubtedly necessary. The kind of framework that, according to Zeicher(2005), must consider not only issues such as teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions, cognition, and beliefs but also factors such as educational, cultural and ideological movement as well as major swings in the political pendulum.

The need for having a comprehensive framework is also emphasized by Kumaravadivelu (2012). He states, “if there is a need for comprehensive framework for teacher preparation in the field of general education, which has witnessed substantial exploration and expansion in the last fifty years, then, clearly, the need for such a framework in the relatively nascent field of second and foreign teacher education is even greater” (p. 2).

Now that we live in a post method era, there is a plausible need to choose an up to date framework satisfying the accounts mentioned above and accounting well for the evaluation of the method in question. For this reason, Kumaravadivelu's (2012) KARDS model, which will be elaborated in details later in this study, is adopted.

After the specification of the model, now for the evaluation of the method in question with a critical view, it is required that we review silent way in details. In what follows, some of the aspects of Silent Way (SW) drawn from different teaching books are mentioned.

SILENT WAY

Basic premises for SW

First of all, as its name implies, the method is based on the premise that teacher should be silent as much as possible and the learners should be encouraged to produce language as much as possible. This is because it is believed that silence makes students to concentrate on what is to be learned. Furthermore, The SW assumes that learners work with resources and nothing else, as they are solely responsible for what they learn. On the top of all that, teaching here should be subordinated to learning.

Learning hypotheses

Some hypotheses about how learning can be best taken place are in favor of SW. One of which is that learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned. Another hypothesis is that learning is facilitated by accompanying

(mediating) physical objects. And finally, learning is facilitated by problem solving involving the material to be learned.

Goals of the Silent Way teacher

The goals which this method sets for teachers to achieve are: 1. at the end the Students are able to use the language for self-expression. 2. The students develop independence from the teacher; develop their own criteria for correctness. Or to put it in another way, they become independent by relying on themselves. Thus, to achieve this end, the teacher should give them only what they absolutely need to promote their learning.

Characteristics of the teaching process

The teacher sets up situations that focus on the structures of the language. These structures are introduced through a language-specific sound-color chart. And they are also constantly reviewed and recycled. Another characteristics associated with SW is that pronunciation is seen as fundamental.

Nature of student-teacher interaction

Although the teacher is silent, He is still very active by setting up situations to force awareness, listening carefully to students' speech, and silently working with them on their production through the use of nonverbal gestures and the tools he has at his disposal. Besides, Student-student verbal interaction is desirable (students can learn from one another) and is therefore encouraged.

How to deal with feeling of students?

When their feelings interfere, the teacher tries to find ways for the students to overcome them. Through feedback sessions at the end of the lessons, students have an opportunity to express how they feel. It is hoped that a relaxed, enjoyable learning environment will be created.

How to accomplish evaluation?

Although the teacher may never give a formal test, he assesses student learning all the time. Since "teaching is subordinated to learning," the teacher must be responsive to immediate learning needs. The teacher's silence frees him to attend to his students and to be aware of these needs.

The syllabus

The syllabus that SW proponents follow is Structural syllabus in which Language items, the imperative, numeration, and prepositions of location are of great importance.

Instructional materials

Using special objects and materials is a special feature of Silent Way. Color-coded pronunciation charts (Fidel charts) are one of the materials that is specific to this method. The Fidel is a set of charts presenting all the possible spellings of each sound of the language which was originally created for teaching native speakers to read with Words in Color. Color-coded vocabulary wall charts, Colored rods, a pointer, Reading/writing exercises are among other instructional materials

used in this method. Further, the method makes use of color association to help teach pronunciation; there is a sound-color chart which is used to teach the language sounds.

Types of learning & teaching activities

The teacher models a word, phrase, or sentence and then elicits learner responses. Learners then go on to create their own utterances by putting together old and new information. Charts, rods, and other aids may be used to elicit learner responses. Teacher modeling is minimal, although much of the activity may be teacher directed.

Principles

Silence in SW is considered as a tool to help students to foster autonomy, or the exercise of initiative and to learn how to accept responsibility for their own learning. The teacher's silence encourages group cooperation as well. The teacher should give only what help is necessary in order for the students to rely on each other and themselves and develop their own inner criteria for correctness as a result. The teacher who is responsible for creating an environment that encourages student risk taking and facilitates learning, also works with the students while the students work on the language. In addition, Teacher provides non-repetitive and motivating practice. He also provides meaning through direct perception, not through translation. He is yet a neutral observer, neither pleased by correct performance nor discouraged by error.

Since errors show the teacher where things are unclear, they are important and necessary to learning. At the beginning and early stages of learning, making errors seems natural; therefore, the teacher needs to look for progress, not perfection. The teacher can gain valuable information from student feedback. Learning takes place in time and at different rates by students. The elements of the language are introduced logically, expanding upon what students already know. Some learning takes place naturally as we sleep. Students will naturally work on the day's lesson then. The skills of speaking, reading, and writing reinforce one another. The teacher creates a relaxed atmosphere of mutual cooperation and has to take into account students' individual needs and varying levels of competence.

Additionally, a successful learning involves commitment of the self to language acquisition through the use of silent awareness and then active trial. Besides, In Silent Way learners are expected to acquire "inner criteria" and become independent, autonomous and responsible.

Finally, language and culture in silent way are perceived as inseparable; therefore, in teaching the item of target language, the culture associated with that target language should be considered and taught.

The Silent Way respects

The silent way respects the learners and their learning processes before anything. This is because students have already mastered professional in their native language and are treated as sophisticated language learners. Another thing the method respects is the impacts of teaching upon learning. That is to say, the Silent Way techniques are designed to allow teachers to intervene without interfering with the learning processes. The other thing respected by the

method is the language being learned - The materials and techniques are designed to bring students into contact the totality and complexity of the new language. Yet, they have to be used in specific way that provides opportunities for working analytically on every pinpointed issue.

KUMARAVADIVELU'S KARDS MODEL

In his book named as Language Teacher Education for a Global Society, Kumaravadivelu calls for a move as restructuring of language teacher education to incorporate process-based multidirectional cyclical modules aimed at preparing teachers to be 'strategic thinkers, exploratory researchers and transformative intellectuals'. The rationale for such a move, according to him, is globalization which embodies economic, cultural, and educational dimensions.

In line with this move, in the report titled as *Transforming teacher education* (Alliance, 2008), it is mentioned that notwithstanding their origins, commonalities and differences, all systems of teacher preparation must rethink their core assumptions and processes in the new global context.

To understand the fast-evolving global context and consequently develop language teacher education plan for a global society, five interconnected globalizing perspectives, and the shifting assumptions that these five perspective demand have to be taken into account. These perspectives are: Post-national, Post-modern, Post-colonial, Post-transmission, and Post-method perspective. The first three are related to historical, political and sociocultural developments; the last two to language teacher education. In what follows, each perspective is discussed very briefly.

From the post-national perspective, the Nationalism is being severely challenged by economic and cultural globalization, creating a global cultural consciousness and resulting in the Shifting assumption that educational issues also can be touched globally.

Postmodernism acknowledges complexity and diversity. In other words, instead of looking for one unifying truth, it recognizes a multiplicity of narratives. Individuals are then entitled to construct their own self, and we have here something we call identity formation. The Shifting assumption that emerges from this perspective is questioning ideology, power, knowledge, class, and things like that.

What Post-colonial perspective emphasizes is that Languages like English, French, and Spanish which are of global and colonial nature tended and were considered to be world's lingua franca formerly. Therefore, there was the threat of linguistic and cultural imperialism. The shifting assumption of this perspective is that many countries have built programs for foreign language education devoid of their cultures, to preserve their own linguistic and culture heritage.

Post-transmission perspective criticizes transmission models as information-oriented, and not enquiry-oriented; hence, designed to transfer a pre-determined, pre-selected and pre-sequenced body of knowledge. The shifting assumption this perspective calls upon is that we should enable

teachers to construct their own versions/visions of teaching, and produce self-directing, self-determining individuals.

Finally, post-method perspective attacks the concept of method. To this perspective, this concept is limited in a way that it makes teachers enslaved by the rigidity of methods guidelines and methodological paradigms. Nowadays, therefore, we don't have to look for alternative method, but we have look for an alternative to method. The Shifting assumption on the basis of this perspective is that the goal of teacher education is to transform classroom practitioners into strategic thinkers, teachers and researchers.

The five global perspectives mentioned above are related to a set of operating principles that can govern the processes and practices of L2 teacher education. They are: Particularity, Practicality, and Possibility.

The principle of particularity is based on the hermeneutic philosophy of *situational understanding*, which claims that a meaningful pedagogy must be constructed on a holistic interpretation of particular situations, and that it can be improved only by improving those particular situations. . All pedagogy, like politics is local. "Language teacher and teacher education plan must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers, teaching a particular group of learners, pursuing a particular set of goals, within a particular institutional context, embedded in a particular socio-cultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 538).

The relationship between theory and practice is focused broadly by the principle of practicality, and the teachers' skill in monitoring their own teaching effectiveness is addressed narrowly by this principle. The harmful dichotomy between theory and practice gives rise to the misconception that theorists produce knowledge, teachers consume knowledge. By contrast, teachers must be enabled to develop the knowledge, skill, attitude& autonomy necessary to construct their own context-sensitive theory of practice.

The principle of possibility is drawn from critical pedagogy and opposes language teacher education programs that merely transmit a dead body of content knowledge; instead, it favors those that raise sociopolitical consciousness among all the participants so that they can form and transform their personal and social identity.

KARDS model proposed by Kumar seems an excellent and plausible response to those language teacher education plans which cannot meet the challenges of globalization, and as an answer to the need of restructurings language teacher education. This model is modular in nature and consists of five modules: Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing. Each modular is discussed as follows.

Module 1: Knowing

The term Knowing is employed here instead of knowledge to exert considerable emphasis on the ways of knowing indicating that knowing is a process; knowledge is a product.

Knowing, implying teacher's knowledge consists of a three-fold frame of reference: teacher's Professional knowledge, teacher's Procedural knowledge and teacher's Personal knowledge.

Teacher's Professional knowledge

With respect to teacher's Professional knowledge, the teacher must know fundamental concepts of language, language learning, and language teaching.

Knowledge about language itself entails knowledge of language as a system (phonological, semantic, syntactic system of language), language as discourse (deals with the cohesive nature of connected texts), and language as ideology (deals with a critical analysis of language; its social, political, cultural and ideological meanings; and seeing how it is exploited in the service of power).

Knowledge about learning deals with knowing about psycholinguistic grounds like **Input** (oral/written corpus of target language, by 1. Native speakers, 2. Simplified language by teachers, textbooks, NNSs, 3. peers). **Intake** (collecting and analyzing spoken and written interlanguage produced by learners). **Intake factors** (facilitate L2 development and consist of: 1. Individual factors like age and motivation, 2. Strategic factors like learning strategies, 3. Educational factors likelanguagepolicies and planning). **Intake processes** (language learning mental operations). **Output**(corpus of learners' well-formed as well as deviant utterances).

Finally, knowledge about language teaching mostly concerns with knowledge about methods of language teaching. The established methods primarily adhere to two basic approaches to language teaching: Use through usage and usage through use. The former heavily focuses on language as a system, and the syllabus and curriculum designer adherent to this approach carefully select a set of grammatical structures and vocabulary items, and sequence them according to their perceived difficulty level. The assumption here is that grammatical competence ultimately leads to communicative competence, and language learning is more intentional than incidental. The later, on the other hand, considers language learning as more incidental than intentional; therefore, communication and meaningful interaction are primary.

Teacher's procedural knowledge

Procedural knowledge relates to management skills and strategies for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating classroom events and activities. There are several aspects to the management of classroom language learning, the most important of which are topic management and talk management. The first mainly involves managing the structure of information exchange, which in turn involves the type of questions asked and responses expected. The information structure in most language classes follows what is called the IRF sequence, that is, the teacher initiates (I), the learner responds(R), and the teacher provides appropriate feedback(F). In most traditional classes talk sequence predominates. To move away from this rigid formula, teachers are advised to ask referential questions which seek new information and permit open-ended responses from students, rather just display questions which allow learners only to display a closed set of language used. Teachers can closely link their talk management with topic management.

Topic management relates to the content of classroom talk. Normally, teachers confine themselves to discussing the topics included in the prescribed textbook. However, going beyond them and encourage students to initiate topics of their interests is likely to increase their motivation to participate in classroom interaction.

Personal knowledge

Teacher's individual observations, experiences, reflections, and interpretations gathered over a period of time. Unexplained and unexplainable understanding and awareness of what constitutes good teaching that is accumulated by teachers, which has been termed differently by different scholars. For example, Van Manen (1997) names this cumulative awareness as teachers' *sense-making*, teachers' *sense of plausibility* is utilized by (prabhu, 1990), and Hargreaves (1994) calls it *ethic of practicality*.

Therefore, teachers are expected to have the ability to critically recognize, reflect, review, and reinvent their own identities, beliefs and values.

Module 2: Analyzing

L2 teachers must develop the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze and understand learner Needs, motivation, and autonomy.

Learner Needs

A needs analysis should be done to discover: What language learners have to learn (their needs), what learners like to learn (their wants), and what they have not yet learned (their lacks). It can be done through questionnaires, interviews, observations, placement tests .

Learner motivation

Because of expanding global cultural consciousness, L2 learners are no longer integratively motivated. Non-English speaking world learns and uses English for communicational purposes because English is now seen more as a communicational tool, than as a cultural career. Based on Self- Determination Theory in cognitive psychology, intrinsic motivation functions as an important energizer of behavior. So, motivation is now being conceptualized & theorized to address changing realities.

Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy is the ability to take charge of one's own learning. Learners can play an active role in topic / talk selection. Learners should develop critical awareness of the cultural constructions, ideologies and social positioning to effectively exercise their agency and develop their own voice.

Module 3: Recognizing

Success in teaching depends also on teacher's recognizing his/her Teaching Self. The teaching self is the inner self teachers bring with them to the practice of everyday teaching. It is accomplished through recognizing: Teacher Identities, Beliefs, and Values.

Teacher identities

Identity is the degree of individual's agency in determining a sense of self.

Teacher identity shapes teacher's perceptions about what constitutes teaching, and learning. Teacher education must help teachers become aware of the possibilities & strategies for personal/ and professional identity transformation.

Teacher beliefs

Teacher knowledge is filtered through teacher beliefs. Teacher education must help teachers to analyze their beliefs, and to critically reflect on them. Beliefs can be analyzed through teacher narratives, autobiographical reflections. Language teacher beliefs: Concepts such as "best method" and "good teaching" should be abandoned in favor of the recognition of diversity in teachers and the idea that "best teaching" is "the individually best".

Teacher Values

Values are beliefs with a moral and ethical slant. A teacher is a moral agent. Teachers face dilemmas and conflicts in dealing with agendas pursued by political and religious entities, or by administrators and students. Interrogating the teaching self: Self-observation, self-analysis and self-reflection can help teachers construct their self- image of who they are as persons and who they are as professionals.

Module 4: Doing

Teacher education program must prepare teachers who are successful in Teaching, Theorizing, and Dialogizing.

Teaching

Teaching with two goals: Maximizing learning opportunities and Mentoring personal information. Things should "get learned", rather than "get taught". Language teaching is more than teaching language. Teachers should be sensitive to linguistic, cultural and educational demands of the global society.

Theorizing

Pedagogic knowledge must emerge from the practice of everyday teaching. Teachers should keep their eyes and ears open, and notice what works and what doesn't, with what groups of learners, for what reason, and think about what actionable changes are necessary and possible. The thinking teacher is no longer perceived as someone who applies theories, but as someone who theorizes practice. Tools: action research, case study, classroom .interaction analysis

Dialogizing

Teacher development is a dialogic construction of meaning. A community of teachers is a community of inquiry, which is a community of knowledge builders. The interlocutors in this community practice and work collaboratively to enhance their knowledge and enrich their experience. Different points of view are respected and treated as a resource of reciprocal critique and learning.

Module 5: Seeing

Despite the great importance of that people simply see the things as they are conventionally there and that is also this module in teaching, little attention and consideration it has received in the field of education and TEOSL. The traditional view of seeing that is prevalent in educational circles is something which everybody else can see. Moreover, they trust what they see. This way of seeing is mostly based on familiarity, experience, and commonsense. It is embedded in human propensity. It therefore requires extraordinary capacity to stop seeing the things that are conventionally there to be seen. The task of teacher regarding seeing is to have critical engagement in relation to what happens “There”, e.g., in the classroom. Kvernbeck (200, p. 361) distinguishes two other kinds of seeing apart from traditional view of seeing, which is termed as seeing in. In what follows three kinds of seeing ordered based on the level of perception are defined:

Seeing-in: Superficially looking at things as they appear.

Seeing-as: Making sense of the experience of current observation.

Seeing-that: Demanding a critical interpretation of what we see.

To see what happens in the classroom we have to consider: Learner perspective, Teacher perspective, and Observer perspective.

Learner perspective

Learners have a role in evaluating teaching acts. Learners are stake-holders of the classroom enterprise. Learners can provide valuable feedback, on an on-going basis. The more teachers gather learner feedback, the better and more productive their intervention will be.

Teacher perspective

Teacher can be considered as manager, acculturator, as professional. Teacher helps STs become accustomed to cultural beliefs and practices of the target language community. Teacher’s view of what constitute a good language class, which refers mostly to class cohesiveness, that is, class functioning effectively as a group.

Observer perspective

Observers may be teacher educators, master teachers, cooperating teachers, supervisors, peers. Observation ensures collaboration among colleagues. Its nature should be meaningful, rewarding, non-threatening feedback aimed at professional development. Teachers see their work in new and critical ways, and engage in self-reflection. No one is marginalized, no one is privileged.

EVALUATION OF SILENT WAY BASED ON KARDS MODEL

Knowing

Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge relates to the fundamental concepts of language, language teaching, and language learning. Knowledge about language in turn entails knowledge of language as a system, as discourse, and as ideology. In terms of language as a system, silent way has a considerable

emphasis. It has a structural syllabus; focuses on patterns of sounds, vocabulary teaching, and syntactic system of language. What is more, teachers in silent way should have a good knowledge of systems and subsystems of language.

However, this method does not go beyond structure; and therefore, language as a discourse does not receive considerable attention. The teacher focuses on prepositional meaning, rather than communicative value. The students discover how to produce grammatical sentences no matter whether or not they are appropriate in a context. Teachers here do not necessarily need to know about the functional grammar, speech act, coherent relationship and other discoursal features of language.

This method, as mentioned earlier, considers language and culture inseparable. The teachers are not free to take into consideration their cultural, political, and ideological meanings. Hence, what the teachers have to know about and present is just the culture of the language they are supposed to teach. With regard to knowledge about language learning it was said that in this method the students receive body of language through various sources (e.g. oral and written corpus), then they are expected to work on input through discovery learning or problem solving and internalize them (intake & intake factors). In the end, they are supposed to produce language (output). Finally, a silent way teacher is supposed to have a great knowledge of cognitive psychology, information processing and second language acquisition.

Regarding knowledge about language teaching, the approach to language teaching used in silent way is “use through usage”. A set of grammatical structures and vocabularies items are selected and sequenced based on the perceived difficulty level. Therefore, the teachers are trained to teach the learners in accordance with this approach, and the knowledge about how to teach using the alternative approach, namely, ‘usage through use’ is not necessary.

Procedural knowledge

Procedural knowledge is about knowing how to manage classroom learning and teaching. This knowledge plays a crucial role in silent way. The teacher has to set up a classroom environment in which learners become autonomous, independent, and responsible. Moreover, students’ verbal interaction is encouraged and at the same time, listening carefully to students’ speech, and silently working with them on their production through the use of nonverbal gestures and the tools he has at his disposal should be done as well. Taking all these into account and controlling the class simultaneously require the teachers to have a great deal of information so as to manage classroom language learning effectively.

Personal knowledge

All the teachers using silent way are trained to follow the same route (the principles and procedures of silent way, structural syllabus, and etc.) and reach the same destination (the goal of silent way). In this respect no room remains for the personal knowledge of the teachers. However, personally, I think, here the teachers can use their personal knowledge to implement the principles of silent way more effectively. In addition, they also have idiosyncratic procedural personal knowledge in creating the effective environment for learning.

Analyzing

Learner needs

In silent way, the teacher should give the learners only what they absolutely need to promote their learning. Therefore, the teacher should be able to do a need analysis to find out how far the learner has progressed toward the goals of silent way and what remains for him to learn. That is why in this method the teacher has to assess students' learning all the time although through informal test. Here the teacher has to know that the students have varying needs; varying needs in the sense that they are different in how well or how fast they learn. Hence, the necessities and the lacks are considered here, but the students' wants are disregarded. This failure to be sensitive to learners' wants, according to Kumar (2012) has lead to a phenomenon in Asian countries, where a vast number of learners from poorly-staffed, badly-equipped government-run state schools flock to private language centers that have mushroomed in cities so that they can gain much needed English communicative abilities.

Learner motivation

Learners of silent way are said to be highly motivated in the sense that mastery of linguistic skills are seen in the light of an emotional inner peace resulting from the sense of power and control brought about by new levels of awareness. Silent Way learning claims to "consolidate the human dimensions of being, which include variety and individuality as essential factors for an acceptance of others as contributors to one's own life" and even moves us "towards better and more lasting solutions of present-day conflicts". Discovery learning is considered as the shift from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards.

Learner Autonomy

Here learners are considered autonomous in the sense that they have free will to choose among any set of linguistic choices, the ability to choose intelligently and carefully is said to be the evidence of autonomy and responsibility. However, the autonomy that is defined by kumar, as we have seen above, is not fully satisfied in this method. The students are not allowed to make decision about what to teach and how to teach. The syllabus is already pre-established and must be structural syllabus; therefore, the students have no control over what they learn and are not encouraged to develop their own agency.

Recognizing

The constituent elements of Recognizing are teacher identities, teacher beliefs, and teacher values. All these three elements are actually disregarded in silent way because the role of the teacher as a technician or facilitator is pre-established. Be silent as much as you can .some of these pre-determined principles of silent way might be in conflict with teachers values and beliefs but they have no choice.

Doing

Teaching

Teaching as a subcategory of doing in the language classroom chiefly entails maximizing learning opportunities and mentoring personal transformation. Regarding maximizing learning opportunities, a silent way teacher should be able to create a situation in which Student-student

verbal interaction is desirable (students can learn from one another). The teacher's silence encourages group cooperation. The elements of the language are introduced logically, expanding upon what students already know. However, the utilization of learning opportunities is limited by pre-determined syllabus, textbooks, and things like that.

With regard to mentoring personal transformation, this method advocates commitment of the self to language acquisition through the use of silent awareness and then active trial. It also views learning as a problem-solving, creative process, and discovering activity in which the learner is a principal actor rather than a bench-bound listener. However, here there is problem solving expected to be done by students but not problem posing. That is to say, it is always the teacher who proposes a problem, and the students have to solve. The reverse is not happened and the students are not supposed to pose a problem. Moreover, the learners' commitment is used in learning units of language as system not political, social, etc. Therefore, there is no critical pedagogy.

Theorizing

Teachers here are consumers of the scholars' theories. Theory of language and theory of learning of this method are already established and the teachers have to follow.

Dialogizing

Students in silent way can have a verbal exchange to express their self, their feeling and experiences. But this cannot be regarded as a dialogic exchange in which there is an interaction between meanings, between belief systems, between voices, etc.

Seeing

Learner perspective

Learners are considered as problem solvers which are cognitively active in shaping what they learn.

Teacher perspective

Stevick defines the Silent Way teacher's tasks as (a) to teach, (b) to test, and (c) to get out of the way. Here teacher has no voice about what to teach and he has to stick to structural syllabus.

Observer perspective

No room is assigned for a critical observer in silent way. Teachers try to follow what they have learnt as a good way of implementing silent way principles, and the observers when assessing the teachers just tick the items on a check list that satisfy the principles and guidelines of the method at best.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

If now we come back to our question why is it that a method like silent way does not receive lots of attention, we can find our answer through considering the results obtaining from our critical analysis of this method. We have seen that most of the grounds of silent way are not compatible

with the modules and sub-modules of KARDS model. In other words, most of the parameters of the KARDS model that we have elaborated are not satisfied or are partially satisfied when adopting silent way as an educational plan. To illustrate the point, Assume that an education plan sets out to train the teachers based on silent way principles, assume further that the trained teachers implement what the method wants from them (not possible in all contexts though) and the goals the method pursue are being achieved. Yet, many requirements that a plan needs to tackle the challenge of globalization remain unfulfilled.

In addition to what have been mentioned before, what the silent way suffers more from concerns with the application of operating principles presented by Kumar that can govern the processes and practices of L2 teacher education. These Principles are: Particularity, Practicality, and Possibility. It is not clear whether it can be use for beginner or advanced adult or children, large number of students or a few students. In some situations it is not possible to provide the tools.

Therefore, this method cannot count for particular group of teachers, teaching a particular group of learners, pursuing a particular set of goals, within a particular institutional context, embedded in a particular socio-cultural milieu.

The evaluation that we have done is expected to bring about some precious insights for language teaching. First of all, we have shown in what grounds silent way cannot satisfy the modules and parameters of KARDS model and consequently the needs of globalization. Another insight coming from the study can be the consideration of this study as a model for language teachers to evaluate the way they teach language in their particular context. Finally, the positive aspects of silent way that were in compliance with KARDS model were also mentioned; therefore, teacher can take them into consideration and use them if they are appropriate for their own situation.

REFERENCES

- Birjandi, P., Mosallanejad, P., & Bagheridoust, E. (2006). *Principles of teaching foreign languages*. Tehran: Rahrovan press.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). New York: Pearson Education.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA and second language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Freeman, D. L. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2th ed.). Oxford: Oxford university Press.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times*. NewYork. Teacher college press.
- Johnson, K. E. (2009). *Second Language Teacher Education*. Routledge
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: from method to post-method*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language teacher education for a global society*. Routledge.
- Polanyi, M. (1958). *Personal knowledge*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Prabhu, N.S. (1990). There is no best method – why? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 161-176.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Transforming teacher education: redefined professional for 21st century schools. (2008). The International Alliance of Leading Education Institute. Singapore: National institute of Education.

Van Manen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical. *Curriculum inquiry* , 6, 205-208.

Zeichner, K. (2005). Becoming a teacher educator: a personal perspective. *Teaching and teacher education*, 21, 117-124.

THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT DEMANDS OF OUTPUT TASKS ON EFL LEARNERS' USE OF LISTENING STRATEGIES, LISTENING COMPREHENSION, AND NOTICING OF LANGUAGE FORM

Marzieh Jawanmiri (M.A in TEFL)

*Department of English Language, Kurdistan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Sanandaj, Iran
M.Jawanmiri@yahoo.com
Jawanmiri.m@gmail.com*

Adel Dastgoshadeh (Ph.D)

*Department of English Language, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran
adastgoshadeh@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study explored the effect of different demands of output tasks on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' use of listening strategies, listening comprehension, and noticing of language form. The purpose of this study was to investigate how different demands of output tasks including: listening for memorization, listening for summarization, and listening for visualization have different impacts on learners' listening strategies while listening, listening comprehending, and grammar noticing. In this case, 60 students, in Abidar English Center, located in Sanandaj- Iran, who were all studying 'Interchange 2', were selected to participate in the study. The participants were randomly divided into three groups. Before performing the tasks, the results of a listening comprehension test and a grammar test, as pre-tests, revealed no significant difference among three groups. By performing the different output tasks on three groups, two other tests including: a listening comprehension test and a grammar test were used as post-tests, and a questionnaire was used for assessing the different strategies used at the time of listening. The results showed a significant difference between memorization group with other two groups based on their accuracy in grammar. No difference was appeared in listening comprehension among three groups. Moreover, through working on a questionnaire which demonstrated the strength of a five-factor model underlying Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ): (1) problem-solving, (2) planning and evaluation, (3) mental translation, (4) person knowledge, and (5) directed attention, the different groups employed different listening strategies while listening.

KEYWORDS: Listening strategy, Listening comprehension, Noticing, Language form, Inter-language, Output task, Task demands.

INTRODUCTION

In the past 10 years, much attention in second language learning research has been devoted to composing hypotheses and theories explaining crucial factors that may develop foreign language (FL) listening comprehension (Nagle & Sanders, 1986; Buck, 1991). Researchers have argued that listening comprehension ability can be taught and trained by using appropriate strategies (Chien & Wei, 1997; Chien & Kao, 2004). Research shows that learners do have their own listening strategies, and there are some differences in what they do in order to comprehend the listening text (Oxford, 1993). To be more successful listeners, listeners should employ a greater number and range of listening strategies; listeners should be flexible in changing strategies to meet the task and be motivated to understand the oral message (Bacon, 1992a). Having a significant and crucial role, the importance of this phenomenon will be enhanced and improved through pre-determined strategies used by learners and may result in a higher level of listening comprehension.

Listening comprehension is a complex activity; coordinating sounds, vocabulary, grammatical structures, and background knowledge involve a great deal of mental processes on the part of the listener (Vandergrift, 1999). O'Malley, Chamot & Kupper (1989) demonstrated that effective EFL listeners use both top-down and bottom-up strategies to construct meaning, while ineffective listeners just determine the meanings of individual words. A study done by Shang (2005) also demonstrated that EFL listeners with lower-proficiency focus on memorizing the picayune linguistic details instead of concentrating on the whole comprehension.

Meaning-focused instruction which ignores the form is not efficient enough in producing successful L2 learners (Ellis & Sheen, 2006). However, the fact that teachers accept every inter-language form produced by the learner without correction will result in fossilized errors (Seedhouse, 1997). Noticing to meaning causes developing competence when other aspects of language such as syntax, semantics, word choice, and discourse structure are considered, too. Skehan (1998) states that "after the critical period, language learning is constrained by similar structures and processes to other learning, and that for learners, meaning takes priority and language form has secondary importance."

For getting the best results at the time of listening, listeners are requested to focus on form in spite of meaning. Long (1991) stated that focus on form overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication. Therefore, in the process of listening, attention also should be directed to language form for obtaining competency. Swain (1998) argues for the facilitative role of learner production in learning. Swain (1995) also proposes that learners need to attend to form in order to achieve high levels of linguistic competence. According to Ellis (2001a) form refers to not only grammar, but also any aspect of linguistic form, and focus on form can be directed at phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and even spelling.

Mackey (2000) fulfilled a research based on the development of morphosyntactic and lexical forms to examine the effects of learners' noticing the gap through interactional feedback in the classroom. The results of his study show that learners, who had more noticing in employing the

forms in spite of attending to meaning, developed more. However, attention is limited, that is, learners cannot attend to meaning and form at the same time. (VanPatten, 1990).

Research findings have indicated that output tasks influence language processing and language learning (Swain, 1985, 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 1995; Izumi, 1999; Izumi, 2002). So, planning before a task or a pre-planned task results in the improvement of task performance particularly in the field of listening. Schmidt (2001) states that "task requirements, task instruction, and input enhancements techniques affect what is attended to and noticed in on-line processing" (p. 10). Thus, the way language is processed and directs learners' attention toward language form, comes true by planning pre-planned tasks in a way that it provides learners some opportunities, and facilitates the way for more learning in further steps.

It is believed that learners' sensitivity to the way they encode their intended meaning in the target language is enhanced through the act of producing the target language (Swain, 1998). Since, the progression of this matter will be facilitated by planning output tasks in the process of learning.

Output is not the last stage of language learning, that is, it feeds back to previous stages of learning which consequently results in inter-language development (Swain, 1998 & Gass, 1997). Therefore, the present study implies to the pre-planned output tasks in the field of listening. In other words, the study dealt with investigating the effect of different output tasks on the process of listening to make the students raise their meta-cognitive awareness and focus on meaning and form in an integrated way.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do different demands of output tasks lead to differences in listening strategies employed by the participants?
2. Do different demands of output tasks lead to differences in listening comprehension of the participants?
3. Do different demands of output tasks lead to differences in noticing of language form by the participants?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants consisted of 75 students (both male and female) in Abidar English Center, located in Sanandaj. All participants have been studying English as a foreign language for two years. The researcher administered a test named "Standardized English Language Knowledge Test" designed by Wei-Tsung Hsu (2008) in order to ensure the homogeneity of the participants regarding their language proficiency level. Based on the obtained scores fallen on standard deviation below or above the mean, 60 learners out of 75 were selected as the participants of the study and 15 participants were discarded.

Instruments

In the present study, four types of instruments were administered:

Standardized English Language Knowledge Test

The participants' English Knowledge Test was composed of 29 test items for the grammatical subtest and 27 test items for the vocabulary subtest which was designed by Hsu (2008). This test was used by the researcher in order to be sure about the homogeneity of students' proficiency level. The reliability index of the test, as reported by Hsu (2008), is .915, measured at Cronbach alpha.

Participants were divided into three groups of Memorization, Summarization, and visualization. The researcher worked on three groups by different output tasks for each. In this case, the memorization group was asked to reproduce a listening part exactly, summarization group was asked to retell it, and visualization group was asked to draw a picture based on what they have got in advance.

Multiple choice listening comprehension test (Pre-test)

While dividing groups into three, and before performing the tasks, a listening comprehension test was used by researcher from "Listening Advantage" book, level 2, written by "Tom Kenny & Tamami Wada" to assess the participants' listening comprehension. The researcher tried to show if learners paid attention to meaning and to what extent. Total score of each participant was calculated based on the number of correct answers.

Grammar test (pre-test)

The format of the grammar test was designed by TOEFL IBT KAPLAN which was assumed to indicate participants' language form noticing before working on different output tasks. The aim of this part was that to what extent learners notice to language form. Total score of each participant was calculated based on the number of correct answers.

Multiple choice listening comprehension test (post-test)

A listening comprehension test was used by researcher from "Listening Advantage" book, level 2, written by "Tom Kenny & Tamami Wada" to assess the participants' listening comprehension after employing different output tasks for a term.

Grammar test (post-test)

The format of the grammar test was designed by TOEFL IBT KAPLAN which was assumed to indicate participants' language form noticing after a term of doing different output tasks.

Reliability of Grammar and listening comprehension tests

To estimate the reliability of the grammar and listening comprehension tests (pre-post tests), KR-21 method of estimating reliability was used. In so doing, the mean, the variance and the number of items ($M=11.74$, $V=79$, $K=10$) were used to calculate reliability manually. The reliability of grammar test (pre-test) was 0.72, that of grammar test (post-test) was 0.74, that of

listening comprehension test (pre-test) was 0.78, and that of listening comprehension test (post-test) was 0.78.

Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)

The format of Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) was designed by Vandergrift (2005a) following guidelines outlined by Brown (2001), Dörnyei (2003), and Gilham (2000). The Internal reliability ranges from .68 to .78. The aim of this questionnaire was to assess listeners' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of strategies while listening to oral texts. The questionnaire demonstrated the strength of a five-factor model underlying the MALQ: (1) problem-solving, (2) planning and evaluation, (3) mental translation, (4) person knowledge, and (5) directed attention. The Likert scale in 6 points, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree", was used. The researcher asked learners to respond each question carefully. This questionnaire also intended to appraise learners' awareness of the listening process and reflect on their strategy use while listening.

Procedure

The English Language Knowledge Test was administered to measure the proficiency of the participants. Total score of the test was 56. In so doing, sixty students who got the enough score were participated in the study and 15 were discarded from the study.

First, the students were divided into 3 groups randomly and they were asked to participate in the listening comprehension and grammar pre-tests to see if there is any significant difference between them before mediation. These two tests were considered as pre-tests.

Then, after several treatment sessions (about one term), participants in group (1) were asked to listen to a short listening part and reproduce it exactly (memorization), Participants in group (2) were asked to listen to the oral text and retell the content of the text (summarization), and participants in group (3) were asked to listen to the oral text and draw a picture based on the content (visualization). Ten minutes were enough for each participant in order to be prepared for producing output as memorizing, summarizing, and visualizing.

In the third step, the participants were asked to describe what they had done during the listening phase. They were asked to check each of the 21 statements in the Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ), and circle the number which best described their use of listening strategies through a Likert scale ranging from 1 (I strongly disagree), 2 (I disagree), 3 (I partly disagree), 4 (I partly agree), 5 (I agree), and 6 (I strongly agree). The learners were advised that they must work at their own pace. Due to participants' limited command of getting the aim of the questionnaire, MALQ was translated into Farsi.

Fourth, during the final session, the participants were asked to perform two different kinds of tests: (1) for evaluating the participants' knowledge of listening comprehension, the listening comprehension test papers were distributed among learners. The participants were requested to listen to each oral text and circle around the correct choices. The researcher, in this way, showed the extent the participants notice to the meaning. (2) Grammar test was another test for focusing

on the form; the participants were asked to fill the blanks with correct parts of speech. These two tests were considered as post- tests.

Data Analysis

The data of the present study was obtained through listening comprehension test results, grammar test results, and self-reports of participants' listening strategies.

The data set was analyzed in the following steps: (1) The self-reports were analyzed to investigate whether different demands of output tasks would cause different listening strategies during the listening phase. The quantitative test was used to compare group differences of the listed listening strategies. (2) The comprehension check test answers were scored and correct answers were totaled for each participant. Then group differences were analyzed through using one-way between-groups ANOVA to examine the significant difference between the three groups, as measured by the Listening Comprehension post-test. The researcher wanted to understand whether different output tasks would effect on learners' listening comprehension or not. (3) The grammar test answers were scored and correct answers were totaled for each participant to show that whether different demands of output tasks would effect on noticing to the form. The one-way between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the group differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this part was to testify the truth or falsity of the research hypotheses. The results of the study presented in three steps provided answers for each of the four research hypotheses. In the first step, the results from One-way between groups ANOVA examined the relationship between learners' demands of output tasks including memorization, summarization and visualization and their performance on listening comprehension test. In the second step, using one-way ANOVA, the study demonstrated the relationship between learners' demands of output tasks including memorization, summarization and visualization and their performance on grammar test. In the third step, the study demonstrated the relationship between learners' demands of output tasks and Meta-cognitive Awareness Listening Strategies including planning-evaluation, directed attention, person knowledge, mental translation and problem-solving.

Homogeneity of the participants

In order to make our sampling fairly homogenous in terms of the level of learners' proficiency, the researcher just included those students whose scores on language proficiency test (named "Standardized English Language Knowledge Test") used in this study fell on standard deviation below or above the mean and ignored the rest. The total number of score obtained by a test taker on this test was calculated out of 56, one score for each question item. In so doing, 15 participants were discarded from the study since their scores on this test did not fall between the mean and on standard deviation above or below the mean.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Scores on Proficiency test	75	12	54	29.05	11.304
Valid N (listwise)	75				

As displayed by Table 1, the mean was 29 and standard deviation was 11. Therefore, given on standard deviation above and below the mean, participants whose scores were between 18 and 40 were included in the study (since $29 - 11 = 18$ and $29 + 11 = 40$). Altogether, the researcher was left with 60 students who were roughly at the same level of proficiency. By doing so, participants selected would be at the same level of intermediate language proficiency.

The students' performance on listening comprehension pre-test
Pre-test between three groups:

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the three groups on listening pre-test

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre-test Memorization	20	25.00	3.53	.79
Summarization	20	23.35	3.89	.87
Visualization	20	24.00	3.00	.67

Table 2 represents the mean and standard deviation for the three groups which are approximately the same. The mean score of memorization group is 25.00, that of summarization group is 23.35, that of the visualization group is 24.00. The table also gives the number of people in each group which is 20.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA for scores on listening pre-test

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	27.64	2	13.81	1.12	.331
Within Groups	698.55	57	12.25		
Total	726.18	59			

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to examine the significant difference between the three groups, as measured by the Listening Comprehension Pre-test. Subjects were divided into three groups according to their demands of output tasks. There was *not* a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three groups [$F(2, 57) = 1.12, p = .01$] (See Table 3).

The students' performance on grammar pre-test
Pre-test between three groups:

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation of the three groups on grammar pre-test

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre-test Memorization	20	27.30	4.26	.95
Summarization	20	29.15	5.92	1.32
Visualization	20	28.65	4.92	1.10

Table 4 represents the mean and standard deviation for the three groups which are approximately the same. The mean score of memorization group is 27.30, that of summarization group is 29.15, that of the visualization group is 28.65. The table also gives the number of people in each group which is 20.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA for scores on grammar pre-test

ANOVA

scores on grammar pre-test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36.633	2	18.317	.709	.497
Within Groups	1473.300	57	25.847		
Total	1509.933	59			

There was *not* a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(2, 57) = .70, p = .01$] (See Table 5).

The students' performance on listening comprehension post-test

Table 6: Mean and standard deviation of the three groups on listening post-test

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
post-test Memorization	20	25.60	5.96	1.33
Summarization	20	26.95	6.45	1.44
Visualization	20	28.15	6.88	1.53

Table 6 shows the mean and standard deviation for the three groups which are approximately the same. The mean score of memorization group is 25.60, that of summarization group is 26.95, that of the visualization group is 28.15. The table also gives the number of people in each group which is 20.

Table 7: One-way ANOVA for scores on listening comprehension post-test

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	65.10	2	32.55	.783	.462
Within Groups	2368.30	57	41.54		
Total	2433.40	59			

Using the statistical formula of one-way between-groups ANOVA, the researcher examined the significant difference between the three groups, as measured by the listening comprehension Post-test. Subjects were divided into three groups according to their demands of output tasks. There was *not a* statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(2, 57) = .783, p = .01$] (See Table 7). Therefore, the second research hypothesis was not rejected.

By preparing three different output tasks, the researcher couldn't influence the differences between groups based on their listening comprehension. Maybe designing more output tasks could help finding this distinction. It seems that retelling output tasks may trigger the learners' critical thinking to ask themselves questions about the text and evaluate their perceptions.

The students' performance on grammar post-test

Table 8: Mean and standard deviation of the three groups on grammar post-test

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post -test	Memorization	20	34.05	3.17	.79
	Summarization	20	30.70	5.02	1.12
	Visualization	20	29.80	4.42	.98

As displayed by Table 8, the mean and standard deviation for the three groups in which the first group mean score is much more than that of other groups.

Table 9: One-way ANOVA for scores on grammar post-test

ANOVA

scores on grammar post test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	200.62	2	100.31	5.48	.007
Within Groups	1042.35	57	18.28		
Total	1242.98	59			

Using the statistical formula of one-way between-groups ANOVA, the researcher examined the significant difference between the three groups, as measured by the Grammar Post-test. Subjects were divided into three groups according to their demands of output tasks. There was *a* statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three groups [$F(2, 57) = 5.48, p = .01$] (See Table 9). Therefore, the third research hypothesis was rejected.

Table 10: Post-hoc test for listening post-test scores

Multiple Comparisons
Scores on grammar post test
Tukey HSD

(I) levels		(J) levels	Mean Differenc e (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
dimen sion2	memorization	dimensio n3	3.35*	1.35	.04	.10	6.60
		visualization	4.25*	1.35	.00	1.00	7.50
	summarization	dimensio n3	-3.35*	1.35	.04	-6.60	-.10
		visualization	.90	1.35	.78	-2.35	4.15
	visualization	dimensio n3	-4.25*	1.35	.00	-7.50	-1.00
		summarization	-.90	1.35	.78	-4.15	2.35

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As displayed by Table 10, Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for memorization was significantly different from summarization and visualization. Summarization did not differ significantly from visualization. By performing different demands of output tasks, there was a significant difference between memorization group with summarization and visualization groups based on their noticing to form. So, the researcher does agree with the ideas of Lightbown & Spada et al. (1990) that a higher level of grammatical accuracy in oral production is expected in combination of form-focused and meaning-focused teaching.

Calculating the effect size for listening post-test

Although SPSS does not generate it for this analysis, it is possible to determine the effect size for this result. The information needed to calculate eta squared, one of the most common effect size statistics, is provided in the ANOVA table. The formula is:

$$\text{Eta squared} = \text{Sum of squares between-groups} / \text{Total sum of squares}$$

In this study, the researcher divided the Sum of squares for between groups (200.62) by the Total sum of squares (1242.98). The resulting eta squared value is .16, which in Cohen's (1988) terms would be considered a *great* effect size. It means that the effect size between the three groups is great.

Cohen classifies .01 as a small effect, .06 as a medium effect and .14 as a large effect.

Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)

Reliability of the translated questionnaire

Due to the lack of enough knowledge of students in comprehending the aim of the questionnaire, the researcher translated it into Farsi in order to clarify the aim of strategies used by learners while listening. Since the researcher, first, estimated its reliability. To

examine the internal consistency of the translated questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha was used, and Cronbach's Alpha estimated the reliability of the whole items as 0.78.

Memorization group

Table 11: MALQ for memorization group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Planning evaluation	63	14.1	14.1	15.0
Directed attention	110	24.7	24.7	41.2
Person knowledge	55	12.3	12.3	54.3
Mental translation	118	26.5	26.5	82.4
Problem solving	74	16.6	16.6	100.0
Total	420	100.0	100.0	

The results from the SPSS Software for Windows version 21:00 yielded interesting frequency concerning the MALQ for memorization group. The most commonly-identified strategy was concerned with *mental translation*.

Summarization group

Table 12: MALQ for summarization group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Planning -evaluation	135	32.1	32.1	21.9
Directed attention	88	21.0	21.0	53.1
Person knowledge	48	11.4	11.4	64.5
Mental translation	65	15.5	15.5	80.0
Problem solving	84	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	420	100.0	100.0	

The most commonly-identified strategy was concerned with *planning-evaluation*.

Visualization group

Table 13: MALQ for visualization group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Planning-evaluation	92	21.9	21.9	21.9
Directed attention	142	31.8	31.8	55.7
Person knowledge	64	15.2	15.2	71.0
Mental translation	52	12.4	12.4	83.3
Problem solving	70	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	420	100.0	100.0	

The most commonly-identified strategy was concerned with *directed attention*.

CONCLUSION

Findings of this study referred that being more aware of the meta-cognitive listening strategies helps learners raise their consciousness and tend toward the variety of suitable strategies while performing the different demands of output tasks for listening.

By gathering the information of the questionnaire, the researcher found that when we listen to something in our real life, we clearly do it with some purpose, if we want to replicate it in our classes as real as outside, it is better to give classroom's listening some purpose, too, and make learners extremely motivated; in this way, their strong motivation leads to succeed. The researcher was looking for some ways which could increase the attention of learners toward language form and help learners shift from content to form to convey their meaning through which. The spoken sentences by English learners should be perfectly grammatical. Because of the complexities observed in English form and particularly in grammar, the successful ways of teaching help more effectively. By prescribing a variety of beneficial output tasks, the EFL learners can promote the gap of inter-language.

Overcoming the performance of tasks correctly needs a variety of skills and experiences obtained by teachers and learners. Getting these results won't be feasible unless by training based on educational skills which are in the favor of both teachers and learners.

Teachers need to think realistically about the task ahead. There are loads of merits and demerits in fulfilling the different tasks. So, distinguishing those with highly positive points and mitigating those with negative points doesn't come true unless by experienced and knowledgeable teachers. The new way of devising syllabi cannot be examined under the old syllabus. All doing in these fields need overall changing and modifying by up to date and modern ways of teaching.

Applicants must hold a recognized teaching qualification. Everyone who has got a degree of teaching is not merely a good and responsible teacher. New teachers should do times teaching practice as part of the course, until they find enough confidence to run their classes to meet the learners' needs. For performing different tasks, it is better to make subjects introduced to classes interesting and fun; there is certainly no lack of interest in some subjects which cannot motivate learners to participate in performing output tasks. Some scholars' idea is that although language forms are necessary in language learning, but are not considered in CLT and Interactive tasks, which are supposed to focus on the comprehensibility of the language, give priority to fluency over accuracy. By doing this research, the researcher found loads of reasons which can promote the communication and interaction between learners based on learning English forms and applying them in their speaking. So, getting accuracy in the first step is not considered as a barrier on the way of interacting, but also strives to facilitate this journey faster.

The researcher faced the following limitations in her research study:

First, the researcher teaches in a private English center with limited number of learners in each class, thus the sample size was not large enough, so, the effect of output tasks needs to be examined on more participants. Second, since the researcher could consider just three different output tasks in this study because of the lack of enough time, other types of output tasks need

to be investigated in future studies. Third, long-term effects of output tasks have better results on learners based on their strategies employed while listening, their listening comprehension and their accuracy toward form, but the present study examines just the short-term effects of output tasks. Fourth, according to Ellis et al. (2002) form refers to not only grammar, but also any aspect of linguistic form. Ellis et al. (2001a) argues focus on form can be directed at phonology, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and even spelling; the researcher could consider just grammar as a part of noticing to form. So, in further studies, preparing some tasks which could cover the different elements of form would be suggested. Fifth, among four skills intervene in learning English, listening was a skill which was considered by the researcher; so, other skills will be recommended.

REFERENCES

- Bacon, S. (1992). The relationship between gender, comprehension, processing strategies, and cognitive and affective response in second-language listening. *The Modern Language Journal*, 76, 160-78.
- Chien, C. N., & Kao, L. H. (2004). Examining the inter-relationship of metacognitive strategy training, listening comprehension, and learning attitude in EFL training. *Chung Yuan Journal*, 32(2), 241-54.
- Chien, C. N., and Wei, L. (1997). A preliminary investigation of the listening strategies of EFL learners. *Chung Yuan Journal*, 25(2), 45-66.
- Ellis, R. (2001a). *Form-focused Instruction and Second Language Learning*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell.
- Gass, S.M. (1997). *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Hsu, W. (2008). EFL students' English language knowledge, strategy use and multiple choice reading test performance: A structural equation modeling approach. University of Southampton. Unpublished doctoral thesis.
- Izumi, S. (2002). Output, input enhancement, and the noticing hypothesis: An experimental study on ESL relativization. *Studies in Second Acquisition*, 24, 541-77.
- Izumi, S., & Bigelow, M. (1999). 'Does output promote noticing and second language acquisition?' *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 239-78.
- Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1990). Focus-on-form and corrective feedback in communicative language teaching: Effects on second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 429-448.
- Long, M. (1991). *Focus on form: a design feature in language teaching methodology*. In Long, M. H. (1996), *The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition*. Handbook of second language acquisition. Academic press, 413-46.
- Mackey, A. (2000). How do learners perceive implicit negative feedback? *Studies in second language acquisition*.
- Nagle, S. J., & Sanders, S. L. (1986). Comprehension theory and second language pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(1), 9-26.
- O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., & Kupper, L. (1989). Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, 418-37.

- Oxford, R. L. (1992/1993). Language learning strategies in a nutshell: Update and ESL suggestions. *TESOL Journal*, 18-22.
- Schmidt, R.W. (2001). *Attention*. In Robinson, P., editor, *Cognition and second language instruction*. Cambridge University Press, 3-32.
- Seedhouse, P. (1997). Combining form and meaning. *ELT Journal*, 51(4), 336-44.
- Shang, H. F. (2005). An investigation of cognitive operations on L2 listening comprehension performance: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Listening*, 19, 51-62.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In Cook, G., and Seidlhofer, B., editors, *Principle and practice in applied linguistics: studies in Honor of H.G. Widdowson*. Oxford University Press. 125-44.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1995). 'Problems in output and the cognitive processes they generate: a step towards second language learning.' *Applied Linguistics*, 16 (3), 371-91.
- Swain, M. (1998). 'Focus on form through conscious reflection' in C. Doughty and J. Williams: *Focus-on-form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating second language listening comprehension: Acquiring successful strategies. *ELT Journal*, 53(3), 168-176.
- VanPatten, B. (1990). Attention to form and content in the input: an experiment in consciousness. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 287-301.

SPEECH ACTS AND LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS FOUND IN THE CONVERSATION MODELS OF *PROSPECT 1* (AN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK FOR IRANIAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS YEAR XII)

A'zam Shams (M.A.)

*English teacher at Farzanegan High School of Gachsaran,
Ministry of Education of Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: shamsazam08@gmail.com
Phone: 989173425028*

ABSTRACT

This descriptive qualitative study was conducted to find out what speech acts and language functions are found in the conversation models of Prospect 1 (An English Textbook for Iranian Junior High School Students Year XII authorized by Textbook Curriculum Development of the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran). This English textbook was designed for use in Iran's junior high school grade XII and is of particular interest because it was based on a communicative approach and was student-centered, whereas past traditional textbooks had followed the traditional methods. The task involved the analysis of the utterances of the conversation models based on Searle's (1976) speech acts taxonomy and van Ek's (1998) list of macro and micro-language functions. A hand count of speech acts revealed speech acts in 123 utterances. The most frequent speech acts were those of Representative, while no Declarative speech acts were observed. Also it was found that Imparting and seeking factual information accounted for 54.28 percent of language functions and only 0.71 percent referred to Structuring Discourse ones. The results indicated that these pragmatic factors were distributed unequally throughout the conversation models. Finally, some implications were offered for the textbook authors in considering and including all types of the speech acts and language functions in English textbooks.

KEYWORDS: Speech acts, Language functions, Prospect 1

INTRODUCTION

Knowing a language does not just mean acquiring the syntax or semantics (linguistic competence), but to develop and use the knowledge of pragmatics (pragmatic competence). Pragmatic competence in foreign language contexts is defined as the knowledge of communicative action or speech acts, how to perform it, and the ability to utilize the language in proper ways based on the context or contextual factors (Kasper, 1997; Kasper & Roever, 2005). Pragmatic competence helps learners to come up with the problems of miscommunication indifferent cultures, and for effective communication in target language. Therefore, language pedagogy should promote language learners' pragmatic competence in the target language, especially in terms of emphasis on one of the significant pragmatic features, speech acts, through

adequate pedagogical practices. And also, we, as teachers, have the responsibility to help language learners develop their pragmatic competence by providing them authentic and appropriate pragmatic input and making them familiar with different speech acts and making them enable to produce those speech acts in different contexts.

But, as a fact, in EFL contexts, it is difficult to equip learners with authentic pragmatic input. Because in EFL settings, like Iran, English is taught as a foreign language and most often, the students do not use English in their daily lives. Their exposure to English language is limited to their English classes with non-native teachers and to the textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, as Razmjoo (2007) believes, textbooks are necessary resource for foreign language learning that has the main role in teaching and learning a foreign language. However, as Gholami, RimaniNikou, and Soultanpour (2012) claims no textbook can be perfect; hence, textbook evaluation is very important to clarify the suitability of the sources and find the best one. Because of this fact it is necessary to evaluate the textbooks constantly to see if they are appropriate and modify them if necessary. This process enables us to make informed decisions through which student achievement will increase and educational programs will be more successful.

This study tries to analyze the conversation models of *Prospect 1* based on Searle's (1976) speech act taxonomy and van Ek's (1998) list of macro and micro-language functions in order to find the different types and frequencies of speech acts and language functions applied in the conversation models of this textbook.

RELATED STUDIES

Speech Acts/ Functions

According to Yule (1996), speech acts are actions performed via utterances. In English, they are labeled as apology, offer, compliment, invitation, promise, or request. These labels for different kinds of speech acts apply to the speaker's communicative intention in producing an utterance. The speaker normally expects that the hearer comprehends his or her communicative intention.

Searle (1976) classified speech acts into five major categories:

1. Representatives: These speech acts commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. asserting and concluding.
2. Directives: These are the speech acts which get the listener to do something, e.g. requesting and questioning.
3. Commissives: These speech acts commit the speaker to some future course of action, e.g. promising and threatening.
4. Expressives: These speech acts express a psychological state, such as thanking, apologizing, and welcoming.
5. Declaratives: These are speech acts which make immediate changes in the state of affairs and tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions, such as declaring war or marriage.

Functions describe the social actions that people intend to perform through language and are expressed in terms like *expressing agreement with a statement* or *showing that one is following a person's discourse*. van Ek (1998) listed 6 macro-functions of language:

1. Imparting and seeking factual information
2. Expressing and eliciting attitudes
3. Getting things done (suasion)
4. Socializing
5. Structuring discourse
6. Communication repair

and 132 micro-functions, e.g., asking, instructing, commanding, suggesting, and requesting .

Foreign Research on Textbook Evaluation

Kanik (2002) did a study to show effectiveness of ESP reading materials at both macro and micro level including nine criteria for English for Law courses at Bashkent University in Turkey.

Morgan (2003) studied IELTS preparation materials and showed that there is a need for more materials that are beyond test-taking practice and aim at developing the language competencies that the candidates need for their work or study destinations. Vellenga (2004) made a comparison between EFL and ESL textbooks. She stated that textbooks rarely provide enough information for learners to successfully acquire pragmatic competence.

Yuka (2008) investigated closing sections in “Oral Communications I” textbooks, which are used in Japanese high school English classes, to see how and how much closing sections are presented.

Batjargal (2010) conducted a doctoral study to look at speech acts in an English language textbook series (English 1-6 series designed for Mongolian secondary schools), including a Student's book, an Activity book, and the Teacher's book.

Finally, the most recent study in textbook evaluation has been performed by Maesaroh (2013) on speech acts and gambits found in the conversation models of *Look Ahead 2* (an English text book for senior high school grade XI).

Iranian Research on Textbook Evaluation

A number of studies have also been done in Iran on the book evaluation. Tavakoli (1995) studied the language functions in the dialogues in the English textbooks of Iranian senior high schools. Razmjoo (2007) investigated the CLT principles in the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks.

Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010) investigated the types of learning objectives represented in Iranian senior high school and pre-university English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives.

Iraji (2007), as cited in Koosha and Dastjerdi, (2012) studied the extent to which the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have been taken into consideration in New Interchange series.

Soozandehfar and Sahragard (2011) analyzed the conversation sections of Top Notch Fundamental textbooks from the pragmatic dimension of language functions and speech acts. Talebinejad and Namdar(2011) investigated the reading comprehension sections of Iranian high school English textbooks (IHSETs) to find out the extent of using discourse markers and their types.

The work reported by Koosha and Dastjerdi (2012) studied the use of request forms in Richard's Interchange Series, Books I, II, and III.

Moradi, Karbalaeei, and Afraz (2013) aimed at the evaluation of Speech Acts and Language Functions in High School English Textbooks (I, II And III) and Interchange Series, Books I, II, And III.

Soleimani and ShafieKhah (2014) attempted to examine the ESP book taught at Payame Noor University for BA Students of Accounting to see whether the book satisfied students according to their objectives, needs, and wants. Regarding the foreign and Iranian studies on textbook evaluation, no study has been done on *Prospect 1* textbook, which has recently come into the realm of FLT, with regard to the pragmatic dimension applying Searle's (1976) speech act classification and van Ek's (1998) list of macro and micro-functions of language.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the objectives of the current study the following questions will be answered in this research:

- 1- Which speech acts and language functions are found in the conversation models?
- 2- How are these speech acts and language functions distributed in the conversation models?

METHODOLOGY

Material

Prospect 1 (an English textbook for junior high school students year XII authorized by Textbook Curriculum Development of the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran) composed of 8 lessons. Each lesson is divided into three sections, *Conversation*, *Sounds and Letters*, and *Listening and Reading*. Two conversation models are presented in each lesson, one in *Conversation* section and one in *Sounds and Letters* section. Altogether, there are 16 conversation models in this textbook.

Data Collection Procedure

In this study, all the 16 conversation models given in the *Prospect 1* were chosen as the object of the study. The aim was to find out what speech acts and language functions are found in them.

Following steps were applied in collecting the data.

1. All the conversations given in the *Prospect 1* were read to comprehend the information of the texts.
2. The conversations were respectively numbered 1 to 16.
3. The clauses containing speech acts were identified and classified according to Searle's (1976) 5 different speech acts classes: *Representatives*, *Directives*, *Commissives*, *Expressives*, and *Declaratives*.
4. The clauses in each class were analyzed and sub-classified according to van Ek's (1998) 6 main functions (*Imparting and seeking factual information*, *Expressing and finding out attitudes*, *Expressing and finding out moral attitudes*, *Deciding on courses of actions*, *Socializing*, *Structuring discourse*, and *Communication repair*) and 132 micro-functions: (e.g. *Correcting*, *Expressing gratitude*, *Offering assistance*, *Greeting*, *Asking someone to spell something*, and *etc.*)

Data Analysis Procedure

As mentioned before, *Prospect 1* (an English textbook for junior high school students year XII authorized by Textbook Curriculum Development of the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran) is communicatively oriented, therefore, it is conversation-based. The speech acts and language functions analyzed in this research are the ones used in conversations which are included in the *Conversation* and *Sounds and Letters* sections.

As the study is basically qualitative, the only quantitative analysis performed in this study was counting the frequencies of the occurrence of each class of Searle's (1976) speech act taxonomy and van Ek's (1998) language functions categories, as well as their percentages illustrated in Table 1 and 2. Also, the chi-square test was applied in order to better illustrate the distribution levels of these pragmatic variables. The results are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Tables 1 and 2 display the frequencies and percentages of speech acts and language functions, respectively:

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages of Speech Acts

No.	Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Declarative	0	0
2	Commissive	3	2.43
3	Directive	50	40.65
4	Expressive	19	15.44
5	Representative	51	41.46
	Total	123	100

As the results in Table 1 reveals the percentages of speech acts show that 41.46% refers to *Representatives*, 40.65% to *Directives*, 15.44% to *Expressives*, 2.43% to *Commissives*, and 0% to *Declaratives*. Therefore, it can be concluded that the overall minimum frequency refers to *Declarative* speech acts ($f=0$), and the overall maximum belongs to *Representative* speech acts ($f=51$).

Table 2: Chi-Square Results

Chi-Square	51.111
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Based on this table, the difference between the frequencies of these speech acts is significant and meaningful. In other words, the speech acts in the conversations of *Prospect 1* are not distributed equally and not at the same or close levels of frequency, i.e. Sig. = .000 ($p < .05$).

Table 3: Frequencies and Percentages of Language Functions

No.	Functions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Imparting and seeking factual information	76	54.28
2	Expressing and finding out attitudes	15	10.71
3	Deciding on courses of actions (Suasion)	18	12.85
4	Socializing	18	12.85
5	Structuring discourse	1	0.71
6	Communication repair	12	8.57
	Total	140	100

Based on Table 3, *Imparting and seeking factual information* comprises 54.28 percent, *Expressing and finding out attitudes* 10.71 percent, *Deciding on courses of actions (Suasion)* 12.85 percent, *Socializing* 12.85 percent, *Structuring discourse* 0.71 percent, and *Communication repair* 8.57 percent of language functions in the book. As a result, *Imparting and seeking factual information* ($f=76$) is the most frequent class of language functions, and the least one is *Structuring discourse* ($f=1$).

Table 4: Chi-Square Results

Chi-Square	36.113
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	.000

According to this table, the difference between the frequencies of these language functions is significant and meaningful. In other words, the language functions in the conversations of *Prospect 1* are not distributed equally and not at the same or close levels of frequency, i.e. Sig. = .000 ($p < .05$).

Discussion

As the results from Table 1 illustrates, out of the five speech act classes in Searle's (1976) classification, one speech act, i.e. *Declarative*, was absent among other speech acts. In other words, four classes of Searle's (1976) speech act classification, including *Representative*, *Expressive*, *Directive*, and *Commissive* speech acts, were present in the conversation models of the textbook (See Appendix A). Therefore, the lack of the *Declarative* speech acts in all of the conversation models of this textbook may be regarded as a weakness for this textbook. As Cutting (2002) states, declarative speech acts are used frequently in everyday communication. They are words and expressions that change the world by their every utterance, such as "I bet," "I declare," "I resign," "I announce," "I pronounce," and many other utterances which are used in different contexts. Also Searle (1976) explains that all types of speech acts are frequently used in every day communication, and believes that different kinds of situations or contexts enable us to use different types of speech acts in order to maintain the basic relationships in our social lives. Therefore, to become pragmatically competent and functional in almost all the contexts of communication, learners need to gain the knowledge of all types of speech acts so as to be able to apply pragmatically appropriate speech acts in different communicative contexts. In this respect, the conversation models of *Prospect 1* do not contain all types of Searle's (1976) speech acts, on the one hand, and according to the results of the chi-square test in Table 3, the existing speech acts are not equally distributed throughout these conversations.

The results from Table 2 indicate that *Prospect 1* textbook covers all the six macro-functions of language. Also a total number of 30 language micro-functions are included in the conversation models of this textbook (See Appendix B). *Imparting and seeking factual information* comprises 54.28 percent of language functions in the book including *identifying*, *reporting*, *correcting*, *asking*, and *answering question*. Then, *expressing and finding out attitudes* comprises 10.71 percent of language functions including *expressing agreement*, *expressing wants*, *expressing liking*, *expressing interest*, *expressing gratitude*, and *offering an apology*. The third, *deciding on courses of actions (Suasion)*, comprises 12.85 percent of language functions including *suggesting a course of action*, *requesting*, *instructing or directing*, *offering assistance*, *inviting someone to do something*, *accepting an offer*, and *declining an offer*. *Socializing* also comprises 12.85 percent of the language functions including *attracting attention*, *greeting people*, *meeting a friend*, *replying to greeting*, *introducing someone*, *being introduced to someone*, and *taking leave*. Then, *structuring discourse* comprises 0.71 percent of language functions including *giving signals that you are hearing and understanding*. Finally, *communication repair* comprises 8.57 percent of language functions including *asking for repetition*, *asking someone to spell something*, *appealing for assistance*, and *spelling out a word or expression*. Looking at the frequencies and percentages of these language functions in Table 2, one can find out the fluctuations among these pragmatic variables in the conversation models. Moreover, as the result of the chi-square test shows in Table 4, there is a significant difference in the distribution of the language functions in the conversation models.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at identifying and categorising the speech acts and language functions in the conversation models of Iranian seventh grade of junior high school English textbook, *Prospect 1* based on Searle's (1976) speech acts taxonomy and van Ek's (1998) list of macro and micro-language functions. The results revealed that the most frequent speech acts in *Prospect 1* are *Representatives* whereas *Declaratives* are not included.

According to Cutting (2002) a good conversation consists of all of the language functions with an equal distribution throughout the textbook. In other words, real conversations in real-life situation contain all of the language functions. So, a good and suitable textbook must include conversations containing all types of these language functions distributed equally throughout the conversations of the book in order to make learners pragmatically competent in their speaking performance. As a result, it is better for the conversation models in *Prospect 1* to include all types of these language functions equally. Therefore, it is necessary for the textbook authors to take this pragmatic pitfall of the conversation models of *Prospect 1* into consideration in developing later *Prospect Series* textbooks. Furthermore, according to the results, the existing speech acts and language functions are not equally distributed throughout the conversation models of the textbook, then; this study recommends the authors to use all types of speech acts and language functions at the same frequency or percentage among all of the conversation models.

In relation to these findings, it is worth mentioning that this textbook, like other language textbooks which have been taught in Iran schools, suffers from lack of explicit instruction of pragmatic features, e.g., speech acts. Many Iranian and international studies have examined the effect of explicit instruction on the development of pragmatic knowledge, e.g., Silva (2003); Alcon-Soler & Guzman-Pitarch (2010); Salemi, Rabiee, & Ketabi (2012); Salehi (2013); Rafieyan, Sharifi-Nejad, & Siew Eng (2014). And most of them found that explicit teaching of pragmatic aspects can be very effective and beneficial for students in order to develop their pragmatic competence in target language. It is recommended, therefore, that the textbook authors try to incorporate explicit instruction of pragmatics into the communicative design of the next *Prospect* textbooks.

Regarding the findings of this study, further studies can be conducted to investigate the presence or absence of different types of speech acts and language functions in later *Prospect* textbooks.

REFERENCES

- Alcon-Soler, E., & Guzman-Pitarch, J. (2010). The effect of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness: A focus on refusals. *IJES*, 10(1), 65-80.
- Batjargal, D. (2010). *The Study of Verbal Communication in the Case of English Speech Acts*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of the Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- Cutting, J. (2002). *Pragmatics and Discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Gholami, J., RimaniNikou, F., & Soltanpour, A. (2012). A retrospective-comparative evaluation Of textbooks developed by native and non-native English speakers. *Journal of Academic And Applied Studies*, 2(11), 34-41.

- Kanik, F. (2002). *Evaluating the Effectiveness of the ESP Reading Materials for 215 English for Law Course at the English Language School of Baskent University*. Unpublished MA thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Kasper, G. (1997). Can pragmatic competence be taught? (NetWorks No. 6). Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
- Kasper, G., & Roever, C. (2005). Pragmatics in second language learning. In E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, pp. 317-334. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Koosha, B., & Vahid Dastjerdi, H. (2012). Investigating Pragmatic Competence: The Case of Requests in Interchange Series. *Asian Social Science*, 8(1), 54-61.
- Maesaroh, S. (2013). Gambits found in the conversations of Look Ahead 2: An English textbook For senior high school students year XI. *ELT Forum*, 2(1), 1-7.
- Morgan, T. (2003). IELTS preparation materials. *ELT Journal*, 57(1), 66-76.
- Moradi, A., Karbalaee, A., & Afraz, Sh. (2013). A textbook evaluation of speech acts and Language functions in high schools English textbooks (I, II, III) and Interchange Series Books (I, II, III). *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 323-335.
- Razmjoo, A. (2007). High schools or private institutes' textbooks? Which fulfill communicative language teaching principles in the Iranian context? *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(4), 1-16.
- Rafieyan, V., Sharifi-Nejad, M., & Siew Eng, L. (2014). Effects of pragmatic instruction on sustainable development of pragmatic awareness. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 4(1), 206-218.
- Riazi, A. M., & Mosalanejad, N. (2010). Evaluation of learning objectives in Iran high-school and pre-university English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy. *TESL-EL*, 13(4), 1-16.
- Salehi, M. (2013). The effect of instruction on development of pragmatic competence. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 1(2), 86-97.
- Salemi, A., Rabiee, M., & Ketabi, S. (2012). The effects of explicit/implicit instruction and feedback on the development of Persian EFL learners' pragmatic competence in suggestion structures. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(1), 188-199.
- Searle, J. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society*, 5, 1-23.
- Silva, A. (2003). The effects of instruction on pragmatics development: Teaching polite refusals In English. *Second language Studies*, 22(1), 55-106.
- Soleimani, H., & Shafiekhah, N. (2014). Are textbooks satisfying students? A case in Iran. *IJLLALW*, 5(2), 8-14.
- Soozandehfar, M., & Sahragard, R. (2011). A textbook evaluation of speech acts and language functions in Top-Notch Series. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(12), 1831-1838.
- Talebinejad, M. A., & Namdar, A. (2011). Discourse markers in high school English textbooks in Iran. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(11), 1590-1602.
- Tavakoli, M. (1995). Encouragement and punishment in Iran high schools. *ROSHD: Teacher Education Journal*, 15 (5).
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yuka, A. (2008). Examining closing sections in Oral Communication I textbooks. *The Economic Journal of Takasaki City University of Economics*, 50(3-4), 111-124.

vanEk, J. A., & Trim, J. L. M. (1998). *Threshold 1990*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning pragmatics from ESL & EFL textbooks: How likely? *TESL-EJ*, 8 (2), 25-38.

APPENDIX A:

Speech Acts Found in the Conversation Models of *Prospect 1*

SA Taxonomy	Con. No.	Example	Sum
Expressive	1,2,3,7,8,11,13,15,16	Hi, How are you?, Fine, Thank you, Nice to meet you, Bye, Thank you , Welcome to our school, Nice picture!	19
Commissive	11,13	I'll call dad, I'm going to visit him today, But I'll try	3
Directive	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13, 14, 15,16	What's your name?, Who is that boy? , When is your birthday?, Is that your father?, How old is he?, What's چادر in English?, And how do you spell them?, Sit down, Tell me your names, Look at this picture, Let's have some cake and milk, Are you coming with me? Can I have my library card? Can I help you? Excuse me	50
Representative	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13, 14,15,16	My name is Ahmad Karimi, I'm your English teacher, That's Erfan, It's in Mehr, He's thirteen, She's a housewife, I'm in the kitchen, He's fixing the car	51
Declarative	---	---	0
Total			123

SA=Speech Act, Con.= Conversation, No.= Number

APPENDIX B:

Language Functions Found in the Conversation Models of *Prospect 1*

Mac-Functions	Mic-Functions	Con. No.	Example	Sum
1. Imparting and seeking factual information f=76	Identifying	1-2-3-4-9-11-13	I'm your English teacher. I'm Kimia Komijani.	19
	Reporting	7-11-13-15	Ali's not well. He's fixing the car.	8
	Correcting	12	It's /w/ not /v/.	2
	Asking	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-11-12-13-14 15	What's your phone number? – Which one is your math teacher?	26
	Answering question	2 5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15	It's 3445302. I'm 12. It's in Mehr. I'm in the kitchen. Around 5 in the afternoon.	21
2. Expressing and finding out attitudes f=15	Expressing agreement	4-11-13-15	Ok. , Sure.	6
	Expressing wants	4	Can I have my library card?	1
	Expressing liking	7	Nice picture!	1
	Expressing interest	5	Really?	1
	Expressing gratitude	1-2-3-8-16	Thank you	5
	Offering an apology	2	Excuse me.	1
3. Deciding on courses of actions (Suasion) f=18	Suggesting a course of action	3-9-15	Let's talk to him.-Let's meet your English teacher first. Let's have some cake and milk.	5
	Requesting	1-2-13	Call me before you go. You please say your name.	4
	Instructing or directing	1-11-12	Sit down. Look at this picture.	4
	Offering assistance	4	Can I help you?	1
	Inviting someone to do something	13	Are you coming with me?	1
	Accepting an offer	4-13	I'll try. Yes.	2
	Declining an offer	15	But I'd like some tea with my cake.	1
4. Socializing f=18	Attracting attention	5-10-11-12-16	Excuse me, teacher. Mom. Fatemeh.	5
	Greeting people	1-2-3-11	Hello. Hi.	6
	Meeting a friend	1	How are you, Ali?	1
	Replying to greeting	1	Fine, thanks.	1
	Introducing someone	3	This is Ali.	1
	Being introduced to someone	3	Nice to meet you.	3
	Taking leave	13	Bye.	1
5. Structuring discourse f= 1	Giving signals that you are hearing and understanding	6	Oh, I see.	1
6. Communication repair f=12	Asking for repetition	6	Thirty?	1
	Asking someone to spell something	2-8-10	How do you spell his first name?	3
	Appealing for assistance	10-16	What's چادر in English? And دستکش?,	3
	Spelling out a word or expression	2-6-8-10-16	Komijani, K-o-m-i-j-a-n-i, jelly, j-e-l-l-y.	5
Total	30			140

Mac= Macro, Mic= Micro, Con.= Conversation, No.= Number,

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' PERSONALITY TRAITS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND THEIR JOB SATISFACTION

Sharareh Ebrahimi

Safir English Language Institute, Tehran, Iran

Email: eb_sharareh@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study was designed to investigate the relationship between personality traits, emotional intelligence, and English teachers' job satisfaction in Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. In so doing, a sample of 80 EFL teachers, who were teaching English in English language institutes in Tehran, Iran was selected. The participants' views towards their job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, and personality traits were investigated using three Likert-type questionnaires. The results of descriptive statistics revealed that Iranian EFL teachers were not satisfied with school-based and system-based factors of their career. Their satisfaction restricted to the intrinsic factors of their job. The results of multiple regression analyses showed that the personality traits are stronger predictors of teachers' job satisfaction. the present study added the potential influence of the personality and emotions in promoting teachers' job satisfaction and a sense of belonging and belief in positive outcomes.

KEYWORDS: EFL Teachers, Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Personality Traits

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, academic work in every field of study is extensively linked to real world professional experience and teaching is not considered as an exception in this case. Thus, if we want to have well-prepared EFL teachers, we should provide real life training program for them. Concentrating on the issue of learning, a teacher is always influenced by many factors throughout his or her learning. It does not matter how old the learner is. The teacher learns or boosts his or her learning through the environment.

The studies on individual and personality differences are a central theme in psychology as well as the other areas of social and behavior sciences (Saklofske & Eysneck, 1998). According to Pervin and John (1995), personality is defined as a unique expression of individual differences in behavior and experience which must out of necessity, be reflected in personal attributes. In other words, psychologically, it is a truism that people are different in many fundamental ways and individuals are characterized by a unique pattern of traits. It could also be defined as "the relatively enduring style of thinking, feeling, and acting that characterizes an individual" (Costa, McCrae & Kay, 1995, p. 124). Moreover, McMartin (1995) also defined personality as "the developing system of distinctive emotional, cognitive and spiritual attributes that manifest themselves in the individual's characteristic behavior at any point in the life course" (p. 5). There

are many different views regarding the issue of the definition of personality and personality traits like any other abstract concepts, as what is meant by personality or personality traits are not usually tangible or measurable directly, however, the main theme is identical.

It is believed that personality factors are important in learning development in general and the improvement of linguistic abilities specifically (Ellis, 1985). Horwitz (1999) pointed out “language learners are individuals approaching language learning in their own unique way” (p.558). Therefore, for many language teachers, personality of the learners is one of the major factors that contributes to their success or failure (Ellis, 1996). In addition, it could also be concluded that individuals who are characterized as particular psychological types, adopt the same way of learning, face almost the same problems in that process, and approach those problems in quite the same way (Fazeli, 2012). Consequently, every one involves in the process of teaching and learning must be aware of the relationship between learners’ personality traits and their academic performance as personality and personality factors play an important and undeniable role in the area of teaching and learning (Eysenck, 1967; Cattell & Butcher, 1968).

Individual variables such as motivation, cognitive styles, abilities, and learning strategies play an important role in the process of learning and nowadays; many researchers have focused on them in their studies. Mokhtari (2007) asserted that some individuals’ differences such as attitudes, sex, nationality, major, and so forth can affect the frequency and variety of language learning strategy use. One of these learners’ variables which we can mention is intelligence.

In 1990s, the emotional intelligence was introduced for the first time and it was used in many fields including education. This concept was formally developed out of growing emphasis on research on the interaction of emotion and thought in the field of psychology. Goleman (1995) defined emotional intelligence as abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration, to control impulses and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to emphasize and to hope, which include self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself. Later, Goleman reformulated his first definition of emotional intelligence and broke down emotional intelligence into twenty-five different emotional competencies, like political awareness, service orientation, self-confidence, consciousness and achievement drive (Goleman, 1998). Furthermore, Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined the Emotional Intelligence as the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.

In recent decades, a lot of researchers had investigated these aspects such as logical reasoning, spatial skills, math skills, understanding analogies, verbal skills, etc. for example, Terman (1921, cited in Rouhani, 2008) states that an individual is intelligent in proportion as he is able to carry on abstract thinking. Although Intelligence Quotient (IQ) could predict, to some academic degree, professional and personal success, but there were some people with high IQ scores who were poorly doing in their life and losing their chances of success.

In order to take advantages of social life and interact in an effective and confident environment, it is important to learn a complex set of social skills such as personality traits. The body of literature reveals a lack of empirical research on personality traits and language learning. Educators must be aware of the impact of individual differences among learners and the personality traits on their learning process. Educators must be aware of the research on personality, since one of the goals of education is the personal and social development of learners. Despite the significant role of personality features in differentiating individual learners, and the potential effect it can have on teaching, to date, very scarce number of studies have been conducted to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence, personality traits, and teachers' job satisfaction. This issue is highlighted when it is considered in Iranian EFL context.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed in order to meet the objectives of the study:

1. Are Iranian EFL teachers' personality traits and emotional intelligence significant predictors of their job satisfaction?
2. Which aspect of Iranian EFL teachers' personality traits is a significant predictor of their job satisfaction?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study included 80 EFL teachers who were teaching in English language institutes of Tehran. They were both male and female. Their English teaching experience varied from 10 to 15 years. The present study adopted a convenience sampling method in which a certain group of people are chosen for the study. This sampling method was chosen in order to maximize the number of EFL teachers as close to the researcher's residence as possible in this survey. The researcher invited these EFL teachers working in the high schools to respond to the questionnaires.

Instruments

The instruments of the study consisted of three questionnaires: a) Personality Traits Questionnaire, introduced by Townend (1991), was used to identify the students' thoughts, ideas, and emotions to compare them with those of others. It includes four sub-scales of assertive, aggressive, submissive, and passive characteristics. Each of these sub-scales consisted of 20 questions that were randomly placed in the questionnaire. After reading each item, the testee needed to examine the particular questioned behavior introspectively; if the questioned attribute was present in his behavior with a high degree of frequency then the affirmative echoic was used; otherwise he should choose "no". Actually the answer sheet displays a binary choice; b) Emotional Quotient inventory (EQ-i) developed by Bar-On (1997) model of EI was used in this study. This scale assesses EI based on self-reported responses to 133 items tapping the evaluation and expression of emotion in oneself and others, and using emotions to solve the problems. The Persian version of this instrument was employed to avoid cross-cultural differences and probable misunderstandings regarding the content of the questionnaire. The original Emotional Quotient

inventory (EQ-i) had demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha ranging from .87 to .90), and good two- week test-retest reliability ($r = .78$) (across a wide variety of cultures) (Bar-On et al., 1997); c) Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Karavas (2010), consists of four main parts: Part 1 elicits the biographical information about teachers (age, sex, years of teaching experience, types of the schools/institutions, and geographical region of schools/institutions in which they have taught). Part 2 consists of a series of 15 Likert-type statements related to teachers' level of satisfaction with various aspects of their job extrinsic to the task of teaching such as their recognition by students, peers, parents and the wider community, the image of teachers, their status in society, their salary, working hours, benefits, etc. The scores on this part were measured by a 5 point scale ranging from 1= highly satisfying to 5= highly dissatisfying. Part 3 consists of a series of 20 Likert type statements focusing on the second research question of the study. More specifically, this part of the questionnaire elicited respondents' attitudes towards various school based factors, their work and their relationship with students. The answers on this part were measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree. Finally, Part 4 investigates the reasons which teachers express for choosing teaching as a career.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to prove the normality of the scores of the emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and personality, a one sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and personality

		Emotional Intelligence	Job Satisfaction	Personality
N		80	80	80
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	487.2500	87.8000	13.79
	Std. Deviation	49.89343	4.89743	2.271
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.109	.148	.128
	Positive	.058	.069	.090
	Negative	-.109	-.148	-.128
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.975	1.320	1.148
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.298	.061	.144
a. Test distribution is Normal.				
b. Calculated from data.				

As the Table 1 shows, the most extreme difference between the scores is not significant. The measured significance levels for emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and personality scores were 0.29, .06 and 0.14; they were higher than the assumed level of significance (i.e., 0.05), therefore, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between the observed distribution of the scores of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and personality and they are normally distributed. In order to investigate the first research question of the study in finding whether Iranian EFL teachers' personality traits and emotional intelligence are significant predictors of their job satisfaction, a standard multiple regression was performed. Table 2

provides the extent to which variability in the dependent variable (job satisfaction) is accounted for by the independent variables (personality traits and emotional intelligence).

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.758 ^a	.575	.562	.3976
Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Personality				

With regard to Table 2, the coefficient of multiple correlations is presented in the "R" column. R is the measure of the prediction of the dependent variable; in this case, job satisfaction. A value of 0.75 indicates a good level of prediction. The "R Square" or R^2 value is the proportion of variance in the job satisfaction that can be explained by the independent variables (i.e., emotional Intelligence and personality traits). It indicates that emotional Intelligence and personality traits explain 57% of the variability of job satisfaction.

In order to determine whether the provided model (emotional Intelligence and personality traits as independent and job satisfaction as dependent variable) is a good fit for the data, a one-way ANOVA was performed. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA of regression model

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.078	2	2.539	47.56	.000 ^b
	Residual	144.289	117	5.344		
	Total	149.367	119			
Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction						
Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence, Personality						

The F value in the Table 3 verifies the fitness of overall regression model for the data. The result shows that ($F = 47.56$, $p = 0$) p value is lower than assumed level of significance (i.e., 0.05), therefore, EFL learners' emotional intelligence and personality traits can significantly predict their job satisfaction (i.e., the regression model is a suitable method for analyzing the data) and the first research question of the study was verified.

In order to investigate the second research question of the study in finding which aspect of Iranian EFL teachers' personality traits is a significant predictor of their job satisfaction, another multiple regression was conducted. Table 4 provides the extent to which variability in the dependent variable (job satisfaction) is accounted for by the independent variables (aspects of personality traits).

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.309 ^a	.096	.047	4.77977
a. Predictors: (Constant), Passiveness, Assertiveness, Aggressiveness, Submissiveness				

R is the measure of the prediction of the dependent variable; in this case, job satisfaction. A value of 0.30 indicates a good level of prediction. The " R Square" or R^2 value is the proportion of variance in the job satisfaction that can be explained by the independent variables (i.e., aspects of personality traits). It indicates that aspects of personality traits explain 9% of the variability of job satisfaction.

In order to determine whether the provided model (aspects of personality traits as independent and job satisfaction as dependent variable) is a good fit for the data, a one-way ANOVA was performed. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: ANOVA of the regression model

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	181.335	4	45.334	21.984	.006 ^b
	Residual	1713.465	75	22.846		
	Total	1894.800	79			
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Passiveness, Assertiveness, Aggressiveness, Submissiveness						

The F value in the Table 5 verifies the fitness of overall regression model for the data. The result shows that ($F = 21.98$, $p < .05$) p value is lower than assumed level of significance (i.e., 0.05), therefore, different aspects of personality traits can significantly predict their job satisfaction (i.e., the regression model is a suitable method for analyzing the data). Table 6 shows the information about the model coefficients. The general form of the model is to predict EFL learners' job satisfaction from their personality traits.

Table 6: Coefficients of the model

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	90.706	2.999		30.249	.000
	Aggressiveness	-.042	.163	-.032	-.255	.799
	Assertiveness	-.365	.163	-.278	-2.238	.028
	Submissiveness	-.193	.224	-.123	-.862	.392
	Passiveness	.212	.154	.178	1.375	.173
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction						

As can be seen in the above table, assertiveness ($b = .27$, $p < .05$) is a significant predictor of EFL teachers' job satisfaction which would indicate that larger assertiveness is related to higher job satisfaction. In other words, assertiveness aspect of personality traits is a significant predictor of Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore, the second research question of the study was verified.

The results of multiple regression analyses showed that the personality traits is a stronger predictor of teachers' job satisfaction. This finding supported those of Day (2002), Day et al., (2006) and Shann (1998) who found that teachers are satisfied with the intrinsic elements of their

work such as interaction with students, professional autonomy, and self-growth and express dissatisfaction with issues related to school-based factors. This result also confirms the findings from the study of Karavas (2010) who showed that Greek EFL teachers' satisfaction of their job has a significant relationship with students' achievements. The results of multiple regression showed that the assertiveness aspect of personality traits is a significant predictor of Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction. This result confirmed those of Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999) who found that teacher student relationship enhanced teacher satisfaction and the direct consequences for it when emotional exhaustion, a sense of futility, and reduced personal accomplishment creep into teachers' working lives. The results of this study were in line with those of Zembylas and Papanastasiou (2004) who found that teachers' reliance on student responsiveness was significantly related to the teachers' personal satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The present study was designed to investigate the impact of personality traits and emotional intelligence on Iranian EFL teachers' job satisfaction in Iranian EFL teachers. Teachers' dissatisfaction with their jobs may be mainly due to the insufficient salary, and/or due to the fact that the educational system does not give appropriate values to different teaching qualities. In other words, teachers believe that for the existing educational system an experienced and skillful teacher is equal to an inexperienced and less skillful teacher. Whatever the reason, this problem - the teachers' dissatisfaction with their job - may deeply affect the teaching methodology on the part of teachers and consequently language learning on the part of learners, as well. These problems may lead to less friendly relationships between teachers and their students, and less time spent on students' problems with learning English as examples which lend themselves well to support the importance of teachers' dissatisfaction with their job.

The present study provides implications for English language teachers to pay attention to the concept of emotional intelligence and try to follow strategies and use techniques in order to promote their emotional intelligence. They can share their feelings with colleagues to help them be familiar with each other, enhance their interpersonal communications, develop cognitive abilities, and reduce stress and anxiety.

The implementation of this study in its present suggested form can be justified in terms of some limitations. The participants were selected according to available sampling. The study can be duplicated using procedures that allow a higher degree of randomization and eventually more generalizability.

REFERENCES

- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): A Test of Emotional Intelligence*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems
- Cattel, R. B., & Butcher, H. (1968). *The prediction of achievement and creativity*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill.

- Costa P., McCrae, R., & Kay, G. (1995). Person, places, and personality: Career assessment using the revised NEO personality inventory. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 3, 123-139.
- Day C. (2002). "The challenge to be best: reckless curiosity and mischievous motivation", in *Teacher and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8 (3), 421-434.
- Day, C., Stobart, G., Sammon, P., & Kington, A. (2006). "Variations in the work and lives of teachers' relative and relational effectiveness", in *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 12, 2: 169-192.
- Ellis, R. (1996). *Second language acquisition and language pedagogy*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1967). *The biological basis of personality*. Springfield: Thomas.
- Fazeli, H. (2012). The influence of personality traits on the use of Memory English Language Learning Strategies. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 5(7), 3041-3046.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on language learners' beliefs about language learning: a review of BALLI studies. *System* 27, 557-576.
- Karavas, E. (2010). How satisfied are Greek EFL Teachers with their Work? Investigating the Motivation and Job Satisfaction Levels of Greek EFL Teachers. *Porta Linguarum* 14, 59-78.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 9, 185-211.
- McMartin, J. (1995). *Personality psychology: A student centered approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mokhtari, A. (2007). *Language Learning Strategies and Beliefs about Language Learning: A Study of University Students of Persian in the United States*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas.
- Pervin, L. A., & John, O. P. (1995). *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Rouhani, A. (2008). An investigation into emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety and empathy through a cognitive- affective course in an EFL context. *Linguistic online* 34(2). Retrieved from http://www.linguistik-online.com/34_08/rouhani.html
- Saklofske, D. H., & Eysenck, S. B. G. (1998). *Individual differences in children and adolescents* (Eds.). New Brunswick, NJ.: Transaction Publishers.
- Shann, M.H. (1998). "Personal commitment and satisfaction among teachers in urban middle schools", in *The Journal of Educational Research*, 92, 2: 67-73.
- Townend, A. (1991). *Developing Assertiveness*. Routledge: London.
- Vandenberghe, R., & Huberman, A. M. (1999). *Understanding and Preventing Teacher Burnout*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zembylas, M., & Papanastasiou, E. (2004). Job satisfaction among school teachers in Cyprus. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 42 (3), 357-374.

THE IMPACT OF TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION VIA MUSICAL RHYTHM UPON PRONUNCIATION IMPROVEMENT OF IRANIAN KURDISH EFL LEARNERS

Farid Ghaemi (Assistant Professor)

Department of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Azad University

Faraz Pourjam (PhD candidate)

Karaj Islamic Azad University

ABSTRACT

This investigation intends to seek into investigating the impact of teaching pronunciation through a fun activity of Rhythm upon the learners' pronunciation improvement. This study is to discover whether students in this group will gain a significant improvement in pronunciation compared to the other group. To ensure the homogeneity of the two groups, the Nelson Proficiency Test will be administered among 120 Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. 82 students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean (scores from 26 to 38) were chosen as homogeneous subjects for this study. Next, Pearson test of English is handed to students as the oral pre-test. Then, Levene's test for equality of variances is employed to demonstrate that four sets of scores have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at pretest. Two-way AVOVA is employed after that to show statistically significant effect for gender and pronunciation improvement. Levene's test for equality of variances is also employed to demonstrate that four sets of scores (control & experimental, male and female) have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at post-test. Finally, Two-way ANOVA is utilized to testify the veracity of null hypotheses. ANOVA detected a statistically significant effect for group, i.e. teaching music and rhyme. Accordingly, the first null hypothesis was rejected. Thus with high degree of confidence it can be claimed that Teaching music and rhyme affects Pronunciation of young Iranian EFL learners. Additionally, ANOVA results revealed no statistically significant effect for gender. Accordingly, the second null hypothesis was not rejected. With high degree of confidence it was claimed that teaching music and rhyme affects pronunciation of young Iranian EFL learners and using this method for teaching pronunciation in Iranian context will bring about fruitful educational implications.

KEYWORDS: Teaching Pronunciation, Musical Rhythm, Pronunciation Improvement, EFL Learners, Kurdish Dialect

INTRODUCTION

Rhythm of English is conceived of as one of the hugest difficulties for many foreign learners of English. It is more vital for EFL learners who have a very diverse structure in their L1 (e.g. Kurdish). These learners are not generally provoked for pronunciation exercise. Consequently, this research will investigate the impact of musical rhythm, upon pronunciation improvement.

Rhythm, in fact, is timing patterns amid syllables. Nevertheless, the timing patterns are not similar in all languages. There are, principally, two contrary sorts of rhythm in languages: stress-timed and syllable-timed. In keeping with Mackay (1985), stress-timed rhythm is decided by stressed syllables that happen at standard gaps of time, with an irregular and varying number of unstressed syllables among them; syllable-timed rhythm is founded on the whole number of syllables as each syllable receives roughly identical quantity of time. English, with a fluctuation of stressed and unstressed syllables, is apparently stress-timed.”(Chen, C. et al 1996).

Statement of the problem

Kurdish, with almost the same weight and time in all syllables, is syllable-timed. The syllables in Kurdish have approximately very similar length and weight. Many Kurd learners are not conscious about this distinction. They employ the rhythm of Kurdish (syllable _timed rhythm) when they speak English. So these pronunciation difficulties might cause speech to become incomprehensible. It possibly will also be tedious for the learners to perform pronunciation and word stress in traditional language teaching method. Numerous students are fed up with the conventional methods which teach word stress. L1 interference is a major distress for EFL learners’ performance. A language like Kurdish which has a radically dissimilar stress system with English can inflict the fact that the learners put stress in any syllables in a word or a sentence. So as to aid students understand that English rhythm is dissimilar with Kurdish, we are capable of using these two illustrations:

Kurdish: syllable timed rhythm English: stressed timed rhythm

English rhythm consists of higher bouncing balls (stressed syllables) and lower bouncing balls (unstressed syllables), which indicates English as a language with different length and weight syllables. On the other hand, Kurdish comprises of identical bounces that represent Kurdish as the language with similar weight and length syllable language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

All over the centuries, specialists in diverse fields - philosophers, scientists, teachers and therapists have distinguished the role of music for remedial and developmental functions. During the last two decades, researches have had major progresses in the theory of foreign language learning. Several researchers find the educational conjoining of language and music unpredictably persuasive since there are frequent historical and developmental evidences of music's connection with language learning. Language and music are the two approaches which human beings employ to be in touch and communicate themselves via sound. Many ESL students who have achieved advanced high levels are still having problem in communicating, owing to low clearness. Word and sentence stress are constituents that donate to a great extent to intelligibility. The schoolwork consists of detailed methodology that can be functional in many ESL classrooms. Envisage you are a highly developed adolescent English language learner (ELL). This is your last year of high school, and you have completed the overwhelming confronts of passing all necessary standardized tests and gaining adequate credits to graduate from school. Your highly developed understanding of the English language has brought your admission at many highly regarded universities. Your awareness of English grammar very much surpasses that

of the normal graduating high school students. You are able to discriminate between a gerund and an infinitive. Your knowledge of past perfect is perfect, and you can reel off comparatives and superlatives. You have perfectly learned the intricate syntax, grammar, and vocabulary of English. In reality, there appears no hurdle to your social and academic achievement, except for one setback. Your meager pronunciation hinders your capability to interact in words. Youngster language learners are not probable to automatically “lift” the pronunciation models of a new language, while native speakers of English instinctively obtain the abilities to make the rhythmic impulses of our language very untimely in life. It is merely the time when another speaker falls short to produce satisfactory stress, intonation, and rhythm. We expect that we become attentive of these aspects at all.

Historical processes in pedagogy of pronunciation

Pronunciation teaching has been connected to the most accepted recent method utilized (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996). Pronunciation was rarely taught throughout the supremacy of the grammar-translation method. From the 1940s through the 1960s, pronunciation was given prominence in the Audio-lingual Method. Over this period, instruction concentrated on imitation and memorization, with recurrent use of error correction. Learners were for long hours in language labs listening to and repeating sounds and phrases. Ideal pronunciation was the chief objective. This trend to highlight pronunciation weakened for the next two decades. Some ESL specialists questioned if pronunciation might even be practically taught. The formerly admired drills exercised were believed to be futile. Accordingly, pronunciation instruction was nearly overlooked. Conversely, in the 1970s, some professionals started to reassess the significance of pronunciation, but with a new focus on communicative practice and learner participation (Morley, 1975).

Since the 1980s, attention to pronunciation has rematerialized, for the most part for use in academic and work-related frameworks. The newest focal point of pronunciation instruction is to allow ELLs to become efficient and competent speakers. As more holistic, interactive approaches have become progressively more well-liked, pronunciation instruction is now being taken in hand within the context of authentic communication (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin 1996; Morley, 1991). Now that pronunciation instruction is deriving from its normally-marginalized role in ESL instruction, professionals are finding out that ideal grammar is not adequate. The ebbs and flows of a language are attained via a natural-like accent. Acculturation is the capacity of the beginner to get a feel for and survive within the leading culture, without abandoning their first culture. The influence of music on today’s community is unfeasible to fail to notice. Tuning into most television or radio channels will give rise to a flood of music-based songs and advertisements. Without a doubt, music has become a main part of mainstream culture. Success in acculturation can enhance successful language acquisition (Schumann, 1986).

Working with children

Children are attracted to nursery rhymes, rhythmic activities, and songs as key texts in building concepts of reality. Though, it sounds that only innovative teachers go after the methods recommended in an institutional framework. Surely, the enhancement of language teaching might be viewed as the aim; in itself a main reason to probe and create.

Songs endorse the application of hand gestures, rhythmic movement, and the format permits public presentation. All of these promote abilities which are not mentioned in more conventional language teaching contexts. In effect, this is at variance significantly with the recent teaching practices employed in most situations that maintain language is best taught via teaching in vocabulary and the regulations to merge them. The effectiveness of such teaching, nevertheless well regarded by most teachers as it is textbook-related and moderately easy to manage, is not very high. The musical method concentrates on establishing fun with the language and allowing words come in a more normal way, and per se has more in common with interactive language learning method, that uses social interaction, small groups, and peer conversation. Music might be incorporated into a more authentic way of learning language. It helps out learners not only with learning of vocabulary, but also acquisition of language-related data. Advantages of applying music in the early on childhood language class are the upshots of the natural sympathy of music with language. Universal music activities that comprise singing and rhythm help promote the growth of aural discriminating skills, with incorporation of letter sounds, syllabification, and words pronunciation. Children pay special attention to delicate differences in tone and timing, which allows them to master their accent perfectly.

Working with adults

Several young adults/adults that pursue the EFL lessons are not total beginners, which mean that they already have some previous command of the language; either they have mastered it via usual school education or by individual experience. Typically, adults start the course either to get ready for tests in their school/university or for occupation headway, occasionally just for personal means. Much of the difficulties that students face in the study of English are a result of the extent to which their mother language varies from English, leading them to frequently make errors of syntax and pronunciation or to allot grammatical models of their own language to English, articulate some sounds wrongly or with problem and to confound items of vocabulary famous as false friends. In addition, cultural distinctions in interaction styles and likings are noteworthy. As expected, students who do not do extremely well with customary delivery methods are required to be dealt with in a different way, but the appropriate nature of that teaching, either musical, rational, or some other means might rely more on the teacher's personal capacities than student needs.

A review of the researches done in the field

Accent and clearness, the ability to be comprehended, make up for a major assistance to interpersonal interactions. The major constituents of accent are *segmental* features: spoken sounds and mixtures of sounds, and the *suprasegmental* facets: stress (length and loudness used for syllables), intonation (speech music or rising and falling of voice pitch), and liaisons or rhythm (word connections during flows of speech). Suprasegmental features of language go beyond the segmental production of vowels and consonants. They enlarge athwart the register of unique sounds and are typically automatically produced by native speakers. Many specialists assert that learning suprasegmentals might help general clearness even more than acquisition of the segmental features usually stressed in the classroom (Grant & Levis, 2003).

Following is an outline of momentous findings, or requirement thereof, pertaining to these issues explained. As rhythm is worldwide, (Martinec, 2000), it looks a reasonable supply to put into practice in the schooling of students who come from varied cultural and linguistic environments. Some investigation has demonstrated that overt instruction of English models may bring about major enhancement of production, even after L1 rhythmic models have been deeply acquired (Adams, 1979). The significance of position rhythm has in pronunciation has directed the focus of this research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Align with the research purposes; the following research questions are formed:

1. Does teaching English through musical rhythm have any significant effect on the development of young Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation improvement?
2. Does gender of young Iranian EFL learners' affect their pronunciation improvement through teaching musical rhythm?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

120 Iranian EFL elementary learners in an English language institute aged from 7-9 years old will participate in this study. To ensure the homogeneity of the two groups, the Nelson Proficiency Test will be administered among 120 Iranian EFL learners. 82 students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean (scores from 26 to 38) were chosen as homogeneous participants for this study.

Instruments

The following instruments are employed in order to conduct the study:

1. First, to ascertain the homogeneity of the participants of the study in terms of language proficiency, a general language proficiency test named Nelson Proficiency Test will be utilized.
2. An oral pre- post tests using some observation cards to determine the differences in each group before and after the instruction will be employed.

Procedure

To ensure the homogeneity of the two groups, the Nelson Proficiency Test is administered to 120 EFL learners. Afterwards, reliability of Nelson proficiency test is calculated through K-R 21 Method. 82 students whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean (scores from 26 to 38) were chosen as homogeneous participants for this study. In control group and experimental one 42 and 40 students are assigned with 45 male participants and 37 female ones respectively. After that Pearson test of English is handed to students as the oral pre-test. Next, reliability of pre-test is computed through Cronbach's Alpha formula. Then, Levene's test for equality of variances is employed to demonstrate that four sets of scores (control & experimental, male and female) have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at pretest. Two-way AVOVA is employed after that to show statistically significant effect for

gender and pronunciation improvement. In experimental group teacher uses musical rhythm to teach as the treatment of the study while in the other one she does not. At the end of the term a posttest is given to both experimental group and control one to check any significant difference between their performances. Later, Reliability of post-test is computed through Cronbach's Alpha. Levene's test for equality of variances is also employed to demonstrate that four sets of scores (control & experimental, male and female) have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at post-test. Finally, Two-way ANOVA is utilized to testify the veracity of null hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the results of the study which was an attempt to investigate the effect of teaching rhyme and music on young Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation improvement. To obtain the goal, the researcher tested the null hypotheses stated on the basis of the research questions. The first step to answer the research questions was to calculate the descriptive statistics for the related conditions, and the second step was to submit the data to repeated measures ANOVAs to determine whether there are significant differences between the conditions specified for each null hypothesis. The following represents the steps of screening the data against each null hypothesis.

Homogeneity process through nelson Proficiency Test

To ensure the homogeneity of the two groups, the Nelson Proficiency Test was administered among 120 EFL learners. Those students (N = 82) whose scores fell within the range of one standard deviation above and below the mean (scores from 26 to 38) were chosen as homogeneous participants for this study. Descriptive statistics for this homogeneity test is represented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Nelson Proficiency Test

N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
120	26	20	46	32.27	32.00	30	.558	6.109
120								

The mean score of participants was 32.27 with standard deviation of 6.109. The min of students was 20 and the median of the group was 32.00.

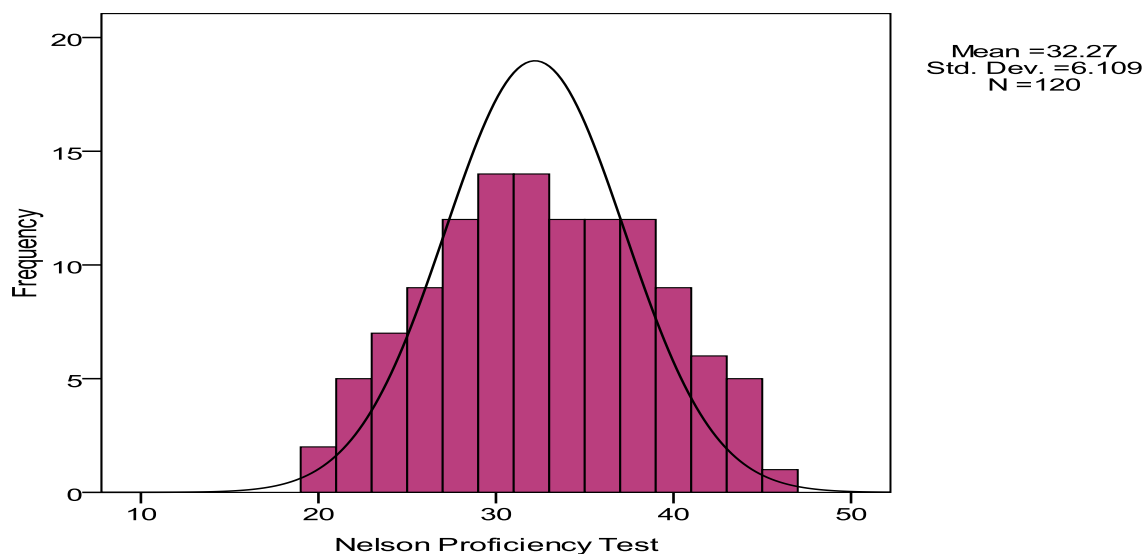


Figure 1: Nelson Proficiency Test Scores

Table 2: Reliability of Nelson Proficiency Test

Reliability of Nelson Proficiency Test	Valid	Number of Students	%	Number of Items	K-R 21 Method
	Excluded	30	0		
	Total	30	100.0		

Table 3: Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Group	1	Control	42
	2	Experimental	40
Gender	1	Male	45
	2	Female	37

Table 4: Reliability of pre-test

Reliability of Pretest	Valid	Number of Students	%	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
	Excluded ^a	0	0		
	Total	18	100.0		

The mean score of participants in control group for men was 19.61 with standard deviation of 5.639 and mean for female was 19.47 with standard deviation of 6.177, for experimental group

the mean score of male participants was 18.45 with standard deviation of 5.096 and for female the mean was 19.28 with standard deviation of 5.410.

Table 5: Dependent Variable: Pronunciation at Pretest

Group	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Control	Male	19.61	5.639	23
	Female	19.47	6.177	19
	Total	19.55	5.815	42
Experimental	Male	18.45	5.096	22
	Female	19.28	5.410	18
	Total	18.83	5.188	40
Total	Male	19.04	5.351	45
	Female	19.38	5.737	37
	Total	19.20	5.496	82

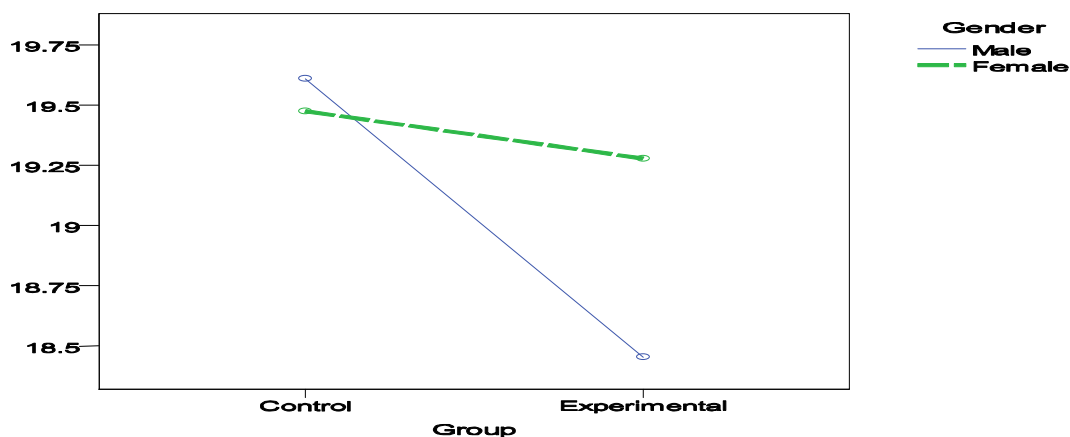


Figure 2: Dependent Variable: Pronunciation at Pretest

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.057	3	78	.962

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances demonstrates that the hypothesis of equal of variances was supported because Sig. was .96 at pretest, which is greater than the .05 significance level for

this study ($p > \alpha$). Therefore it was concluded that four sets of scores (control & experimental, male and female) have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at pretest.

Table 6: Two-way AVOVA

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	17.597	3	5.866	.188	.904	.007
Intercept	29933.545	1	29933.545	961.114	.000	.925
Group	9.246	1	9.246	.297	.587	.004
Gender	2.403	1	2.403	.077	.782	.001
Group * Gender	4.658	1	4.658	.150	.700	.002
Error	2429.281	78	31.145			
Total	32660.000	82				
Corrected Total	2446.878	81				

ANOVA failed to detect a statistically significant effect for group, ($F = .29$ $p = .58$, $p > .05$, Effect size = .004). Moreover, ANOVA results found no statistically significant effect for gender ($F = .07$ $p = .78$, $p > .05$, Effect size = .001). Accordingly, there was no significant difference between the pronunciation improvement of participants in control and experimental groups, and also between male and female participants before facing any treatment. Also, the interaction effect of Group * Gender was not significant ($F = .15$, $p = .70$, $p > .05$, Effect size = .002)

Table 7: Reliability of post-test

Reliability of Posttest	Valid	Number of Students	%	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
	Excluded ^a	0	0		
	Total	18	100.0		

Table 8: Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
Group	1	Control	42
	2	Experimental	40
Gender	1	Male	45
	2	Female	37

The mean score of participants in control group for men was 21.00 with standard deviation of 5.143 and mean for female was 21.32 with standard deviation of 5.850 for experimental group

the mean score of male participants was 25.64 with standard deviation of 5.619 and for female the mean was 24.39 with standard deviation of 6.307.

Table 9: Dependent Variable: Pronunciation at Posttest

Group	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Control	Male	21.00	5.143	23
	Female	21.32	5.850	19
	Total	21.14	5.408	42
Experimental	Male	25.64	5.619	22
	Female	24.39	6.307	18
	Total	25.08	5.894	40
Total	Male	23.27	5.813	45
	Female	22.81	6.191	37
	Total	23.06	5.953	82

p

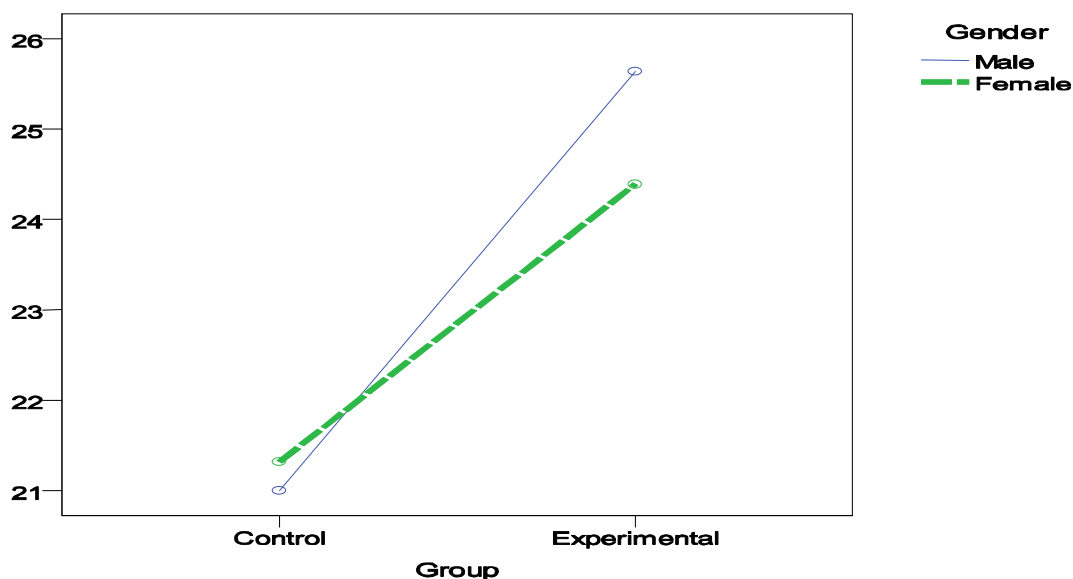


Figure 3: Dependent Variable: Pronunciation at Post test

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable: Pronunciation at Posttest

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.345	3	78	.793

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances manifests that the hypothesis of equal of variances was proved since Sig. was .79 at posttest, which is greater than the .05 significance level for this study ($p > \alpha$). As a result it was concluded that four sets of scores (control & experimental, male and female) have equal variances and therefore are homogeneous at posttest.

Table 10: Two-way ANOVA

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	333.221	3	111.074	3.414	.021	.116
Intercept	43257.257	1	43257.257	1329.695	.000	.945
Group	301.521	1	301.521	9.269	.003	.106
Gender	4.404	1	4.404	.135	.714	.002
Group * Gender	12.398	1	12.398	.381	.539	.005
Error	2537.474	78	32.532			
Total	46479.000	82				
Corrected Total	2870.695	81				

Null Hypothesis One

ANOVA detected a statistically significant effect for group, i.e. Teaching music and rhyme ($F = 9.26$, $p = .003$, $p < .05$, Effect size = .10). Accordingly, the first null hypothesis which predicted that Teaching music and rhyme does not affect Pronunciation of young Iranian EFL learners was rejected. Thus with high degree of confidence it can be claimed that Teaching music and rhyme affects Pronunciation of young Iranian EFL learners

Null Hypothesis two

Additionally, ANOVA results revealed no statistically significant effect for gender ($F = .13$, $p = .71$, $p > .05$, Effect size = .002). Accordingly, the second null hypothesis which predicted that gender of Iranian students does not affect their pronunciation was not rejected. Also, the interaction of Group * Gender was not significant ($F = .38$, $p = .53$, $p > .05$, Effect size = .005). The findings of the study clearly stated that teaching pronunciation through having fun and music bear direct influence upon students. As with the case of children, the findings imply that they will be much more affected by music as their biological features allow them to be so. Concerning adults, more intensive line of research needs to be conducted as to accurately determine which age range is how much affected by music in terms of the pronunciation improvement.

CONCLUSION

Due to the complexity and intricacy of the nature of the issue, finding a logical and appropriate answer to the questions raised in this paper can be beneficial in many ways and many aspects. This study is designed to investigate the effect of teaching the pronunciation through a fun activity of musical rhythm on the EFL young learners' pronunciation improvement. "The Angle of the North, a statue by Anthony Gormley in the north West of England, gives us a satisfying metaphor to deal confront with the biggest difficulty teachers' see regarding motivation." (Rogers 1996:61). Teaching word stress is one of those angles of North. So it is very essential for the teachers to overcome this problem." (Hammer, J. 2009: 57).

English is a very rhythmical language, so that a learner who can maintain the rhythm of the language is more likely to sound both natural and fluent. The two components of the system which have the greatest influence on rhythm are sentence stress and the various features of connected speech, i.e. what happens to words when we put them in an utterance." (Darn, 2007:7). Perception of rhythm of English is a very essential stage for learning a language. It may be a phase for pronunciation improvement. Sound pronunciation is an indispensable factor in having an intelligible and comprehensible speech. Musical rhythm can be viewed as a new and efficient one.

Limitations

Even after perception practicing word stress is a big problem for many EFL learners and teachers in Iran particularly for the young learners. Using the rhythmic technique, I have tried to find a solution to overcome this problem. It is obvious that the human child from the times she/he sits on her/his parents' lap starts clapping and learning while she is having fun. This method seems to be very effective in teaching rhythm of English through a fun way to practice rhythm of English unconsciously. The participants of this research will only be Iranian EFL young learners. Boukan will be the geographical area in which the research will be conducted. All participants will be Iranian EFL students who live in Boukan and they can speak Kurdish and Persian and no other nationalities will take part in this research. All the participants are in elementary level of English.

REFERENCES

- Abercrombie, D. (1956). *Problems and principles in language study*. London: Longman.
- Asher, J. (1993). Imagination in second language acquisition. *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching 1*, 20-23.
- Auer, P., Couper-Kuhlen, E., & Muller, F. (1999). *Language in time; the rhythm and tempo of spoken interaction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Avery, P., & Ehrlich, S. (1992). *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bansal, R. K. (1969). *The intelligibility of Indian English*. Hyderabad: Central Institute of English.
- Begley, S. (1996, February 19). Your child's brain. *Newsweek*, 55-62.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (1987). Teaching pronunciation as communication. In J. Morley (Ed.) *Current perspectives on pronunciation*. Washington DC: TESOL.

- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D., & Goodwin, J. M. (2000). *Teaching pronunciation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Chomsky, N., & Halle, M., (1968). *The sound pattern of English*. New York: Harper & 118
- Cruttenden, A. (1986). *Intonation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cutler, A. (1984). Stress and accent in language production and understanding. in D. Gibbon., & H. Richter (eds.) *Intonation, accent and rhythm: Studies in discourse phonology* . Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Dalton, C., & Seidlhofer, B. (1994). *Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fudge, E. (1984). *English word stress*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Gabb, S. (2000). Calzones! You can't eat calzones in Mexico. *American Education Newsletter*.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.
- Garnes, S., & Bond, Z. S. (1980). *Errors in linguistic performance: Slips of the tongue, ear, pen, and hand*. New York: Academic Press.
- Grant, L. (1999). Form to meaning: Bridges in pronunciation teaching. *TESOL Matters*, December/January, 12. 119.
- Hall, P. D. (1998). The relationship between types of rap music and memory in African American children. *Journal of Black Studies*, 28 (6), 802-814.
- Halle, M., & Keyser, S. J. (1971). *English stress: its form, its growth, and its role in verse*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Hill, C., & Beebe, L. M. (1980). Contraction and blending: the use of orthographic clues in teaching pronunciation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14 (3), 299-323.
- Hu, C. H. (2003). Phonological memory, phonological awareness, and foreign language word learning. *Language Learning*, 53 (3), 429-263.
- Hubicka, O. (1980). Why bother about phonology? *Practical English Teaching*, 1 (3), 22-24.
- Hubicka, O. (1982). Phonology: stress. *Practical English Teaching*, 1 (3), 20-23.
- Morley, J. (1975). Round robin on the teaching of pronunciation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9 (1), 81-88.
- Morley, J. (1991). Pronunciation component in teaching English to speakers of other languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23, 481-520.
- Morley, J. (1994). A multidimensional curriculum design for speech pronunciation instruction. In Morley (Ed.), *Pronunciation pedagogy and theory: New views, new directions*. 64-91. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
- Morley, J. (1998). Trippingly on the tongue: putting serious speech/pronunciation back in the TESOL equation. *ESL Magazine*, 1, 20-23.
- Morley, J. (1999). New developments in speech/pronunciation instruction. *As We Speak*, 2, 1-4.
- Nelson, A. M. S. (1999). *This is how we flow: rhythm in black cultures*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
- Newham, P. (1993). *The singing cure*. United Kingdom: Random House.
- Nunan, D. (1992). *Research methods in language learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Parrish, B. (2004). *Teaching adult ESL. A practical introduction*. New York: McGraw- Hill Companies, Inc.
- Pennington, M. (1996). *Phonology in English language teaching*. New York: Longman.

Petitto, L.A., Howlok, S., Segio, L., & Ostry, D. (2001). Language rhythms in babies' hand movements. *Nature*, 413, 35-36.

Powell, C. T. (1991). Rap music and education with a beat from the street. *Journal of Negro Education*, 60 (3), 245-259. 121

Schumann, J. H. (1975). Affective factors and the problems of age in second language

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER AUTONOMY AND LEARNER AUTONOMY AMONG EFL STUDENTS IN BANDAR ABBAS

Sahar Saljoughi

Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch
Department of English, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
Corresponding author email: saljoughi.sahar@gmail.com

Azadeh Nemati (Ph.D.)

Department of English language teaching, Jahrom branch, Islamic Azad University, Jahrom, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy among teachers and English as a foreign language (EFL) university students in Bandar Abbas, Iran, in two samples: a) 25 professors of Islamic Azad and Payam Noor universities of Bandar Abbas, b) 77 MA students of those universities majoring in English Teaching and English Translation. Professors were asked to complete Teacher Autonomy Scale (TAS) and students were asked to fill Learner Autonomy Questionnaire (LAQ). The independent t-test and the one-sample t-test were applied to examine the relationship between Teacher autonomy and learner autonomy and to clarify autonomy level of students. The results of the study indicated that there was no significant relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy and also, the autonomy level of students was high. The finding of the study can be applied not only to language learning contexts, but to all kinds of learning. Autonomy equips students with the power to deal with everyday situations and find solutions to the problems they encounter.

KEYWORDS: autonomy, teacher autonomy, learner autonomy

INTRODUCTION

In the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning, as the theory and practice of language teaching enters a new century, the importance of helping students become more autonomous in their learning has become one of its more prominent themes (Benson, 2001, p. 1) and a number of justifications for advocating learner autonomy in language learning have been proposed (Finch, 2000). Nanuli Chitashvili (2007) stated that autonomy is a complex socio-cognitive system, manifested in different degrees of independence and control of one's own learning process, involving capacities, abilities, attitudes, willingness, decision making, choices, planning, actions, and assessment either as a language learner or as a communicator inside or outside the classroom. The second language learning will proceed most effectively if learners are allowed to develop and exercise their autonomy. Benson (2008) argued autonomy is directly related to learning so the role of the learner and his/her contribution in the process of second

language learning is very important. Teachers and learners are working on and with each other in the process of learning autonomy. The teacher autonomy and learner autonomy are interacting with each other. According to Smith (2001), “Teachers also need to constantly reflect on their own role in the classroom, monitoring the extent to which they constrain or scaffold students’ thinking and behavior, so as to engage students in autonomous and effective learning”. If students want to learn to take control of their learning, the teacher may need to learn to let learners learn by themselves while providing necessary help. But learner autonomy cannot be simplified only as freedom from the control of the teacher, freedom from the constraints of the curriculum, even freedom to choose not to learn. In fact, Berofsky (1997) considered that the most important freedom that autonomy implies is “the learner's freedom from self, by which we mean his or her capacity to transcend the limitations of personal heritage”. Burkert and Schwienhorst (2008) took the view that teachers who themselves are autonomous learners may have a positive influence on the development of autonomy in their students. Learner autonomy has been considered as an essential part of learning in the last ten years based on the learners themselves, their needs, interests and reasons to learn a subject (Guevara de Leon, 2010). Learners are the makers of their own fortune and valued members of a learning community that is their class. It is up to learners if they want to learn. Many experts in the field of educational reform reported that empowering teachers is an appropriate place to begin in solving the problems of today’s schools (Melenyzer, 1990). If we are to empower teachers and exalt them as professionals, then, like other professionals, teachers must have the freedom to prescribe the best treatment for their students as doctors or lawyers do for their clients. This freedom is teacher autonomy and is not restricted to the classroom but also must include decisions that impact the classrooms such as school structure and organization (Pearson & Hall, 1993).

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy among the professors and the EFL university students majoring in English language translation and English language teaching in Bandar Abbas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning, as the theory and practice of language teaching enters a new century, the importance of helping students become more autonomous in their learning has become one of its more prominent themes (Benson, 2001, p. 1). According to Nunan (1997) the concept of autonomy in language learning is linked to the communicative approach. The second language learning will proceed most effectively if learners are allowed to develop and exercise their autonomy. The connection between autonomy in language learning and the communicative approach is, therefore, relatively well-developed at a theoretical level. The definition of teacher autonomy becomes more ambiguous as one reviews the literature on the subject. What seems like autonomy to one teacher may seem like isolation to another. One teacher may view autonomy as a means to gain substantial freedom from interference or supervision; another may view it as the freedom to develop collegial relationships and accomplish tasks that extend beyond the classroom. Some teachers thrive on autonomy, while others perceive it as a means for principals to avoid their duties (Fraser & Sorenson, 1992).

Thavenius (1999) argued that teacher autonomy refers to the teacher's ability and willingness to help learners take responsibility for their own learning (p.160). The teachers' role in an autonomous language classroom is to help learners learn by exposing them to the language and providing opportunities for them to practice the new language in class as well as at home (Lowes & Target, 1999). A teacher aiming to foster learner autonomy in his classroom also has to be aware of the importance of differentiation. Differentiating instruction is the idea of accommodating different ways learners learn; to design the lessons according to learners' needs and differences in the classroom. In a differentiated classroom it should be taken into consideration that learners have different abilities, skills and backgrounds. All of this affects the way they learn (Tomlinson, 2003). The learner autonomy teacher is one who helps learners become more aware of themselves as language learners (e.g. styles, needs, difficulties) and encourages greater independence in learning 'while recognizing that as learner expertise increases, teacher involvement inevitably decreases' (Hurd, 1998, p. 70). A number of definitions of learner autonomy exist in the field. Little (1991) conceptualized autonomy as "a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action" (p. 4). He believes that the capacity for autonomy will be demonstrated in the way learners learn and in the way they transfer what they have learned to wider contexts. Benson (2001) defined autonomy as "the capacity to take control over one's own learning" (p. 2). It is not a method of learning; rather it is an attribute of the learner's approach to the learning process. According to him, control over learning may take different forms at different levels of the learning process. Other researchers such as Wenden (1991), Littlewood (1996) and Scharle and Szabo (2000) defined learner autonomy in different dimensions such as learning and acquiring strategies and attitudes - learners' ability and willingness and the freedom and responsibility.

It is of vital importance to understand the dynamic relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy. They are interrelated and interactive. Smith (2001) explained explicitly their relationship, "Teachers also need to constantly reflect on their own role in the classroom, monitoring the extent to which they constrain or scaffold students' thinking and behavior, so as to engage students in autonomous and effective learning". As a result, teachers are required to get fully prepared for teacher autonomy. To promote LA, Yang (1998) suggested that teachers embark on new roles as helpers, facilitators, advisors, and guides. Teachers also provide information and help change learners' misconceptions through lectures, discussions or reading materials. Knowing and understanding the principles of learner autonomy is important before refusing or supporting it. New roles for teachers and learners are emerging and teaching has to be adapted to them. Autonomy requires a fundamental change in educational practices, and teachers and learners need to generate new developmental plans, according to continuous learning and reflection on their learning needs and purposes. Autonomous learning should be occurred through negotiation and cooperation between teachers and learners (Riasati & Mollaei, 2014).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To this end, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Is there any significant relationship between teacher autonomy and their Students to become autonomous in the learning foreign language?

2. What level of autonomy is present among EFL students?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The Participants of this study consisted of two groups of professors and students taking part in Azad University and Payam Noor University of Hormozgan province, Iran. In first group, there were 25 professors in teaching and translation of English (both male and female). In another group there were 77 M.A students of those universities. They were majoring Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Translation at the Department of Foreign Languages. They were studying in first and second semester. The participants were selected randomly as the sample of this study.

Instruments

To determine whether teacher autonomy has any correlation with learner autonomy, two instruments were used in this study. First, a Teacher Autonomy Scale (TAS) and second, a Learner Autonomy Questionnaire.

Teacher autonomy scale (TAS)

The TAS was developed by Pearson and Hall (1993). The 18 items on the scale were originally designed to elicit the degree to which teachers perceive they have autonomy in the following areas: (a) selection of activities and materials, (b) classroom standards of conduct, (c) instructional planning and sequencing, and (d) personal on-the-job decision making. In the study of Pearson & Moomaw (2005) of the TAS which utilized a stable factor structure with improved internal consistency reliability .83, that was computed based on Cronbach's alpha.

Learner autonomy questionnaire (LAQ)

It is designed by Zhang and Li (2004). It has two parts including 21 items after they were revised and predicted on the basis of the learning strategies classified by Oxford (1990), Wenden (1998) and O'Malley & Chamot (1990). The first part had 11 questions and each had five-point Likert scale (1= never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always). In the second part there were 10 questions. They should be answered based on five multiple-choice items.

Procedure

The participants were given the questionnaires and were requested to complete the survey, so that their autonomy level was obtained. The teacher's questionnaire was taken 15 minutes to answer it and student's questionnaire was taken 20 minutes to be completed. The data were collected in one month.

Data analysis

After collecting the data, the TAS and LAQ were scored based on the Likert-scale, the scores are respectively 1,2,3,4 and 5. In order to investigate whether there was a match or mismatch between teacher autonomy and learners autonomy, the independent t-test was used to calculate the correlation between the autonomy means in two groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive statistics

Table1: Statistics for teachers' and learners' autonomy

Statistics Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Teachers	25	46.07	6.195	33.33	66.67
Learners	77	57.18	10.957	33.33	83.33

The autonomy in both groups was scaled to be between 0 and 100. The teachers' autonomy had mean 46.07 with standard deviation 6.195 and between 33.33 and 66.67. The learners' autonomy had mean 57.18 with standard deviation 10.957 and between 33.33 and 83.33.

Inferential statistics

Table 2: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality for teachers' and learners' autonomy

Statistics Groups	Z	Sig.
Teachers	1.045	0.225
Learners	0.887	0.411

The above table shows results for Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Since sig. values were greater than 0.05 (Sig.>0.05) for two groups, the statistics were not significant which means that the distributions were normal.

Investigation of the research questions

To answer the first question, the autonomy means in two groups were compared by the independent t-test as follows.

Table 3: The independent t-test for comparison of autonomy between teachers and their students

Statistics group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Mean Difference	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Teacher	25	46.07	6.195	1.239	-11.11	-4.81	100	0.001
Learner	77	57.18	10.957	1.248				

The result of independent t-test as presented in table 3 shows that there was a significant difference between two groups at the level of 0.01 ($\text{Sig.}=0.001<0.01$). This indicated that teacher autonomy significantly different from their students to be autonomous. Thus we infer that there is no relationship between teacher autonomy and their students to become autonomous in the learning foreign language.

The second research question concerned the autonomy level of students. The learners' scores obtained from questionnaires were compared with the expected value of 50. According to table 11, the mean of the learners' scores ($M=57.18$) was greater than 50. The statistically significance of the difference was tested by the one-sample t-test as presented in the following table.

Table 4: The one-sample t-test for the learners' autonomy

Statistics Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Test value = 50			
					Mean Difference	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Overall effect	77	57.18	10.957	1.248	7.18	5.757	76	0.001

As shown in table 4, the t-test was significant at the level of 0.01 ($\text{Sig.}=0.001<0.01$). Thus the difference between the learners' autonomy mean and the expected value (50) was significant. In other words, the level of autonomy among Iranian EFL students is higher than the average.

Discussion

In order to answer the relationship between TAS and LAQ, it was done by comparing the autonomy means of two groups with the independent t-test. It was revealed that teacher autonomy significantly different from their students to be autonomous. Thus, we infer that there is no relationship between teacher autonomy and their students to become autonomous in the learning foreign language. However, the relationship and interaction between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy were emphasized in many researches in this era. According to Camilleri (1999), a learner autonomous classroom is a place where learners and teachers have constructive interaction with each other and learn from each other. The teacher is responsible for helping learners become aware of alternative strategies and learning styles. LA does not mean learning without a teacher. As, little (1991) said that it is one misconception about LA. The learners need to work collaboratively with their peers and with the help of teachers. As shown in table 4, the difference between the learners' autonomy mean and the expected value (50) was significant. In other words, the level of autonomy among Iranian EFL students is higher than the average.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that there is no significance relationship between teacher autonomy and learner autonomy among EFL students in Bandar Abbas, whereas the existence of relationship between these two components was mentioned in

many other researches. The result of the study revealed that autonomy level of student is higher than expected average of autonomy level.

Limitations of the study

The subjects of this study were English-major learners. A different research project with participants in a large sample size from other backgrounds that have dissimilar types of motivation would be interesting. This study employed quantitative research design, further study can be designed and employed qualitative research design and in order to get a complete picture of students' views, the questionnaire can be accompanied with other instruments such as observation and interview to achieve more reliable results.

REFERENCES

- Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*. Harlow, England: Longman.
- Benson, P. (2002). Autonomy and communication. In P. Benson & S. Toogood (Eds.), *Challenges to research and practice*, 7, 10-29.
- Benson, P. (2008). *Teachers' and learners' perspectives on autonomy*. In T. Lamb & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Learner and teacher autonomy: Concepts, realities, and responses*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Berofsky, B. (1997). *Liberation from self: A theory of personal autonomy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burkert, A., & Schwenhorst, K. (2008). Focus on the Student Teacher: The Europea Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) as a Tool to Develop Teacher Autonomy. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*. 2 (3) 238- 252.
- Camilleri, G. (Ed.). (1999). *Learner autonomy - the teachers' views*. Strassbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Chitashvili, N. (2007). The Concept of Autonomy in Second Language Learning. *Georgian Electronic Scientific Journal: Education Science and Psychology*, 2(11).
- Fraser, L. E., & Sorenson, L. (1992). Teacher motivation and satisfaction: Impact on participatory management. *NASSP Bulletin*, 76, 37-43.
- Finch, A. E. (2000). *A formative evaluation of a task-based EFL programme for Korean university students*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Manchester University, U.K.
- Hurd, S. (1998). Too carefully led or too carelessly left alone? *Language Learning Journal*, 17, 70-74 .
- Guevara de León, G . (2010). Learner autonomy in language learning? Is that possible? MEMORIAS DEL VI FORO DE ESTUDIOS EN LENGUAS INTERNACIONAL .978-607-9015-22-0.From <http://fel.uqroo.mx>.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy: Definitions, Issues, Problems*. Dublin: Authentic
- Littlewood, W. (1996a). "Autonomy": An anatomy and a framework. *System*, 24(4), 427- 435
- Lowes, R., & Target, F. (1999). *Helping students to learn - a guide to learner autonomy*. (P. Seligson, Ed.) London: Richmond Publishing.
- Melenyzer, B. J. (1990). *Teacher empowerment: the discourse meaning, and social actions of teachers*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on

- States on In-service Education, Orlando, FL.
- Nunan, D. (1997). Designing and adapting materials to encourage learner autonomy. In P. Benson & P. Voller (eds.) *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. London: Longman, pp. 192-203. Longman: London.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Pearson, L. C., & Hall, B. C., (1993). Initial construct validation of the teaching autonomy scale. *Journal of Educational Research*, 86(3), 172-177.
- Pearson, L.C., & Moomaw, W. (2005). *Continuing validation of the teaching autonomy scale*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Riasati, M.J., & Mollaei, F (2014) Teachers' and learners' attitudes toward applying autonomous learning in language classroom. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 6(4), 188-201
- Scharle, A., & Szabo, A. (2000). *Learner autonomy: A guide to developing learner responsibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, R.C. (2001) Learner and teacher development: Connections and constraints. *The Language Teacher* 25(6), 43-48.
- Thavenius, C. (1999) Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change*. Frankfurt, In S. Cotterall and D. Crabbe (Eds.).
- Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). *Fulfilling the promise of the differentiated classroom*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Wenden, A. (1991a). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy: Planning and implementing learner training for language learners*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.
- Yang, N.-D. (1998). Exploring a new role for teachers: Promoting learner autonomy. *System*, 26(1), 127-135.
- Zhang, L.X., & Li X.X. (2004). A comparative study on learner autonomy between Chinese students and west European students. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 15-23.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FIELD INDEPENDENCE, REFLECTIVITY/IMPULSIVITY AND READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Katayoon Kayghobady Amiry

*Department of English Language, Science & Research, Shahr-e-Qods Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Tehran, Iran
k.kayghobady@yahoo.com*

Behdokht Mall-Amiri

*Islamic Azad University of Central Tehran Branch
b_m_amiri@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between Field Independence, Reflectivity/Impulsivity, and Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners. To reach this aim, 125 EFL freshman and sophomore undergraduate university students at Iran's Islamic Azad University Central Tehran Branch were randomly selected. They were asked to fill out two questionnaires on cognitive styles of Field Independence (Group Embedded Figure Test), and Reflectivity/Impulsivity (Impulsivity sub-scale of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire, I7, IVE) and one Reading Comprehension test (First Certificate in English). Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed through Pearson Correlation formula the results of which revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between Field Independence and Reading Comprehension, and there was also a statistically significant relationship between Reflectivity and Reading Comprehension. Furthermore, it was found out that both Field Independence and Reflectivity could significantly predict the Reading Comprehension ability of the EFL learners. The implication of this research is for test developers in order to prepare accurate and fair tests. It can also be useful for language teachers, for they can help learners by addressing their needs using appropriate teaching strategies and for language learners as well because they will be able to see the cause of their problems in comprehending and passing language reading tests.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive styles, Field Independence, Reflectivity/Impulsivity, and Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Success in second language learning generally and factors that affect learning process and performance in language tests particularly, have been investigated by many researchers in order to provide guidelines for teachers and learners in second language settings. The enormous complexity and variety of the variables involved in the development of second/foreign language learning and test performance have been discussed by many researchers and scholars (Brown,

1987; Stern, 1983; Chastain, 1988; Dunkel, 1991; Bachman, 1995, etc). Chastain (1988) distinguishes four sets of variables as learner variables that are involved in the language learning: Affective variables (self-concept, perseverance, etc) Cognitive variables (cognitive style, learning skills, etc) Social variables (social context, language and culture shock) and Biological variables (gender and age). Moreover, in communicative language ability, factors such as test method facets, personal attributes, and random factors are considered as potential source of error in measurement that decrease both the reliability of scores and the validity of their interpretations. Among the mentioned factors, attributes of the test takers that are not related to the ability we are interested in, such as cognitive styles should be considered by language teachers and test developers for they are reported to influence and to interfere with the students' Reading Comprehension process and performance on different tests as well (Brown, 2000; Bachman, 1995).

Abraham (1985) explains that cognitive style is part of the learners' characteristics which apparently is related to second language learning for they depict individuals' differences in a learning context and test performance. The term cognitive style was defined by Brown (1994) as the link between personality and cognition that influences how we learn things in general, and the particular approach we adopt when dealing with problems. Among the numerous cognitive styles that exist, only a few of them have received attention in second language researches in recent years. Field Independence and Reflectivity/Impulsivity as two of the most important cognitive styles which have been considered by researchers to see if they are related to learning, learners' performance in tests and even to test results in case of showing the real knowledge of test takers were selected in this study (e.g. Jamieson, 1992; Skehan, 1989; Abraham, 1985; Kogan, 1981; Doran, 1973, etc).

According to Salmani-Nodoushan (2007) among the cognitive styles identified so far, the FI/D dimension has been the most extensively studied and has had the widest application to educational issues and specifically to second language learning. One of the subjects that attracted researchers is to see if there is any relationship between FI/D construct and Reading Comprehension (Davey, 1990; Jamali, 2001; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2007; Behnam and Fathi, 2009; Khalili Sabet and Mohammadi, 2013). In their study, Behnam and Fathi (2009) considered the cognitive style of FI/D of 60 intermediate EFL learners and its relationship with reading performance. The results indicated that Field Independent participants have an advantage over Field Dependent ones. Khalili Sabet and Mohammadi (2013) intended to investigate the relationship between FI/D styles and Reading Comprehension abilities of 90 university students as well as to explore EFL readers' attitude toward reading in a foreign language with respect to their cognitive style and the results revealed that there is a relationship between Field Dependency/Independence and Reading Comprehension. The present study is an extension of their works on the possible relationship between Field Independence cognitive style and Reading Comprehension Ability of EFL learners with a larger sample and a different context.

The other cognitive style which was assumed to be in relation with language learning process and performance in language skills was Reflectivity/Impulsivity. Most of the research studies concerning the relationship between R/I cognitive style and language skills have focused on the

impact of children or adults' cognitive styles on the receptive skills of reading or listening whether in their first, second, or foreign language (Messer, 1976; Pirouznia, 1994; Salimi, 2001; Ghapanchi and Dashti, 2011). Salimi (2001) studied the relationship between Impulsivity and performance of Iranian Ph. D candidates in TMU (Tarbiat Modarres University) general English proficiency test. Overall results of the research indicated that Low Impulsive subjects outperformed High and Medium Impulsives in all sections, and that there is a significant difference between Low and High Impulsives in Total and Reading Comprehension section. Ghapanchi and Dashti (2011) attempted to study the relationship between cognitive style of Impulsivity and performance of the 100 sophomore EFL university students on display, referential and inferential Reading Comprehension questions. The results revealed that there was no significant difference between Low, Medium and High Impulsives with respect to their performance in Display, Referential, and Inferential Reading Comprehension questions. As it was mentioned, in this study, it was tried to extend the previous findings and find the possible relationship between Reflectivity/Impulsivity and Reading Comprehension Ability of EFL learners in a new context. It should be mentioned that the main reason to choose these two cognitive styles was to see if there is any difference between predictability of Field Independence and Reflectivity/Impulsivity about Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners.

During the past decades, the emphasis on communicative language ability in teaching, learning and testing pinned importance on Reading Comprehension as a very influential skill in learning second/foreign languages and also on the factors that influence the learners' Reading Comprehension ability and learners' performance on Reading Comprehension tests (Widdowson, 1984; Chastain, 1988). For most EFL learners, developing Reading Comprehension skill is considered as the most important component of learning among other skills. In many EFL learning contexts, learners have very little or no accessibility to native speakers or enough listening input and only have access to books, journals, periodicals and other reading materials to gain the information they need. Regarding the importance of Reading Comprehension in language classes, Chastain (1988) mentions that all types of authentic comprehensible text can be used in order to help learners to develop a sufficient language base from which they can create messages they want to share with others. Furthermore, Widdowson (1984) refers to reading as communication activity and believes that the communication happens between the writer who encodes some messages and the reader who decodes the messages through top down or bottom up models for comprehending the message. Due to the importance of Reading Comprehension Ability of the learners in learning, teaching, and testing in EFL settings, some studies have been done but for the lack of sufficient research on the possible relationship between these two variables and Iranian university students' general performance in Reading Comprehension tests in EFL settings, in this research, two cognitive styles of Field Independence and Reflectivity/Impulsivity were considered in case of being possibly related to EFL learners performance in Reading Comprehension tests, and also in case of being a predictive factor on the Reading Comprehension test result.

The other factor that made this study significant was about the result of this research that can be useful for test developers in order to prepare accurate and fair tests that show real language knowledge of test takers independent of the test takers cognitive styles. It can also be useful for

language teachers, for they can help learners by addressing their needs using appropriate teaching strategies to help them to have a better understanding and comprehension. Moreover, it can be helpful for language learners because if they know their cognitive style they will be able to see the cause of their problems in comprehending and passing language reading tests. Thus they can use the learning strategies suitable to their cognitive styles and get better results or manipulate style levels in their encounter with the language.

Field Independence

Field Dependence (FD) is a cognitive style in which an individual tends to look at the whole of a learning task that contains many items and has difficulty in studying a particular item when it occurs within a field of other items. The field may be perceptual, or it may be abstract such as a set of ideas, thoughts, or feelings. Field Independence (FI), on the contrary, refers to a cognitive style in which an individual is able to identify or focus on particular items and is not distracted by other items in the background or the context (Brown, 2000; Gollnick & Chein, 1994).

Reflectivity/Impulsivity

The other cognitive style that gained attention is Reflectivity/Impulsivity or as Kagan (1966) puts it: “conceptual tempo”. This cognitive dimension refers to “either fast, spontaneous and unplanned, or slow, cautious and planned performance in cognitive tasks” (Malle & Neubauer, 1991, p. 865). “The ‘Impulsives’ reach decision and report them very quickly with little concern for accuracy” (Kagan, 1966, as cited in Jamieson, 1992, p. 492). On the other hand, ‘Reflectives’ are slow and accurate learners and they take longer to respond and consequently make fewer errors (Razmjoo & Mirzaei, 2009).

Reading Comprehension

Defining Reading Comprehension and describing a single comprehensive definition is a difficult task for it is a very complicated matter. According to Chastain (1988) reading is a process which requires active mental processing of the learner and activation of previously acquired knowledge and skills while focusing on the reading materials in order to recreate and comprehend what someone else has written. Perfetti (1984, p. 40-41) defines reading as “thinking guided by print” (as cited in Chastain, 1988. P. 216).

REASEAECH HYPOTHESE

In order to reach the aims of this research, the following null hypotheses were stated:

1. There is no significant relationship between Field Independence and Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian EFL Learners.
2. There is no significant relationship between Reflectivity/Impulsivity and Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian EFL Learners.
3. There is no difference between predictability of Field Independence and Reflectivity/Impulsivity about Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were 125 university students who were selected randomly from among students in BA English majors at Islamic Azad University Tehran Central Branch, Iran. The age range of participants was 19 -25 years old and among them there were 98 female and 27 male. In addition to them, another 30 university students, with similar characteristics to the main sample took part in this study for piloting the Reading Comprehension section of the FCE test.

Instrumentation

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following three instruments were utilized: Eysenck (1990) Impulsiveness Questionnaire (I7. IVE) which contains 54 items, assesses Impulsiveness (19 items), Ventureness (16 items), and Empathy (19 items). A Persian version of this questionnaire was prepared and validated by Salimi (2001). The reliability of the Persian Impulsive sub-scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha which was found to be 0.86 and Spearman-Brown's unusual-length split-half reliability which was found to be 0.86, both of which are acceptable indicators of reliability. This questionnaire consisted of 19 five-multiple choice items. Those whose grades fell among (19 to 57) were regarded as high Impulsive and those with grades of (58 to 95) were considered as Reflective.

The second questionnaire was Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT) which is a figure test that assesses Field Independence and has been first developed by Witkin, Oltman, Raskin, and Karp (1971). They reported a Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient of 0.82 for their instrument. Comparing the parallel test to the Embedded Figures Test established the validity of the GEFT (Blanton, 2004). In addition, internal consistency and construct validity of the GEFT are satisfactory. The GEFT is a 25-item test which requires participants to locate and trace simple geometric figures embedded within progressively more complex ones. Based on the number of correct answers given by subjects, the scores on GEFT range from 0 (the most FD) to 18 (the most FI). In this study, participants were classified with GEFT scores of 11 and less than 11 into the FD group and those with GEFT scores above 11 out of 18 into the FI group. The Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE) is an upper-Intermediate level examination which is the third level of the Cambridge ESOL Main Suite examinations and is at Level B2 of the Council of Europe Common European Framework was also used. The FCE consists of 5 tests – Reading, Writing, Listening, Use of English and Speaking. The reading section has three parts and takes 60 minutes: Part 1 consists of a text with 8 multiple choice questions, Part 2 consists of a text with 7 sentences missing (gapped text), and Part 3 includes multiple matching with 15 questions. In part one and two each question scores 2 points, and in part three each question scores 1 point. Thus totally the reading section mark is counted out of 45.

Procedure

To achieve the purpose of this study, at the first step, thirty university students with similar characteristics to the main sample who were selected randomly took part in piloting the reading section of the FCE. They were among BA students majoring in English and they did not participate in the main investigation. The Reading section of the FCE exam consisted of 30 questions and it took approximately 60 minutes. After gathering the information, based on

analysis on items five malfunctioning items were eliminated from the test. Following this, the main study was carried out with 125 EFL students. The Persian version of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire and the GEFT questionnaire were administered to participants for obtaining information about their cognitive styles. Based on their performance in these questionnaires, they were classified as Reflective/ Impulsive, and Field Independent/ Dependent. The researcher was present while participants were responding to questionnaires to provide further explanations if required. Then the revised version of the reading section of the FCE was administered to participants to gather information on their level of ability in Reading Comprehension in the same session. At the final step, the statistical procedures were conducted by the researcher to test the hypotheses of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before starting the main study, the reading section of the FCE test was once piloted. The analysis of the FCE piloting with 30 items revealed that the reliability of the test was lower than acceptable (Cronbach's Alpha = .593). In order to increase the reliability of the test, after some analysis such as Item Analysis, Item Facility, Item Difficulty, and Choice Distribution, 5 Items (4-5-8-10-13) were deleted from the test, so the number of items remaining became 25. To make sure that the reliability of the remaining 25 items was acceptable, Cronbach's Alpha analysis was used again and the result showed an acceptable reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = .640). On the next step, in order to test the null hypotheses of this study through the Parametric Pearson correlation formula, the assumptions of Normality of distribution of each set of scores and Linearity relation between each pair of variables were checked. First, *Normality condition* was verified through the following data:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the three variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Skewness ratios
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	
FI	125	2.00	18.00	11.1520	3.87518	-.365	.217	-1.68
Reflectivity	125	41.00	77.00	59.3520	7.41430	-.034	.217	.15
Reading	125	10.00	33.00	22.4000	4.73320	-.382	.217	-1.76
Valid N (listwise)	125							

As the table 1 showed, the ratio of skewness statistic of FI questionnaire, R/I questionnaire, and Reading Comprehension test were within the ranges of (± 1.96) which means that their distribution did not show a significant deviation from normality. Thus, the normality condition was met. To check the second assumption which was *Linearity of relations*, the researcher visually inspected the data through following scatter plots.

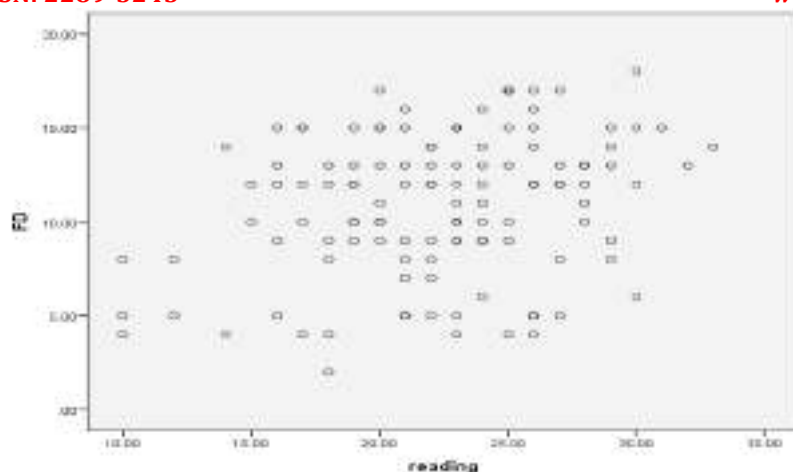


Figure 1: Scatter plot representing the relationship between Reading and FI (The FI was written FD in this figure)

As the figure 1 visually illustrated, the dots cluster around a straight line stretching from the bottom left to the top right, implying a positive relationship between the learners' Reading Comprehension and their Field Independence.

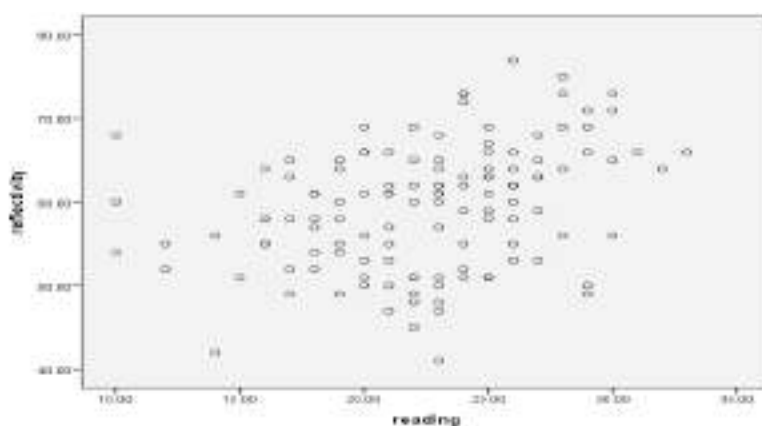


Figure 2: Scatter plot representing the relationship between Reading and Reflectivity

As the figure 2 visually illustrated, the coordinate values form a cigar shape stretching from the bottom left to the top right, hence the linearity of the relationship is also revealed. When the above assumptions were met, correlational analysis was conducted by the researcher for testing the hypotheses of the study.

To test the first hypothesis a correlation between Reading Comprehension and FI was conducted. The following table shows the result:

Table 2: Correlation between Reading and FI

		FI	Reading
FI	Pearson Correlation	1	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	125	125
Reading	Pearson Correlation	.296**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	125	125

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

As displayed in table 2, the correlation between Reading Comprehension and FI of the EFL learners turned out to be positive and significant ($r = .296$, $p = .001 < .05$). Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected. The strength of the relationship however, turned out to be small ($.296^2 = .08$). Expressed in percentage, only 8 percent of variance in Reading Comprehension could be explained by variance in FI. This low relationship power of course affects the generalizability of the finding to the population.

To test the second hypothesis, a correlational analysis was conducted between Reading Comprehension and Reflectivity. The following table shows the result:

Table 3: Correlation between Reading and Reflectivity

		Reading	Reflectivity
Reading	Pearson Correlation	1	.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	125	125
Reflectivity	Pearson Correlation	.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	125	125

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

As the table 3 showed, the relationship between Reading Comprehension and Reflectivity of the learners also turned out to be positive and significant ($r = .321$, $p = .000 < .05$) which leads to the rejection of the second null hypothesis. The strength of the relationship also turned out to be as small as .10 ($.321^2$), which limits the generalizability of the finding as well.

And finally to test the third null hypothesis multiple regression was needed to compare the predictability of FI and Reflectivity about Reading Comprehension of the learners. Firstly however, the conditions for multiple regressions were checked: The normality condition, the multicollinearity condition, the presence of outliers, and the homoscedasticity condition.

The normality condition was visually verified as below:

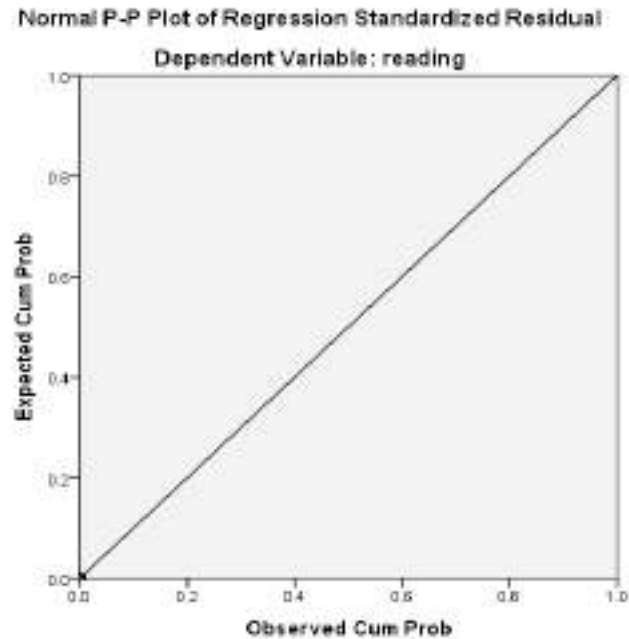


Figure 3: Normality plot of the residuals about the dependent variable

As the values form a straight line and there is no major deviation from the line, it is concluded that normality condition was met. The second condition was multicollinearity which is the relationship between the Independent variables.

Table 5: Correlations

		Reflectivity	FI
Reflectivity	Pearson Correlation	1	.107
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.235
	N	125	125
FI	Pearson Correlation	.107	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.235	
	N	125	125

As it was shown in table 5, the relationship between Independent variables turned out to be small ($r = .107$), which does not violate the condition. Thus the second conditioned was met. The presence of outliers was also checked through the standardized residual in the following table.

Table 6: Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	16.8417	26.9454	22.4000	1.96608	125
Std. Predicted Value	-2.827	2.312	.000	1.000	125
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.389	1.172	.651	.168	125
Adjusted Predicted Value	17.0652	27.0038	22.3920	1.96966	125
Residual	-12.99859	9.36853	.00000	4.30555	125
Std. Residual	-2.995	2.158	.000	.992	125
Stud. Residual	-3.035	2.185	.001	1.004	125
Deleted Residual	-13.34766	9.60466	.00803	4.40947	125
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.143	2.220	-.001	1.012	125
Mahal. Distance	.003	8.051	1.984	1.536	125
Cook's Distance	.000	.082	.008	.013	125
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.065	.016	.012	125

a. Dependent Variable: Reading

As depicted there the values do not exceed 3.3, which imply the absence of affecting outliers. Mahal. Distance values were also inspected to check the outliers. As the maximum value does not exceed 13.82 (with two Independent variables) (Pallant, 2007), it is concluded that there were no outliers. Hence, the third condition was met.

Homoscedasticity of the residuals about the dependent variable was checked finally.

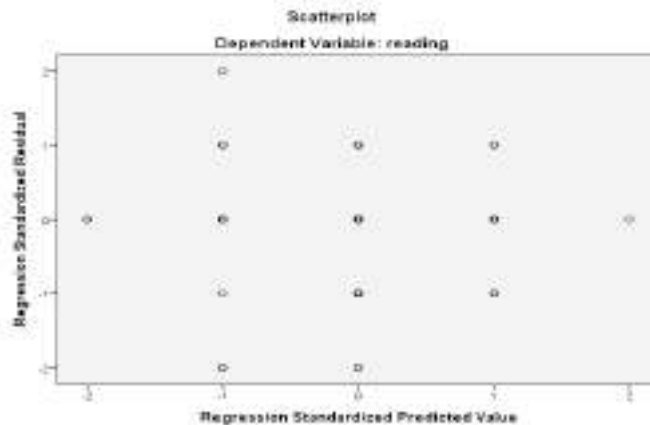


Figure 4: Homoscedasticity of the residuals about the dependent variable

As displayed in the above scatter plot the dots form a rectangular shape with most of the values clustered at the centre. Therefore, homoscedasticity condition was also met. As the above mentioned conditions were met, the researcher was able to conduct a multiple regression. The following tables show the result of the multiple regressions:

Table 7: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.415 ^a	.173	.159	4.34070

a. Predictors: (Constant), Reflectivity, FI

b. Dependent Variable: Reading

As the above table showed, the R square value was .173. This means that 17.3 variance in the dependent variable (Reading Comprehension) could be explained by the model. The following table shows the significance of this model:

Table 8: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	479.316	2	239.658	12.720	.000 ^a
	Residual	2298.684	122	18.842		
	Total	2778.000	124			

As illustrated in table 8 the model turned out to be significant ($F = 12.72$, $p = .000 < .05$), implying that the predictability of the Independent variables (FI and R) about the dependent variable was significant. The contribution of each Independent variable is shown in the following table.

Table 9: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	7.692	3.243		2.372	.019	1.272	14.111					
	FD	.323	.101	.265	3.196	.002	.123	.524	.296	.278	.263	.989	1.012
	Reflectivity	.187	.053	.293	3.538	.001	.082	.292	.321	.305	.291	.989	1.012

a. Dependent Variable: Reading

As shown above, the p values for both independent variables under beta values turned out to be smaller than .05, implying that both of them had a significant contribution to the predictability about the dependent variable. Therefore, the third null hypothesis fails to be rejected.

According to the analysis of the data, the first null hypothesis was rejected and a positive and significant relationship was found between Field Independence and Reading Comprehension ability ($r=.296$, $p=.001<.05$). This relationship confirmed that individuals with high Field Independence have a better performance on Reading Comprehension tests for they used strategies to generate solutions to problems. The findings of this study also lead to the rejection of the second null hypotheses and suggested a positive and significant relationship between Reflectivity and Reading Comprehension ability of the learners ($r=.321$, $p=.000<.05$). This result confirmed that Reflective learners are considered as thoughtful people who like to consider all the possible angles and implications and also to observe all different conclusions for as long as possible before acting so they outperform Impulsive learners.

The other important result of this study was about the predictability of the Independent variables about the dependent variable which was significant and it showed that both of the Independent variables (FI and R) had a significant contribution to the predictability about the dependent variable (Reading Comprehension).

CONCLUSION

In this study the researcher focused on cognitive styles of Field Independence and Reflectivity/Impulsivity as determining factors in learning process and outcome and tried to explore any significant relationship between them and Reading Comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. Based on the data analyses the results have shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between Field Independence and Reading Comprehension ability and there is also a positive and significant relationship between Reflectivity and Reading Comprehension ability of the EFL learners.

As the results revealed, since a statistically significant relationship between Field Independence and Reading Comprehension ability has been found it can be concluded that the higher the Field Independency of the learners is, the more successful they tend to be in Reading Comprehension tests. Furthermore, the a positive and significant relationship between Reflectivity and Reading Comprehension ability of the learners confirmed that the more Reflective the learners are, the better their performances are on Reading Comprehension tests.

In addition, it was shown in this study that the learners' Field Independence and Reflectivity as Independent variables had a significant contribution to the predictability about the dependent variable which is Reading Comprehension ability of the EFL learners. Considering this fact, it can be said that Field Independence and Reflectivity can be considered as two sources of variation in language learning process and outcome, particularly in Reading Comprehension test scores. Thus the result of this study could be of benefit to all language teachers and learners, test developers and syllabus designers.

Limitations of the study

1. The results of this study may not be generalized to all Iranian EFL students with different Reading Comprehension ability, for the size of the sample was small.

2. Participants were chosen from among undergraduate students, freshmen and sophomores, as the researcher had only access to them.
3. The age range of the participants was between 19 - 25 and findings may not be applied to younger or older learners.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, R.G. (1985). Field-dependence/independence and the teaching of grammar. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 689 -702.
- Bachman, L. F. (1995). *Fundamental Consideration in Language Testing*. Oxford University Press.
- Behnam, B., & Fathi, M. (2006). The relationship between reading performance and field dependence/ independence cognitive styles. *Journal of Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Literature*, 1 (1), 49-62.
- Blanton, E. (2004). *The influence of students' cognitive style on a standardized reading test administered in three different formats*. Unpublished Ph.D.Dissertation. The University of Central Florida, Orlando.
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3rd ed). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents. pp: 299.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (2nd ed). Longman: San Francisco State University.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice*. (3rd ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1990). Biological dimensions of personality. In L. A. Pervin (Ed.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 244–276). New York: Guilford.
- Ghapanchi, Z., & Dashti, Z (2011). The relationship between cognitive style of impulsivity and display, referential, and inferential reading comprehension questions among Iranian EFL University students. *Canadian Social Science*, 7 (6), 227-233.
- Gollnick, D. M., & Chein, P. C. (1994). *Multicultural education in pluralistic society*. New York: Macmillan.
- Jamieson, J. (1992). The cognitive styles of reflection/impulsivity and field independence/dependence and ESL success. *Modern Language Journal*, 76, 491-501.
- Kagan, J. (1966). Reflection and Impulsivity: the Generality and Dynamics of Conceptual Tempo. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 71(1), 17-24.
- Khalili Sabet, M., & Mohamadi, SH. (2013). The relationship between field Independence/Dependence styles and Reading Comprehension abilities of EFL readers. Unpublished Master dissertation. Iran.
- Malle, B. F., & Neubaer, A.C. (1991). Impulsivity, reflection, and questionnaire response latencies: No evidence for a broad impulsivity trait. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 12, 865-871.
- Razmjoo, S. A., Mirzaei, R. (2009). On the relationship between dimensions of Reflectivity/Impulsivity as cognitive style and language proficiency among Iranian EFL university students. Unpublished Master dissertation. Islamic Azad University-Bandar Abbas Branch.

- Salimi, E. (2001). *On the relationship between impulsivity-reflectivity cognitive style and performance in TMU English proficiency test*. Unpublished Master dissertation. TMU Iran, Iran.
- Salmani-Nodoushan, M. A (2007). Is field dependence or Independence a predictor of EFL reading performance? *TESL Canada Journal*, 24(2), 82-108.
- Widdowson, H.G. (2007). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Witkin, H. A., Oltman, P. K., Raskin, E., & Karp, S. A. (1971). *The group embedded figures test*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press

The Authors

Katayoon Kayghobay Amiri holds an MA degree in TEFL from Department of English Language, Science & Research, shahr-e-Qods Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

Behdokht Mall-Amiri is Assistant Professor of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran. She has published several articles in domestic and foreign academic journals. She is specifically interested in research areas related to translation, cognitive and learning styles, motivation, and program evaluation.

THE EFFECT OF BILINGUALISM ON LEARNING NEW ENGLISH IMPERATIVE VERBS AMONG IRANIAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EFL MALE LEARNERS

Yaghoub Sobhani

*Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, Science and Research Branch
Jaccob004@yahoo.com*

Elkhas Vaysi

*Assistant professor of Payame e Noor university, Iran
Elkhas@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore the functions and the roles of being bilingual on learning new imperative English verbs among male Iranian high school students. The main attempt was investigating whether Arabic-Persian bilingual students take advantage/es of their bilingualism in learning new imperative verbs of third language (English) or not. For this purpose, 60 male students from Susangerd, Bostan and Hamidie (the bilingual Arab/Persian cities in Khuzestan province in Iran) were asked to take part in this experiment. The sample of this research were junior high school students between 13 - 16 years old. These students were selected randomly from 6 state and English schools. The data were collected, and analyzed by use of t- test and the outcome results demonstrated that bilingualism had significance advantages in learning new imperative English verbs among khouzestanian Iranian EFL junior high school male students. The finding also shown that bilingualism could employe as a teaching technique in EFL classes where all of learners share the same L1.

KEYWORDS: bilingualism, grammar, imperative verbs, Arabic, Persian ,EFL learners.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of bilingualism on English grammar learning (imperative verbs) will study in this research. There has already been a great interest among linguists and psychologists to study bilingualism and its effects on individuals or the EFL learners in many cases . When teachers teach grammar, actually there are two purposes: enhancing fluency and accuracy in all of language skills. As you know fluency is ability to speak fluently, whereas accuracy is ability to speak with correct grammar structures, such as correct use of imperative verb forms. In many countries that English regarded as foreign language, the teachers begin their teaching plans by grammar forms, especially imperative verbs (such as open the books, stand up, sit down)to make the classes excited. Moreover, the learners usually learn and do the imperative verbs faster than other subjects. For many of teachers who working in teaching and methodology , the imperative English verbs has been the most exciting area of EFL classes. EFL teachers constantly should

explain English grammar forms to help the learners speak and write correctly. As you know Iranian community is dominantly a bilingual community, and the Persian as an official language used as linguistic and cultural homogenization, while minority languages are not used in education system. In Iran, for a long time bilingualism and its effect was considered as negative factor that threatening the learning of students. So in present study, we aim to find that is there any advantage in bilingualism (on bilingual Iranian learners) in learning new imperative English or not?

Bilingualism

Ellis (1994) defines bilingualism as the use of two languages by an individual or speech community. His statement was rather confusing because there is no mention of the degree to which the people or speech community is able to use their languages. Moreover, there isn't any mention to the degree or manner in which they achieved their bilingualism from birth in a bilingual setting growing up there, or acquired as a second language later in life. It is necessary to say that there is no universally accepted definition of bilingualism concept.

Some like Grosjean (1982) refer to the use of both languages simultaneously, whereas others like Weinreich (1953) refer to alternating between the two and using only one language at any time. All in all, there are multiple definitions of bilingualism and childhood bilingualism, but in particular, this study focuses on Iranian bilingual male children.

Imperative verbs in English

Imperative verbs were known as Bossy verbs, because they tell us what to do. We put imperative verbs at the beginning of sentences, which automatically changes them into instructions or actions that should be done. The commands are usually very short sentences and acted immediately. When we read or hear instructions, we want them to be quick and snappy, so we can act upon them straight away. Imperative verbs do not leave space for questions or discussion even if the sentence has a polite tone. We usually use the root form of the verb to create the imperative verbs. For example :

Open your books boys, Write your names, Push the table, Listen to me students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The short background of bilingualism research

Before the 1960s research on bilingual people was varied but with an unit pattern of result and conclusions, for instance, being bilingual was detrimental to a child's linguistic and cognitive development and put the people at a disadvantage compared to monolingual ones. The main opinions were that bilinguals would have smaller vocabularies and cognitive abilities. Those studies reported that bilinguals performed worse in IQ tests, vocabularies tests, and suffered in most aspects of language development.

But new researchers believe that, these studies suffered from several methodological problems and conclusion. Peal and Lambert (1969) published a study which brought to light the importance

of controlling for such factors as age, sex, as well as standardized measure when selecting a sample of bilinguals to be studied. They carefully matched their bilingual to their monolingual participants and they found that the bilinguals showed significant advantages over the monolinguals in both verbal and non-verbal tests, especially in non-verbal tests that required more mental flexibility.

Bilingualism studies in Iran

Keshavarz and Astaneh (2004) conducted a research in which they studied the impact of bilingualism on third language vocabulary learning of three groups of bi/monolingual female students (Turkish-Persian bilinguals, Armenian-Persian bilinguals and Persian monolinguals) in two regions of the Iran. Finally, they concluded that bilingualism has a positive effect on third language vocabulary learning.

Kassaiian and Esmaeli (2011) conducted a research to investigate the effect of bilingualism on third language breadth of vocabulary knowledge and word reading skill on Armenian bilinguals learners which mostly live in Isfahan province in Iran. The Nation's vocabulary levels test and Burt word reading test were used to measure subjects' knowledge of vocabulary and their word reading skill. After computations, the results indicated that bilingualism is highly correlated with breadth of vocabulary knowledge and reading skill.

Although studies conducted in national context centering on the effect of bilingualism on L3 vocabulary learning have mostly reported the positive and facilitating role of bilingualism, but not in all areas of L3. There are studies investigating the effect of bilingualism on other sub skills of language which have achieved paradoxical findings, for instance, while Merrikhi (2012) states that bilinguals definitely outperform monolinguals on the English grammar, Maghsoudi (2010) notes that monolingual and bilingual learners do not differ in acquiring syntactic structure. He even maintains that monolingual participants surpass bilingual participant ts in general English proficiency.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With respect to the topic of the current study, two research questions are set to be investigated which are as follow:

1. Does home speaking in first language (L1) have any effect on learning new English imperative verbs among bilingual junior high school EFL learners ?
2. Dose bilingualism have any positive or negative effects on learning new English imperative verbs?

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in khouzeestan province in Iran. The aim of this part of study was to note down the methods in which material has be gathered, formulated and evaluated in order to test and verify the questions made at the beginning of this study.

Participants

The participants were two groups of junior high school male learners with ages between 13-16 years. The participants were selected from state and private schools, and then divided into two groups.

30 male studentsPersian/ monolingual

30 male studentsPersian_ Arabic/ bilingual

Instruments

The field of research was conducted in order to gather the required information for the analysis of the topic of study. This research draws its material from different sources as follow:

Questionnaires

The questionnaire include twenty four multiple choice items and used to collect specific items, and provides information about age, sex, parents ,school,occupation,level of education and etc. This questionnaires designed and used by Sipra, M. A. (2007).

The Oxford Placement Test (Dave Allen 1992)

A test of grammar was administered as a measure of learners' linguistic competence. The administration of this test was important in order to select a specific level of learners with respect to the topic of this investigation. To this purpose, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was used in order to select the level of learners. This OPT test contained 100 multiple choice grammar items.

The Oxford Placement is a valid and reliable measure of language ability.

Tests on imperative verbs (pre/post tests)

One type of test was constructed in order to assess the students' performance with regard to the topic of this study. This multiple choice tests, which evaluates the retention of imperative verbs among learners, comprises twenty items. The test is a valid and reliable measure of language ability. The source of the tests is englishforeveryone.org.

Procedure

In order to accomplish the aim of this study, a step-by-step procedure was followed: First of all, the aim of the researcher was to choose a homogenous group of the subjects. For this purpose, placement test the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was given to 160 male students. The evaluation of the subjects' performances on that test was perfectly objective because it was a multiple-choice test and every item had only one correct answer. Finally 75 students (42 bilinguals/33 monolinguals) were passed ,but we select only 60 according to the rank of best scores and then divided them in two groups, 30 of them bilingual and the next participants monolingual. Secondly, pre-test administered to both groups. This pre-test included 20 multiple-choice items and participants had to select the correct choice. After pre test we had treatment ,the treatment lasted for 8 sessions and the timing of each session was 75 minutes. Both groups attended in treatment sessions at the same language center but on different days which are:

Bilingual Group on even days from 5 to 6:15 P.M

Monolingual Group on odd days from 5 to 6:15 P.M

Thirdly, the treatment (teaching intermediate level) were given to them in a systematic ways, two days a week. The material for teaching were Touchstone books. Fortunately none of the students were absent during the treatment in two groups. And this factor would increase the reliability of the conclusions. Finally, at the end of sessions, the subjects were given 4 free days to study for the final exam (post-test). The allocated time for 20 imperative verb questions was 40 minutes. It is necessary to say that the post test with 20 items was completely similar to pre-test one in style and framework but its content was different and it was a level ahead of the pre-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis

In this part of study the researcher has tried to present the data collected concerning the research topic. The data has been collected through questionnaires, OPT test, pre and post test. Moreover, the researcher has represented his research through the presentation of tables and statistical annexations.

Results of the Pretest

The results of the t-test analysis for the comparison of the MG and BG are presented below:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing the MG and BG pretest Scores

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre test	MG	30	15.3333	2.80803	.51267
	BG	30	15.5667	2.29968	.41986

Such descriptive statistics as mean and standard deviation are shown for both groups in Table 1. As you see the mean score of the BG (M= 15.5) is greater than the mean score of the MG (M=15.3) but this difference does not seem to be significant.

Results of the First Research Question

After the treatment sessions, the posttest was given to the participants. Remember, the research question of the study asked : Does home speaking in first language (L1) have any effect on learning new English imperative verbs among bilingual junior high school EFL learners ?

A paired-samples t-test was run to capture any possible difference between the performances of the learners in the BG on the pretest and posttest.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing pretest and posttest Scores of the MG

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MG Pretest	15.3333	30	2.80803	.51267
MG posttest	16.1667	30	1.78274	.32548

In the MG, the mean score on the pretest ($M = 15.33$) is substantially less than the mean score on the posttest ($M = 16.16$). However, to check the statistical (in-) significance of this difference, one needs to consult the Sig. (2-tailed) column in the t-test table which follows.

Table 3: Results of the Paired Samples T-Test for Comparing Pretest and Post test Scores of the MG

Table 5: Results of the Paired Samples t Test for Comparing Pretest and Posttest Scores of the MCS									
	Paired Differences				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower	Upper				
						Mean			
Pretest-Posttest	-83333	4.26763	77916	-42689	76022	-.070	29	.294	

Because the Sig. (2-tailed) value is greater than the alpha level ($.000 < .05$), it could be argued that there was a statistically no significant difference between the pretest scores of the learners in the MG ($M = 15.33$, $SD = 2.80$) and their posttest scores ($M = 16.16$, $SD = 41.78$), $t(29) = -.070$. The magnitude of this difference. The conclusion could be that learning new English imperative verbs among MG don't significantly improves the knowledge of the learners. The table 3 shows that the performance of the learners in the MG on the posttest is different from their performance on the pretest but not very much.

Results of the Second Research Question

The second research question of the current study was formulated to investigate that: Dose bilingualism have any positive or negative effects on learning new English imperative verbs? Like the analysis performed for the first research question, a paired samples t-test was conducted. Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Pretest and Posttest Scores of the BG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BG Pretest	30	15.56	2.29968	.41986
BG Posttest	30	17.50	1.67641	.30607

It can be seen that in the BG on the posttest, the mean score of the learners (M= 17.50) is enormously greater than that of pretest (M= 15.56). To make certain that the difference is indeed statistically significant, the following t-test table should be consulted.

Table 5: Results of the Paired Samples T-Test for Comparing Pretest and Posttest Scores of the BG

	Paired Differences				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error	Lower	Upper				
Pretest-Posttest	-1.93333	3.94735	.72069	-3.40730	-.45937	-2.683	29	.012	

Given the fact that the p value is less than the specified level of significance ($.000 < .05$), it could be concluded that there was a significant difference between the posttest scores of the learners in the BG (M = 15.56, SD = 2.29) and their posttest scores (M= 17.50, SD = 1.67), $t = -2.683$. The magnitude of the difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the BG, calculated through Eta Squared formula was which is a large effect size. This table also signifies the great difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the bilingual learners. The conclusion up to this part is that the bilingual learners understand and did the imperative verbs more better than monolingual learners. So we find that, our training during 4 week was affective and bilingualism had a significant positive effect on learning new English imperative verbs.

CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to investigate the possible effect of bilingualism on learning new imperative English verbs. The result of study shown that bilingualism has a small but important role and effect to play in learning new imperative English verbs. Moreover, this study shown that bilingualism competence that help in learning new imperative verbs may not be found advisable in English methodology and the use of two languages in the class is generally facilitating the language learning experience. The teachers participating in the research indicated that the translation of many words and verbs in two languages or even the whole sentences is a good way to learn the imperative verbs. More over the study also shown that in the EFL classes, bilingualism has played a supportive and facilitating role. As with any other class technique, the using of the mother tongue was only a means to the end of improving foreign language proficiency. We agree with the majority of the student participants that no more than 25% of class time should be spent using L1. In my experience, this percentage can decrease as the students' English proficiency increases.

Sugesstion for further research

The present study indicated that bilingualism can be considered as supportive factor that helping male EFL learners on learning new imperative English verbs. As it is true for every research, it is not possible to claim that all the findings of this study are generalizable to similar cases. Finally, there are some suggestions for further investigations listed as below:

The same study can be conducted in advanced-level situation to see is there any difference between the findings of this study and other findings?

The same study can be conducted to investigate the effect of bilingualism on younger or older ages of participants of the present study, since this study focused on participants between 14-16 years. This study was conducted on male learners, the following studies can be conducted to investigate the effect of bilingualism on both gender.

REFERENCES

- Al-Dosarri, M. N. (2005). An investigation of bilingual children's metalinguistic awareness in two typologically unrelated languages. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 65(8), 228-239.
- Al-Mekhlafi, A. M. (2011). Difficulties in teaching and learning grammar in an EFL context. *International Journal of Instruction*, 4(2), 69-92.
- De Houwer, A. (1995). *Structural aspects of young bilingual children's mixed utterances: A unified analysis*. Antwerpen: Universitaire Instelling.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grosjean, F. (1982). *Life in two languages: An introduction to bilingualism*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hornby, P.A. (1977). *Bilingualism: psychological, social and educational implications*. New York: Academic Press.
- Kassaian, Z., & Esmae'li, S. (2011). The effect of bilinguality on L3 Breadth of vocabulary knowledge and word Reading Skill. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(8), 966-974.
- Keshavarz, M. H., & Astaneh, H. (2004). The impact of bilinguality on the learning of English vocabulary as a foreign language (L3). *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 7(4), 295-302.
- Maghsoudi, M. (2010). The interaction between bilingualism, educational and social factors and foreign language learning in Iran. *Journal of Language and Culture*, 1(3), 35-46.
- Merrikhi, P. (2012). The effect of bilingualism on Iranian pre-university students' English grammar proficiency. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(2), 360-370.
- Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in contact*. New York: Publications of the Linguistic Circle of New York.

THE STRATEGIES APPLIED IN TRANSLATING HUMOR FOR AGES 8 TO 12 ON THE BASIS OF ATTARDO'S MODEL FROM ENGLISH INTO PERSIAN

Seyyed Hami Ghasemtabar Kashikolaei

Department of English Language, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Ghasemtabarhami@gmail.com

Dr. Morad Bagherzadeh Kasmani

Assistant Professor, Islamic Azad University, Chalous Branch

Kasmankola@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

"Humor is an essential part of everyday communication and an important component of innumerable literary works and of art in general. It is rooted in a specific cultural and linguistic context, but it is also an indispensable part of intercultural communication. Wordplay and humor add so much to a text and sometimes can be truly essential to the story or document, but they are incredibly difficult to translate well" (Vandaele, 2002, p. 153). The present study was an attempt to look into what strategies translators apply while translating humor in children's literature between ages 8 to 12. The corpus consisted of four English books with their Farsi translations: Dan Guttman's "Mr. Docker is off his rocker", "Miss Daisy is crazy", "Mrs. Cooney is loony" and "Miss Small is off the wall" (by Mahboubeh Najafkhani). The humors according to the definition of humor mentioned in this study were identified and a detailed comparison was made between the humors in the original books and their Persian equivalents. What became evident through conducting this study was the fact that for the purpose of translating humor in the selected books, not all the strategies introduced by Attardo which was regarded as the theoretical framework of this study are used in Persian translations of the texts and also there are some strategies that work better than any others. By examining the collected data and investigating the table of the percentage of the usage of these strategies, it was concluded that Reproducing and Substitution are the most useful strategies and Domestication, Omission and Compensation are the least applicable strategy for the purpose of translating humor. When a translator who is aware of this matter can focus on the strategies that are more useful, h/she will reach a better result.

KEYWORDS: Translation, Children's Literature, Humor, Wordplay

INTRODUCTION

"Translation process has always been challenging and debatable. Poets, philosophers and literary

men had difficulties about translations. This idea generally came from their own experiences” (Mollanazar, 2003, P.8). There have been debates over the concept of translation for many years. Linguists and experts like Nida (1982) believe that translation is something beyond finding equivalents of source language in the target language.

Translating may be defined as rereading and rewriting for target –language audiences, which make translations uniquely different from their originals; every text which is translated, takes on new language; a new culture, a new reader, and a new point of view (Wells, 1948). “One of the most important factors in translation is the culture of the target language. Cultural knowledge and cultural difference have always been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence. The main concern has traditionally been with words and phrases that are so heavily and exclusively grounded in one culture that they are almost impossible to be translated into the terms of another.” (Robinson, 2007, p.186). Translation of children's literature is very similar to that of other literary texts. The more widely children read, the more open-minded they are likely to grow up. Literature in translation can enrich a child's world by providing glimpses into the lives and actions of young people in other parts of the world and fostering his understanding of cultural diversity. Despite the progress that has been made in understanding children's texts from other countries through the medium of translation and their importance, the need for research into and dissemination of the diversity of children's literatures is still acute. Yet translating children's literature has its own special feature; children's books have a dual audience, children and adults (O'Dell, 1948). Research shows that appropriate content is an element everyone who selects, reads, tells, translates, edits, publishes, sells or promotes literature for children is interested in, for it is widely accepted that literature is a major carrier of content and powerful medium for understanding the world (Xeni, 2007). For children it is easier to assimilate new information when this is presented within the structure of a story or a poem, whereas research activities that followed earlier attempts revealed that literature for children can meet essential need of the audience / readership in question and what is more give answers to life time matters (Xeni, 2006). “Humor is an essential part of everyday communication and an important component of innumerable literary works and of art in general. Humor is a significant children's need met in literature. Throughout this particular paper in children's anxieties, worries and fears, making literature a beneficiary activity for a child's wellbeing. Humor is used in everyday parlance to refer simultaneously to an effect and its (con) textual causes, an occurrence so normal (ised) that we don't even notice it. This is a trivial issue for ordinary understanding, but an annoying and confusing one in the scholarly debate on humor” (Vandaele, 2002, p. 153).

It will be argued that despite various other lifetime matters, children of all three age groups (Xeni, 2000) suffer from anxieties, worries and fears including separation anxiety, which is closely related to loneliness and isolation, super mental phenomena and animals, noise and situations with noise, the school life (i.e. school directors and teachers, authority punishment /restriction, homework, test, school failure, etc.), super mental events and beings, bodily injury, etc. (ibid). These will be presented and analyzed underlying children's literature that humor cannot be humor for humor's sake alone, but it serves a hyper purpose: to meet essential childhood need (Xeni, 2000). Wordplay, combining "formal similarity" and "semantic dissimilarity" (Delabastita, 1993, as cited in De Geest, 1996), is a good example of humor being

culture-specific. It is culturally bound in that culture defines what kind of wordplay is appropriate and that recognizing and appreciating it requires background knowledge (Leppihalme, 1996). When translating wordplay from the SL to the TL, a translator has basically three options available: wordplay, some other rhetorical device or no wordplay (Leppihalme, 1996). The choice between the options at hand is not simple. Quite the contrary, it includes both textual and extra textual concerns. SL wordplay may contain, for example, elements that are unacceptable, or even taboo, according to TL norms and that may have to be played down for TL purposes. One could say that the translator necessarily rewrites humor for the TL audience following, at least to some extent, the norms accepted in the target culture.

“One might ask if translating humor is fundamentally different from any other forms of translation; after all, it is often agreed that successful translation involves recreating in the TL text those features of the SL text that are relevant for the text to function for a certain purpose” (see Kussmaul, 1995:90). With a humorous text, the purpose is, for all practical purposes, always the same: to elicit laughter. In a way the translator has less latitude with a humorous text, in that the translation should be able to function for the TL audience in a maximally similar way as the original text did for the SL audience, even if this were achieved by substantially altering it. Balancing between SL restrictions and TL demands, the translator is engaged in what could be compared to an exercise in tightrope walking, in that the immediacy of effect can easily be lost.

In this study, the researcher has tried to investigate the common strategies adopted by an Iranian translator to translate humorous words in children's books from English to Persian. The model of translation strategies which is presented by Attardo (1994) is taken into consideration as a framework for investigating the humor translation strategies.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Characteristics of children's literature

From discussion concerning the definition, content, and theory of CHL, various characteristic feature of CHL can be derived. When listing some of the main characteristics that can be easily traced from statements and arguments through the years, it becomes clear that the aspects of language and content are what matter the most. Therefore, drawing from Nodelman (1996, 2008) Oittinen (2000), Xein (2007) and Panaou and Tsilimeni (2011), the following list of characteristics can be drafted: ‘simplicistic’, ‘comprehensive’, ‘cautious with readability and speak ability’, ‘repetitive’, ‘didactic, and at the same time, ‘optimistic’, ‘straightforward’, ‘child appropriate’, ‘expressing a child's point of view’, or ‘about childhood’, and ‘with illustration’, ‘fantasy’, and ‘happy ending’.

An attempt to provide an overview of the characteristics of CHL over the centuries reveals that the concepts established in any given period of time were not self-governing. They were dependent to a high degree on social, ideological, and spiritual factors influencing the writer. Prevalent views with regarded to childhood the child's role in the family and societal contexts also played their part in establishing CHL characteristics (Lathey, 2006). In the past, CHL was expected to involve didacticism and to thus consist of ethical/religious element (Shavit, 1986).

Books for children were more seen as a way to acquire happiness and satisfaction (Nodleman, 1996, 2008). It is interesting to note the entirely secondary function of entertainment until very recently.

As soon as didactic narratives lost their appeal somewhat, the value of CHL as a mean for happiness, satisfaction, enjoyment, and enhancement was promoted (Nodleman, 2008). According to the well-known Greek translator of CHL, Petrovits-Androutsopoulou (1990), excellent CHL can perhaps eventually provide some teaching in its own way, offering some knowledge, but this is not what a writer aims for. What is important is that CHL cultivates children's inner world, widens their horizons, transfers life experiences, provides children with an opportunity to experience life and art, and given them pleasure. In a modernized world, writers for children began paying attention to the aesthetic value of their texts and the pleasure they bring to readers in addition to knowledge (Kontoleon, 1988; Lathey, 2006; Nodleman, 2008). To them literature was primarily an aesthesis of life expressed by feelings with cognitive and intellectual aspects as secondary. With the coming of modernity, writers tended to avoid naïve narratives with didactic elements and attempted to adopt a more sincere and authentic attitude towards readers, trying to mirror reality in Their work (Kontoleon, 2008) Using cultivated language, humor, pictures and realism, they worked towards offering enjoyment to the child-readers, helping them handle or overcome their problems, and mature and advance their spirit, inner-world, and personality, preparing them to integrate smoothly in society, and become creative the aesthetic pleasure, the greater the benefit for the child-reader, and at the same time, the greater the impact on the status of CHL in literary studies (Pinsent, 2006; Nodleman, 2008). It is noteworthy here that a child's development was felt to be achieved via enjoyment and aesthetic means.

Beyond the years of didacticism and aesthetic enjoyment, new ways of seeing things emerged. Influenced by postmodernism, CHL presented new tendencies in terms of its characteristics and the role of child-reader. The latter, having an active role to play and being now responsible for the meaning-making of the literary text as a critical literate individual, experiences an era where a piece of literary work is open to various readings, interpretations, critical engagement, approaches, and dimensions (Nikoljeva, 1998; Economidou, 2000; Stein, 2000; Mallouri, 2006; Sinfield & Hawkins, 2006).

In traditional CHL the main characteristics of writing for child-reader are different to those of ADL. Some characteristics derive from attempts to define CHL, where scholars, instead of listing characteristics, tend to report features that – from their point of view – signify that the particular literary work is addressed to children. In this framework, Petrovits- Androutsopoulou (1990) suggests that simplicity of language, the avoidance of taboo language, like insults and curse words, as well as sarcasm, and short sentences, describing characters, settings and the plot, are some of the main characteristics that authors and translators should incorporate in their books. Similarly, McDowel (1991) asserts that CHL texts are shorter in length, written in simple language, and have an 'easy to follow' structure, mainly consisting of dialogue, and with less description. Crouch (1962) stresses that CHL should be comprehensible, and Sakellariou (1987) and Nodelmaan (1992) both underline that CHL should consist of uncomplicated language

characterized by innocence, optimism, didacticism, and happy endings. This links to Tucker's (1976) earlier idea that a forced limitation of literature in certain areas of experience and vocabulary was necessary. The use of 'simple language's is a recurring characteristic where CHL is concerned (Oittinen, 2000; Lathey, 2006; Camara Aguilera, 2008).

Translating children's literature

This section covers certain behavior pattern of translating children's literature. It may seem that writing and translating for children is much easier than performing these jobs for adult. Children have their own language. If an Adult is to write or to translate for them, she should learn this language. Other Wise her work won't be successful because the addresses don't understand her works .consider you are talking to child; you cannot use all work that you prefer. On the other but they are not common among adults. When translating for children, the translator should consider all these in mind and then start her job.

Shavit (1986) considers translating for children a semiotic concept as opposed to a traditional normative sense: "translation understood as part of a transfer Mechanism that is, the process by which textual models of one system are transferred to another" (p.11) the translated text in the target language then relates to the source text in different ways. Therefore the target text is the result of the relationship between two different systems; the source and the target systems. When translation viewed as part of the transfer process, the significant issue to regard is that it is not just translation of a text from one Language to another but also translation of a text from one system to another; for example, from adult system in to children's.

The translation should be understandable for children. If there is a word or expression which is not known in their world, it should be replaced by something else or omitted because it causes confusion, ambiguity and sometimes misunderstanding. Lopez (2006) confirms this idea and believes that Translator can, and should; leave out things that are beyond children's comprehension .it is not difficult to understand the importance of translating.

Word children's and adult's literature are broadly the same (Chambers, 1980).On the whole, translating for children is complex and just like translating for adults, it needs a good knowledge of the specific age group for which the TT is destined. This does not mean that only parents or people involved with children should translate for the younger ones but maybe "when translating for children, we should listen to the child, the child in the neighborhood and the child within ourselves" (Oittinen.1993.p.15).

The concept of humor

Glottology (Attardo, 1994; popa, 2005) also known as humorology, is the study of humor and is regarded as "one of the least understood, though studied, phenomena" (Popa, 2005, p. 48). In the context of this study, humor translation (HT), therefore, is seen as a branch of the study of humor and a field that is also heavily under-researched. What is believed about humor in the research world, where it is often seen as a culture- bound element, is well articulated by Alexander (1977): "Humor does not travel well across national boundaries [and [does not always survive translation across languages "(p.159). Or as Vandaele (2002) puts it, "... the sheer difficulty of humor as a

concept may discourage translation researchers..."(p. 150) a statement that explains the limited research in the field in many language combinations.

HT is a key area explored in this thesis, along with CHLT, translation process research, translator's strategies and approaches. This is a vital step as TS and humor studies are disciplines that have been long established but their intersections have seldom been explored (Chiaro, 2010), especially in such a way as this thesis proposes.

Using translation strategies while translating humor

It is impossible to translate a text from a source language in to a Target language without using translation strategies:

Andrew Chesterman claims that the most simple translation strategy is change something of course this is a rather simple view on translation strategies applied, because there needs to be a reason on changing something.

"Strategies of translation involve the basic task of to translate it. Both of these tasks are determined by various factors: cultural, economic and political" (Baker, 1998.p.240). Attardo (2002) suggests five main strategies:

1) Reproducing

"Reproducing is employed when the format of a joke that exists in the source culture (SC) cannot be found in the target culture (TC).In this case; the translator reproduces the joke" (Attardo, 2002, p. 186).

2) Domestication

Domestication is applied so as to make a certain joke from the ST amusing for the target recipient? The aim of this strategy is to produce a TT as similar to the non-translated text as possible.

3) Substitution

Substitution is the strategy employed when replacing a joke from the SL with a different one that will be comprehensible and amusing for the target recipient in the TL. This strategy is similar to reproducing, as it is applied due to cultural differences. According to Attardo (2002), substitution is, in other words, a free translation. As he puts it, while substitution is not a translation at the semantic level, it can be successful as long as it "elicits the laughter that the speaker was seeking" (Attardo, 2002, p. 189).

4) Omission

Omission is used in the most intricate cases, when a translator cannot possibly manage to render a joke into the TL.

5) Compensation

Compensation, which is linked to omission, is employed when the translator compensates for the loss of a non-translated joke by introducing another joke, which does not exist in the SL, in a different part of a text. According to Bruzdziak (2009), omission and compensation can be seen as 'gain and loss' in the process of translation. "A non-translated joke in the TT is conceived as a loss in translation, whereas a joke introduced in another part of the TT serves to compensate for the previous loss" (Gottlieb, 1997, p.222).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What strategies has the Persian translator applied to transfer humor from English to Persian for ages 8 to 12?
2. Which strategies have been more frequently used by the translator?

METHODOLOGY

Corpus of the study

To accomplish the objective of the study two criteria were designated for choosing the corpus of this research; the first one were the books in which humor plays a large role than in any other books and the writer who was well known for using humor in her works, and the second one was availability of the Persian translation of the books. Several books were given a close look, four of which carrying humor were extracted and worked on. In these books, humor plays a large role than in any other books and included various humors. This writer's creativity in using humor engaged the researcher to see if Persian translators were successful in transferring this beauty in Persian translation.

Also, the researcher intended to find out which strategies the translator used to transfer the same beauty into the target language. So, the corpus consisted of four original texts along with their translations as listed below:

Table 1: The English Corpus Used in this Research

Text No	Title	Author
1	Mr. Docker is off his rocker	Dan Guttman
2	Miss Daisy is Crazy	Dan Guttman
3	Mrs. Cooney is Loony	Dan Guttman
4	Miss Small is off the wall	Dan Guttman

In table 4, the information regarding the Persian elements was provided. The data was sorted according to the title of the books in Persian, the name of the translators, the date and the name of publication in Iran. It should be mentioned that no random selection has been done and all wordplays have been gathered.

Table 2: The Persian Corpus Used in this Research

شماره متن	عنوان	مترجم	تاریخ انتشار در ایران	ناشر
1	آقای میچل، دانشمند خل و چل	محبوبه نجف خانی	1390	نشر افق
2	خانم بریج، معلم گیج	محبوبه نجف خانی	1390	نشر افق
3	خانم براشت، مربی بهداشت	محبوبه نجف خانی	1390	نشر افق
4	خانم لیزار، ما را گذاشته سرکار	محبوبه نجف خانی	1390	نشر افق

Theoretical framework

In this study, the researcher used Attardo's model for the translation of humor in order to analyze the collected data and classify and categorize them. Attardo (2002) suggests five main strategies: Reproducing, Domestication, Substitution, Omission and Compensation

Procedure

After searching in the market and the internet in order to find the books containing humor together with their Persian translations, Dan Guttman's "Mr. Docker is off his rocker", "Miss. Daisy is Crazy", "Mrs. Cooney is loony" and Miss. Small is off the wall" with their Farsi translations were selected because of their popularity in containing humor. After accessing the original texts and their corresponding Farsi translations, the main books were read sentence by sentence and word by word and finally a number of items carrying humor according to the definition of humor were identified. He wanted to understand how effective the translation strategies were. They were listed in a piece of papers to be examined in the next step and so a list of word plays and translation strategies was provided. In pursuit of this step, the researcher examined the listed items to see whether they were translated through applying a translation strategy. In the next stage, according to different types of strategies proposed by Attardo in translating humor, the types of the strategies used by translators in translation of each humorous item were identified and determined. It is pressing to note that the table of specification presented for each translated book which depicted the humorous section, their Persian translations and the types of strategy used according to Attardo, respectively. Finally, the results were put into numerical modes and were shown in a table in chapter 4 and their percentages were elicited and the most and the least frequently used strategies were represented.

Data Collection

Data was gathered from the parallel corpora, consisting of twenty five children's books, translated from English into Persian. Attardo's (2002) model in translation of humor in children's literature was used.

After deciding on the corpus of the study, the researcher carried out the data collection procedure. In the first stage, the main books were read sentence by sentence and word by word and finally a

number of items carrying humor according to the definition of humor were identified. They were listed in a piece of papers to be examined in the next step and so a list of word plays and translation strategies was provided. In pursuit of this step, the researcher examined the listed items to see whether they were translated through applying a translation strategy. In the next stage, according to different types of strategies proposed by Attardo (2002) in translating humor, the types of the strategies used by translators in translation of each humorous item were identified and determined. It is pressing to note that the table of specification presented for each translated book which depicted the humorous section, their Persian translations and the types of strategy used according to Attardo, respectively. Finally, the results were put into numerical modes and were shown in a table and their percentages were elicited and the most and the least frequently used strategy were represented.

Samples of strategies used in translating wordplays

1. Reproducing:

"Pleeeeeeeeeee": "تو را به خداااا بگویند چیه"

2. Substitution:

"Nah-nah-nah boo boo": "دماغ سوخته می خریم"

3. Reproducing:

"Cluck like a chicken": "مثل مرغ قدقد کنم"

4. Substitution:

"Real potato freak": "کشته و مرده سیب زمینی"

5. Reproducing:

"You're blinded by love ": "عشق چشمهایت را کور کرده "

6. Reproducing:

"Football players are really dump": "بازیکنان آمریکایی همه شان خنگ اند "

Design

To answer the research question, the present study applied descriptive approach, as Farhady (2005, p. 144) represents, through descriptive method, "the researcher attempts to describe and interpret the current status of phenomena." So, the present study was concerned with clarifying and describing the strategies applied by an Iranian translator while translating humor. In this study, comparisons were done between the main texts and their corresponding translations in order to find techniques used by translators in translating humor and between the found techniques in order to determine the most frequent ones.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the process of tracking down the samples, the collected data was first sorted and organized in tables. These data included wordplays instances of each book. For this purpose, the researcher designed tables, consisting of the original and translated proper names and the type of strategy applied in translating that wordplay. In summarizing the results of the analysis of instances, the number of applied strategies was counted in all books. Then, the frequency and the percentage of the different strategies used in translating that name was measured and were shown in tables.

Finally, tables were analyzed and their results were discussed. In the next phase, the frequency and the percentage of the most frequent strategies were measured in each book.

Table 3: The frequency and percentage of strategies among all data.

	Strategy	Fr.	%
1	Reproducing	31	83
2	Substitution	6	17
3	Domestication	0	0
4	Omission	0	0
5	Compensation	0	0

The above table represents strategies used in translating proper names from the most commonly used strategies to less commonly used one. As the distribution of strategies shows, out of 37 data collected by the researcher from four original English books, 31 instances refer to reproducing strategy, 6 instances refer to substitution and the other strategies are not used.

The difficulty in reading Dan Guttman's works is understanding humor which depends on meaning, so in order to improve this ability during translation, some strategies must be introduced for translating different genders. The model applied in this study which was put forward by Attardo (2002), was taken as the framework of this study for the translation of humor and contained five strategies, namely: reproducing, domestication, substitution, omission and compensation. The items considered in this model were regarded as the strategies to be used in translation of humors found in the chosen books. The humors were selected and extracted according to the definition of humor mentioned in key terms definition in section one of the present study. The translator (Mahboubeh Najafkhani) tried to translate humor in a way to be more and more understandable for children and accordingly applied reproducing and substitution in order to make the humorous stories understandable and at the same time as funny as the original texts.

Having sorted four translated versions of the original texts and found the wordplays and strategies applied by the translator, the researcher found the following interesting findings regarding the type and frequency of each wordplay and strategy. As the summary of the statistical findings in the above table presents, it can be concluded that among wordplays, Onomatopoeia and Hyperbole are the most frequently used in books of the research. But among strategies, Reproducing and Substitution are the most frequently used in four books and this can be due to the nature of such strategies, according to which the meaning or the function of the source sentences or texts is preserved.

CONCLUSION

To that end, Dan Guttman's stories " Mr. Docker is off his rocker", "Miss Daisy is Crazy", "Mrs. Cooney is loony" and "Miss Small is off the wall" and their translations were compared, the data were analyzed on the basis of Attardo's classification of strategies.

What is understood from "Mr. Docker is off his rocker", "Miss Daisy is Crazy", "Mrs. Cooney is loony" and "Miss Small is off the wall" is one of the most difficult challenges and barriers. There are several factors that often confuse the reader, the humorous conversations that depend on the meaning, usage and pronunciation of words and the ambiguity of them and this make confusion to the translator which meaning of his word is the main idea. The findings showed that when a word or a sentence is funny in English culture and makes children laugh, it is funny in Iranian culture and makes children laugh according to the types of wordplays.

The collected data which were the result of examining the books and their translations mentioned before in this study showed that for the purpose of translating humor in "Mr. Docker is off his rocker", "Miss Daisy is Crazy", "Mrs. Cooney is loony" and "Miss Small is off the wall", not all the strategies introduced by Attardo are used in the corresponding Persian translations of the texts and also there are some strategies that work better than the others. These strategies are as follows: Reproducing, Substitution, Domestication, Omission and Compensation.

By investigating the tables of the percentage of the usage of these wordplays and strategies, among the wordplays, Onomatopoeia and Hyperbole are the most frequently used wordplays and Alliteration and Personification are the least useful ones. On the other hand, among strategies, Reproducing and substitution are the most frequently applied strategies and the other strategies are the least frequently used ones for the purpose of translating humor in this study.

Limitation of the study

The main limitation of the study was concerned to the fact that although there were many Persian sources in Iran that were translated versions of the English books, the researcher couldn't find the original English books in Iran.

REFERENCES

- Alexander, R. J. (1997). Aspects of Verbal Humor in English. *Language in Performance* 13. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Attardo, S. (1994). *Linguistic Theory of Humor*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Attardo, S. (2002). Translation and Humor: An Approach Based on the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH). In J. Vandaele (Ed.), *Translating Humor* (pp. 173-192). Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Baker, M. (1998). Norms. In M. Baker & K. Malmkjaer (Eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (pp.163-165). London: Routledge.
- Bruzdzia, E. M. (2009). Shifts of meaning in humor translation as exemplified by Polish translation of Sherk (BA Thesis). University of Gdansk, Faculty of Languages, Institute of English, Gdansk. Retrieved 26 March, 2011, from http://www.dubbing.pl/archiwum/shifts_of_meaning.Pdf.
- Camara Aguilera, E. (2008). *The Translation of Proper Name in Children's Literature*. Retrieved February 6, 2011, from <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/4666.pdf>. Cambridge University Press.

- Chambers, A. (1980). The Reader in the Book. In C. Carpelan, A. Parpola, & P. Koskikallio, P. (Eds.), *The Signal Approach to Children's Books* (pp.250-272). Metuchen: Scarecrow.
- Chiaro D. et al. (2010). *Translation, Humor and Literature*. London.
- Crouch, M. (1962). *Treasure Seekers and Borrowers: Children's Books in Britain 1900 – 1960*. London: The Library Association.
- De Geest, D. (1996). Review of There's a Double Tongue by Delabastita. *the Translator*, 2(2), 328-332.
- Delabastita, D. (1993). *there's a Double Tongue*, Amsterdam: Rodopi. 1994 "Focus on the Pun: Wordplay as a Special Problem in Translation Studies", *Target* 6 (2), 223 243.
- Economidou, A. (2006). Representations of Masculinity in Greek Literature for young readers: Signs of Hopeful Changes. In V. Joosen & K. Vloeberghs (Eds.), *Changing Concepts of Childhood and Children's Literature*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- Fernandez Lopez, M. (2006). Translation Studies in Contemporary Children's Literature: A comparison of Intercultural Ideological Factors. In G. Lathey (Ed.). *The Translation of Children's Literature; A Reader* (pp. 41-53). Clevedon/ Buffalo/Toronto: Multilingual Matters.
- Gottlieb, H. (1997). On the Polysemiotics of Subtitling Wordplay. In D. Delabastita (Ed.), *Traduction Essays on punning and Translation* (pp. 207-227). Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Kontoleon, M. (1988). *Views on Children's Literature*. Athens: Pataki's [οντολέων, M. (1988).
- Kussmaul, P. (1995). *Training the Translator*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamin's.
- Lathey, G. (Ed.). (2006). *The Translation of Children's Literature: A Reader*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Leppihalme, R. (1996). Caught in the frame- A Target- culture viewpoint of allusive wordplay. *The translator*, 2(2), 189-218.
- Mallouri, L. (2006). Postmodern Fairytales: Ways of the realization of their modernity and their impact on young readers. In Contemporary Research in Cyprus: Priorities and Perspectives. *The Pedagogical Association of Cyprus Conference Proceedings IX*. University of Cyprus.
- McDowel, E. (1991). Children's Book Award Winners Named. *The New York Times*. Retrieved October 10, 2007.
- Mollanazar, H. (2003). *The Role of Collocations in Translation* (MA thesis), Tehran: Tarbiat Modarres University, 2003.
- Nida, E.A., & Taber, C. R. (1982). *The theory and practice of translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill
- Nikolajeva, M. (1998). Exit children's literature? *The lion and The Unicorn*, 22(2), 221-236.
- Nodelman, P. (1992). The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature. *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 17, 29-35.
- Nodelman, P. (1996). *The pleasures of children's literature* (2nd Ed). New York: Longman.
- Nodelman, P. (2008). *The Hidden Adult: Defining Children's Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.
- O'Dell, A. (1948). *Socialization Through Children's Literature*. Cambridge.
- Oittinen, R. (1993). *I Am Me- I Am Other: On the Dialogic of Translating for Children*. Tampere: University of Tampere.
- Oittinen, R. (2000). *Translating for children*. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc.

- Panaou, P., & Tsilimeni, T. (2011). The Implied Reader of the Translation: Culture to Another. In S. Wolf, K. Coats, P.A. Enciso, and C. Jenkins (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Children's and Young Adult Literature* (pp. 419-427). New York: Routledge.
- Petrovits-Androutsopoulou, L. (1990). *Children's Literature in Our Days*. Athens: Kastaniotis. [Πέτροβιτς-ανδρ].
- Pinsent, P. (Ed.). (2006). *No Child is an Island: The Case for Children's Literature in Translation*. Staffordshire: pied piper publishing.
- Popa, D.E. (2005). Jokes and Translation. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, 13(1), 48-57.
- Robinson, D. (2007): *Becoming a Translator: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation*. London: Routledge.
- Sakellariou, C. (1987). *History of Children's Literature (Greek and International)*. Athens: Flipippaki.
- Shavit, Z. (1986). *Poetics of Children's Literature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Sinfield, I., & Hawkins, L. (2006). Critical literacy: Policy and Practice. *Orbit*, 36(27).
- Stein, S. (2000). *Equipped for the future content standards: What adults need to know and be able to do in the 21st century*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.
- Vandaele, J. (2002) " (Re-) Constructing Humor: *Meanings and Means*". In *The Translator*, Volume, Number 8(2), pp. 149- 172.
- Wells, G. (1986). *The Meaning Makers: Children Learning Language And Using Language To Learn*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Xeni, E. (2000). *Translation of children's Literature: Children's Need for Literature and the Problems Related to their Translation. (Ma Thesis)*. University of Surrey, UK.
- Xeni, E. (2006). Children and Young adults' Needs for Literature and Problems regarding their Translation. In p. pinsent (Ed.), *No Child is an Island: IBBY Collection of Paoers* (pp. 62-73).
- Xeni, E. (2007). 'Children's Literature in Translation'. Invited contribution to Translation Studies and International Communication Joint MA Research Seminar Series 2007- 2008, organized by the Translation Studies Graduate Programmed University of Edinberg and the Center for Translation & Interpreting Studies in Scotland (CTISS). November 2007, Heriot Watt University, UK.

HOW DOES COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE ASSIST IRANIAN LOW-INTERMEDIATE EFL STUDENTS' WRITING?

Hadi Alizadegan

Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Alborz, Iran
(Email: Alizadegan_2000@yahoo.com)

Mehrdad Moloudi

Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Alborz, Iran
(Email: dr.moloudi@yahoo.com)

ABSTRACT

Writing is viewed as an individual activity and normally teachers are expected to feedback students' writings. Although there has been a growing body of research on using collaborative activities in English as a second language (ESL) and/or English as a foreign language (EFL) classes to enhance speaking, on writing, there are only a few-documented researches. The present study examined collaborative dialogue of 12 EFL low-intermediate male teenagers in one intact class. The researcher analyzed the participants' collaborative dialogue in terms of the occurrence of lexis, form (grammar and cohesion), and mechanics (punctuation and spelling) in their language-related episode writings; additional data was collected through interviews with the participants, class observations, group discussions, field-notes, and written materials in order to find out how the collaborative dialogue led to the improvement of the participants writing ability in English. The present research may be of great value for teachers and practitioners since it devises a proper way to motivate students to enhance their writings ability through collaboration. The researcher determined writing quality by an analytic rating procedure that included cohesion, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation (Weir, 1998 as cited in Weigle, 2008). Analysis of data showed that there has been a gradual improvement in terms of writing ability when comparing sessions from the first phase to the last phase. Results also indicated that all the students except for one perceived collaborative dialogue positively and consider it useful in enhancing writing ability. The best conclusion was that collaborative dialogue strategy assisted the participants to perform their pieces of writing better than those in non-collaborative dialogue class. Here, the researchers could conclude that if our students get acquainted with the technique of collaborative dialogue and the writing skill is taught to the students by means of this strategy, they are more successful at accomplishing the task than when they do it individually.

KEYWORDS: collaborative dialogue, lexis, form, mechanics

INTRODUCTION

The significance of the writing ability has long been the focal point for much discussion in learning English as a foreign and/or second language. There is no doubt that writing skill is the thorniest skill for learners to learn. The problem exists not only in producing and arranging ideas, but also in changing these ideas into written materials. Considering that there are a wide variety of theories and implementation factors, teaching the writing skill is a daunting task. Writing is really seen as a process of discovery as the writers try to find their way while they are struggling to think, compose and put their ideas together. In that way, it is not considered as a static process but as a cognitive, social and dynamic one (Kellogg, 2008 as cited in Javed, Juan, & Nazli, 2013). Duenans believes that writing, nowadays, is considered as an important expertise in supporting other learning experiences, and reformulating knowledge. In fact, the new trends have begun to see writing as an active communication, social process involving discussions, interaction with others, group work, and peer work. When writing becomes a social act, the teacher can make use of some technique called collaborative dialogue to facilitate the learning of this skill. In recent years, the idea that collaborative dialogue may also mediate learning, has been developed (Duenans, 2004; Tudge & Wells, 1998 as cited in Swain, Brooks and Tocalli- Beller, 2002). According to Swain (2000, as cited in Lantolf, 2009) collaborative dialogue originates in the perspective sociocultural theory of mind which claims that cognition and knowledge are dialogically formed. Collaborative dialogue is linguistic knowledge and makes performance to great competence. It is where language use and language learning can take place at exactly the same time. It is language use facilitating language learning. It is cognitive activity and social activity. It is a type of dialogue in which students become engaged in problem-solving and knowledge-building.

Statement of the Problem

One of the salient hardship for English as a second language students (ESLS) and/or English as a foreign language students (EFLS) is the learning of writing skill, and the reason is that our students do not have access to experienced and trained teachers, and most of our teachers are not really aware of what techniques may be useful for teaching this skill. Although a growing number of studies (Baradaran & Mo'ezzy, 2011; Meihami & Varmaghani, 2013) have been carried out pertaining to the relation of other teaching techniques with writing, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, not enough research has been conducted into how collaborative dialogue, as a more recent teaching strategy, can assist students in their writing quality. In other words, there are only a few documented researches to explore how collaborative dialogue lead to improvement on writing proficiency of English as a foreign language students in Iran. In the present study, the researchers made an effort to teach the writing skill by the help of collaborative dialogue technique to the students. In fact, this is aimed at investigating how the present technique led to the improvement of the EFL students' writing proficiency in Iran.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Dialogue

A theoretical claim is that language is a source of the second and/or foreign language learning. The idea of languaging that comes from Vygotsky showed the crucial role that language plays in

mediating cognitive processes. Language and thought are different; in fact, Vygotsky proposed that language completes thought. We can think of language as an activity i.e., a process of making meaning and constructing knowledge and experience through language, in the exact sense of word, language is an episode of the process of learning. The word languaging compels us to understand language as a process rather than an object. When we have to deal with a complicated problem, we may speak with another person in order to find a solution to it (collaborative dialogue) or may whisper to ourselves (private speech). These are two types of languaging. In both of them, the purpose is to solve a complex problem (Swain, 2010 as cited in Watanabe & Swain, 2013). Collaborative dialogue is dialogue in which students have interaction with each other to find a solution to their linguistic problems. It is dialogue that forms linguistic knowledge, that mediate joint problem solving and knowledge building. It is where language use and language learning can take place simultaneously. It is language use mediating language learning. In brief, what is taking place in collaborative dialogue their “saying” and reacting to “what is said” is language learning i.e., knowledge building mediated by language i.e., a semiotic tool (Swain, 2000 as cited in Lantolf, 2002).

Language-Related Episode

Language-related episodes are instances of collaborative dialogue in which the students talk about the language they are generating, question their language use or self-correct their language production. Language-related episodes provide opportunities for language learning. In such episodes, the participants talk about linguistic form as an object (Swain & Lapkin, 1998 as cited in Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Swain and Lapkin (2002) believe that three types of language-related episodes are found as the students collaboratively write a text. Form-oriented (F-O) LREs, lexis-oriented (L-O) LREs, and mechanics-oriented (M-O) LREs. Any segment in the collaborative discourse of the students dealing with grammatical accuracy is organized as form-oriented LREs. These episodes are about the tense of verb, articles, prepositions, linking devices, pronoun reference, and word-order. The segments in the collaborative dialogue which are dealing with word’ meaning, word choice or procedures of expressing an idea is classified as lexis-oriented LREs, and language-related episodes dealing with spelling and punctuation are categorized as mechanics-oriented LREs.

Collaborative Dialogue as a Source of Learning

Collaborative dialogue involves two characteristics. The performance of collaborative dialogue among students promotes “noticing”. Noticing occurs in different forms. Noticing something in target language for it is frequent. Noticing that the target language forms is completely different from the students’ own inter language. From time to time, the students notice that they cannot express exactly the meaning that they wish to convey at the very moment of attempting to produce it. Another characteristics in which producing language may serve the language learning process is through “hypothesis testing”. When there are errors in students’ written production, the students give hypothesis to each other in order to solve the errors. To better understand a hypothesis, the students have to do something, and one procedure of doing this is to write something. This process of modification done by students in order to find a satisfactory solution to their linguistic problems represents the second and/or foreign language learning. Collaborative

dialogue forcefully persuade the students to process language with more mental effort. Thus, it seems to have a significant role in learning (Kowal & Swain, 1997 as cited in Lantolf, 2009).

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is one of the mediational means used during collaborative dialogue (Watanabe & Swain, 2013). The term of scaffolding derives from SCT which its central idea is that cognition must be investigated within the social context. SCT considers learning, concluding language learning, as dialogically based so that Artigal (1992 as cited in Ellis, 2012) claims that ‘language acquisition device’ is found in the interaction that occurs between interactants or conversationalists rather than in the learners’ heads. Scaffolding is a process in which one student (an expert or a novice) helps another student (a novice) to accomplish a skill that they cannot do independently (Ellis, 2012). Cook (2008) defined scaffolding as the process that assists the learner to reach the next point in development and, in sociocultural theory, it involves social assistance by others rather than physical resources such as dictionary. As per Pool and Patthey-chavez (1994), the tenet of scaffolding has also been described through another phrase namely “assisted performance”. The phrase assisted performance involves both “assistance” afforded and the consequences of that assistance in facilitating “performance”. And finally, the effects of assistance will be obvious in the performance of the one assisted.

Use of First Language (L1)

There has been a lot of disagreement or argument over the use of first language (L1) in second language (L2) classroom as a mediational means throughout collaborative dialogue (Watanabe & Swain, 2013). Swain and Lapkin (2000 as cited in Yang, 2014) believe that judicious use of L1 can advocate L2 learning and use. Banning the use of L1 in performing L2 tasks is to prevent L2 students from an important cognitive tool. Anton and DiCamilla (1998) examined the sociocognitive functions of L1 use in the collaborative dialogue of adults learning the Spanish language as an L2. Qualitative analysis of five groups working collaboratively on writing tasks showed how the L1 facilitated expression of private speech. In their investigation of collaborative dialogue between university ESL students as they participated in peer revision of their L2 writing, they found that the learners make use of their L1 to understand the text, solve language-related problems, produce ideas, take over the task, and keep dialogue. In sum, after their study, they underlined the importance of the L1 as a vital cognitive tool for the students’ collaborative problem solving.

Repetition

In accordance with Watanabe and Swain (2013), repetition is another mediational means which can be used over collaborative dialogue. Dicamilla and Anton (1997) investigated the use of repetition to mediate solutions to language- related problems in the second and/or foreign language learning. The subjects in their study consisted of adult L2 Spanish learners took part in collaborative writing tasks. They came to the conclusion that, in peer-peer collaborative dialogue, repetition played a vital role in creating and maintaining students’ shared perspective of the task and mediated the co-construction of linguistic knowledge.

Empirical Review

According to Swain and Lapkin (1998), a number of studies have investigated language learning clearly and easily seen in collaborative dialogue. Donato (1994) investigated the transcripts of scaffolding, defined as a situation where a participant who knows more can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which those who have lack of knowledge can take part and increase current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence. Donato found that per student owned some relevant information but not all. The participants together solved their problems successfully. They combined the scaffolded information and reached the correct construction. Students have generated language and reflect on it, showing how they are simultaneously novices as individuals yet experts collectively. Together they have performed beyond their individual competencies. Altogether, 32 cases of scaffolded help were discovered in the hour-long planning session. The question is that if this collective scaffolding provided opportunities for linguistic development in the individual learner. To determine this question, evidence for independent second language performance was sought in the actual oral activity performed the following week. Of the 32 cases of collective scaffolding seen in the planning session, the participants used 75% of language structures included in the scaffolding correctly the following week. Thus, through collaborative dialogue, the participants increased both their own second language knowledge and their peer's second language. The participants afforded the necessary support and opportunities for each other so that they could outperform their competence.

The results of Donato's research are consonant with Vygotsky's theory which claims that the individual knowledge is socially and dialogically derived and its origin can be observed directly in the interactions among students over problem-solving tasks. It is important to note here that the unit of analysis used in Donato's study was the dialogue, in this case, through dialogue how students provided a collective scaffold. In the La Pierre study (1994) to be described, dialogue was also the unit of analysis. She isolated language-related episodes- episodes in which language was the focus of discussion. The La Pierre study (1994) involved grade 8 early French immersion students. In La Pierre's study (1994) it was hypothesized that when second language learners engage in a task in which they have to talk about the language they are generating (metatalk) for completing the task, that metatalk may be a source of second language learning. The task the students engaged in was dictogloss. Language-related episodes were separated from the transcripts of the students' talk as they tried to find an answer to linguistic problems that they encountered while, with a partner, reconstructing the passage. As per these episodes, items were constructed to test the language discussed. Thus, any pair of the students had to respond to a set of test items which the students had discussed them in reconstructing the passage. These tests were given almost one week after the students had accomplished the task. The results of La Pierre's 1994 study indicate that when the students solved a linguistic problem together, the solution exactly was the same as their responses one week later. For example, if the students, through collaborative dialogue, attained a correct solution jointly, approximately 80% of the relevant posttest items were correct. Moreover, if they reached an incorrect solution, approximately 70% of the responses on the posttest items were false. In other words, the students tried to keep the same knowledge that they had constructed collaboratively the previous week. These results suggest these language-related episodes were the opportunities for second language

learning. Another study was conducted by Kowal and Swain (1997) as cited in Lantolf (2009) in doing a task that needed students to recreate a text they had just heard, Rachel and Sophie (pseudonyms) two grade 8 French immersion students working together, wrote the sentence: Meme les solutions ecologiques causent quelquefois des nouvelle menaces (even ecological solutions sometimes cause new threats). In their written text, des was dropped out and replaced with de. This replacement by them, shows the students' current hypothesis about the form that a partitive should take in front of an adjective. This process of modification (the change from des to de) proves second language acquisition, yet, our grasp of what Rachel and Sophie produced is greatly improved when we share in their dialogue as they construct the phrase des nouvellesmenaces. The phrase that they had heard was actually de nouveaux problem, but, they rephrased the text and wrote menace. They made the activity more challenging by stretching their inter-language. In turn 1, Rachel has utilized the noun menaces as a synonym for problems, and Sophie, in turn 2, congratulate her on this. But the phrase des nouveaux menaces is not well-formed. To be well-formed, the partitive des needs to be changed to de because it precede an adjective, and nouveaux should be nouvelles, because menace is a feminine noun. Producing the phrase des nouveaux menaces gives them an opportunity to notice gaps in their linguistic knowledge. In turn3, she expresses the possibilities to see what looks best, and then explicitly formulates her question: Is it des nouveaux or de nouveaux? She keeps on to test out her hypothesis in turn 5. This question is raised in Sophie's mind whether the new word that her friend has introduced is masculine or feminine. Knowing this is important since if menaces is masculine, then the form of the adjective should be nouveaux and if it is feminine, then the form of the adjective should be nouvelles. In turn 6, as we can see, Sophie test alternatives to reach the correct choice. Finally, they refer to a dictionary (artefact) and discover that menace is feminine. In turn 8, Sophie affords the correct form of the adjective, and in turn 9, Rachel confirms Sophie's choice. In brief, we have seen, in this example, when Sophie and Rachel were trying to produce a phrase, they recognized what they did not know. They formed hypotheses, test them out, and finally they referred to a tool (a dictionary) that would provide them with a definite response. What occurred in their collaborative dialogue-their "saying" and responding to "what is said" is language learning (knowledge building) mediated by language (as a semiotic tool). Rachel and Sophie's dialogue is both social and cognitive activity. It is a linguistic-problem solving through social interaction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Taking the importance of learning writing skill in the one hand, and the role of collaborative dialogue in language teaching on the other hand, the following general question and specific questions were caused to fulfill the objective of the present study:

RQ1: How does collaborative dialogue lead to improvement on Iranian low-intermediate EFL students' writing proficiency? (General question).

RQ2: How does collaborative dialogue assist Iranian low-intermediate EFL students with their writing cohesion? (Specific question).

RQ3: How does collaborative dialogue assist Iranian low-intermediate EFL students' writing grammar? (Specific question).

RQ4: How does collaborative dialogue help Iranian low-intermediate EFL students with their writing vocabulary? (Specific question).

RQ5: How does collaborative dialogue assist Iranian low-intermediate EFL students' writing punctuation? (Specific question).

RQ6: How does collaborative dialogue help Iranian low-intermediate EFL students' writing spelling? (Specific question).

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants, in the present research, were an intact class of 12 high school students (teenagers) of English as a foreign language. All of these students were Iranian, and English was taught in an EFL context. They shared the same first language (L1) background, Farsi, and their overall proficiency in the English language was low-intermediate level. They ranged in age from 13 to 19 years old. No female was included, and every single student attended 19 sessions. They had a common language knowledge in two respects: (a) They were recruited to participate voluntarily in an English class in Bisotoon Institute, and (b) Prior to being enrolled in Bisotoon Institute, they had studied EFL in their schools.

Instrumentations

To fulfill the objectives of the present study, the researchers employed the following instruments:

Oxford Placement Test (OPT):

Firstly, an English language proficiency test called "Oxford Placement Test" was administered to verify whether the participants enjoyed the same level of language proficiency or not. OPT was chosen since it is a reliable and efficient means of grading and placing students into classes at the start of a course. Enormous researches were carried out across the world, funded by Education Testing Services Co., to establish validity and reliability of the test. The present test is periodically updated to ensure quality and accuracy. This test has been pretested and validated by thousands of students in more than sixty countries ensuring accurate and reliable results. It has a strong theoretical basis (Retrieved from www.lang.ox.ac.uk/courses.test).

Use of One-on-One Interview

Secondly, the researchers conducted one-on-one interviews to find out what was in the minds of the students about writing ability in English. For reliability or the consistency of response, the researchers should have restated a query in a slightly different form at a later time in the interview, or, more precisely, they should have repeated the interview at another time, yet, because of short research span, this feasibility was impossible. Validity is greater if the interview is based upon a carefully designed structure, and it elicits the significant information which is

vital. For the interview to be more valid, it was judged by a panel of experts in the field of inquiry since they were fully aware of selecting the essential questions (Best & Kahn, 2006).

Use of Dictoglass Task

Thirdly, for the purpose of the treatment i.e., “collaborative dialogue”, a number of dictoglass tasks or passage construction tasks the same in length were employed by the researcher. According to Smith (2012), any passage is suitable as long as it is comprehensible to the students when read at normal speed. As a general rule, the text should be at or below the students’ current proficiency level, although they may include new vocabularies.

Use of Investigator Triangulation

Over the course, the researcher used investigator triangulation, that is, using multiple observers (Mackey & Gass, 2005). John (1992, as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005) noted that the importance of triangulation is that it decreases observer bias and increases the validity and reliability of the information. Therefore, three other teachers were invited, by the researchers, to observe the class. They accompanied the researchers from the outset of tenth session to the end of the eighteenth session. Best and Kahn (2006) believe that observation as a research instrument must always be systematic, directed by particular aim, carefully concentrated. Like other research instruments, it must be checked for reliability and validity. To achieve a satisfactory degree of content validity, the researcher identified and sampled the significant incidents of behaviors. In doing so, the panel of experts assisted him in selecting a limited number of incidents. In the present study, the reliability of observations was established with a high percentage of agreement among the teachers.

Use of Rating Scale

Afterwards, the rating scale which was utilized for reporting was TEEP by Cyril Weir (1998 as cited in Weigle, 2008). The reasons for the use of Weir’s scheme by the researcher were that it provides more detailed information with respect to the students’ performance on the different aspects of form, lexis, and mechanics, and also its reliability and validity were confirmed by a large number of writing specialists. Weir’s scheme is composed of seven scales including content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. As per the present study, the researchers used five indicators of Weir’s scheme concluding cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Use of a Questionnaire and a Focus-Group Interview

And finally, having passed a five-week period in which the students received the treatment, a questionnaire and a focus-group interview were constructed and carried out consecutively in a series, without an interruption by the researchers. In the recent study, depending on the students’ overall writing proficiency, the researchers preferred questionnaires which were made up of closed-ended items, and the participants did not need generating any free writing; Instead, they were to choose one of the given options (irrespective of whether their answer is among them). Therefore, he selected the most famous type of closed-ended items called “likert scale”. In the present study, content and face validity of the questionnaire were established by the help of the panel of experts. In order for the questionnaire to be reliable, the researcher should have

administered the same questionnaire to the same sample on another occasion and compared the responses with those of the first (Best & Kahn, 2006). However, due to the short research span, this was not feasible. Immediately, after conducting the closed-ended questionnaires, the participants were called for a focus-group interview in order to elicit the participants' views of collaborative dialogue experience. The researchers solicited a small number of general questions and got responses from all the individuals in the group. For the focus-group interview to be valid, it was judged by the experts in the field of inquiry because they were fully aware of selecting the essential questions (Best & Kahn, 2006). In order to avoid the idiosyncratic results that take place due to some unexpected internal or external factors that influence the dynamic of a group, the researcher should have run the focus-group interview twice (Dornyei, 2011), yet, because the present study must be completed within a specific time span, this was not possible.

Procedure

In order to run the present study, it was necessary for the researchers to employ some instruments and use a number of phases over the course. Firstly, Oxford Placement Test was administered to verify whether the participants enjoyed the same level of language proficiency or not. The result of the test showed that the proficiency level of the students in English were found to be low-intermediate. Secondly, the researchers conducted one-on-one interviews with all the students one at a time to find out what was in the minds of the students about writing ability in English. From the outset of the second session until the end of ninth session, any special treatment was not submitted to the students except that they were asked to do writing individually in the same traditional method. Then, prior to the beginning of the tenth session, the researchers/ tutors solicited the students to get into groups of three. They, in order to have more accurate information, demanded three other teachers to cooperate with them on the present research. Any of the teachers was intended for a group of three students. Observer A was specifically for Group A, Observer B was intended for Group B, Observer C was asked to observe Group C, and the researchers were responsible for Group D. they were supposed to check the students' dialogue and take notes of their produced LREs and then they should submit their collected LREs to the researchers for later analysis. In the next step, from the tenth session on, the treatment i.e., collaborative dialogue was submitted to the participants. When there were errors in each other's scripts, they were giving hypothesis together to solve the hardship, therefore, they were in continuous modification of each other's scripts in order to make them acceptable. At the end of every session, the researchers had ongoing assessment with respect to students' writing assignment. The researchers furnished the students with a variety of texts (Dictoglass) in order to check their ability in writing. The passages were about the content of the materials included in their textbook. The researcher collected a set of observations, checklists, and performance assessment. In the next stage, the use of the rating scale was strictly necessary for the researchers to score, therefore, they made use of Weir's analytic scale (TEEP). Considering the students' proficiency in English, the researchers took into account five scales of Weir's scheme for the purpose of the present study including cohesion, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling. TEEP scoring scheme gives an equal weight to cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and spelling of EFL students. Each component is separately evaluated and a score ranging from zero, for the lowest (*poor*), 1 for *average* performance, 2 for *good* performance to three, for the highest

(*excellent* performance) is given. The score of these components cannot be summed up, and they should be reported separately. It should be noted that the use of the word "excellent", by Weir, does not mean the absence of the mistakes among the students' texts. Thus the researcher took it into account in this study. And finally after the treatment on session 19, a closed-ended questionnaire called Likert scale and a focus-group interview were designed and followed one after the other without any interruption by the researchers. As per the current scale, each response was assigned a number for scoring purposes (e. g., Agree=3 Neither agree nor disagree=2 Disagree=1) and the scores of all the items were summed up or averaged. Therefore, the researchers assigned a scale value to each of the three responses, and it was assumed that a higher total score expresses support and approval of the target attitude. In order to conduct a focus-group interview, the researcher divided the students into four groups of three, and then asked them open-ended questions in Farsi so that the students could best voice their experiences for collaborative dialogue without any barrier

Treatment Procedures

To practice collaborative dialogue with the help of Dictoglass in this class of EFL students, the researchers did the following steps: The first step was preparation: The researchers introduced a topic, and the key vocabularies were addressed. The second step was dictation: The researchers read a text at normal speed, twice or three times. The first time, the students just listened to and the second time, they jotted down some words that could help them recall the text. The third stage was reconstruction: The students together pooled their ideas or resources to reconstruct the text from their joint notes and write a final version. It was during this reconstruction phase that participants produced language-related episodes as they were searching for correct words or forms they needed to convey their intended meaning, and the final stage involving analysis and correction, the students analyzed and compared their text with the reconstruction of their group. The participants discussed the differences, the texts and then compared their text with the original ones and notes or made necessary corrections (Wajnyrb, 1990 as cited in Smith 2012).

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The researchers adopted a qualitative multiple case study. In the current study, qualitative data were collected via a one-on-one and a focus-group interview, direct observation of classroom activities, introspective methods (verbal reporting or protocol analysis), investigator triangulation, and questionnaires within a period of five weeks. Data collection took place in nine sessions and lasted five weeks. From session10 to session 18, the students wrote their pieces of writings through collaborative dialogue .Group talk data, from the outset of the tenth session, was transcribed for each group. The reason behind having an equal number of collaborative session for all the groups was to accurately reflect the linguistic features of the participants' collaborative discourse within the equal number of sessions. The verbal interactions taking place among the peers in each group, were jotted down by the researcher and the observers for later analysis. The researchers scrutinized the responses to the closed-ended questionnaires, his collected LREs and the observers' collected LREs. In addition, field-note observation was used through the study for a comprehensive investigation of the research questions. Where relevant, frequency technique was used through the study for the students' feedback. In doing so, the researchers coded the students' verbal protocol in terms of LREs, selected them and used quantification for the analysis

of the data. The researchers and the observers elicited LREs from the students' talk or interaction by taking notes when the students attempted to solve linguistic problems they encountered while jointly reconstructing the passage. The researchers traced language-related episodes related to the different aspects of writing through each stage of the activity in an effort to realize what was learnt and why. The scripts written collaboratively by each group of the students were rated and reported just by the researcher according to Weir' scheme (1998 as cited in Weigle, 2008). The researchers rated and reported the passage on a 4 point-scale with 0 representing *poor* performance, 1 representing *average*, 2 representing *good* performance, and 3 representing *excellent* performance.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions stipulated in the present study, the researchers investigated the dialogue of all the Groups (A, B, C, and D,) in terms of Form-oriented (F-O) LREs (grammar and cohesion), of Lexical-oriented (L-O) LREs (vocabulary) and of Mechanics-oriented (M-O) LREs (punctuation and spelling) in an attempt to realize their conversation as a foreign language writing learning. The first research question asked, "How does collaborative dialogue lead to improvement in Iranian low-intermediate EFL students' writing proficiency?" .The researchers looked into the generated LREs of each scale separately in all the Groups and showed them in the following tables. These tables show that the participants' writing proficiency improved as they went along further.

Table 1: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions10-12

Type Frequency	Form-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	15	0	Poor
Group B	14	0	Poor
Group C	13	0	Poor
Group D	12	0	Poor

Concerning the scale of form, it was observed that cohesion in the scripts of the students in all the Groups was almost absent, and they used almost all grammatical patterns inaccurately.

Table 2: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 13-15

Type Frequency	Form-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	12	0	Poor
Group B	13	0	Poor
Group C	6	1	Average
Group D	6	1	Average

On the second phase, the form of Group A and B's texts had the same previous condition, however, that of Group C, and D enriched somewhat. Although there was unsatisfactory cohesion in their texts, there was frequent grammatical inaccuracies in their texts.

Table 3: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 16-18

Type Frequency	Form-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	5	3	Average
Group B	6	3	Average
Group C	2	3	Excellent
Group D	2	3	Excellent

On the last phase, the Groups C and D's writing form improved to a great extent compared with the last two phases. For all the parts of their writing, there was satisfactory use of cohesion resulting in effective communication and almost no grammatical inaccuracies were observed in their writing form. Group A and B's writing form enriched slightly although there was frequent grammatical inaccuracies and unsatisfactory cohesion so that there was little confusion in comprehension of most of the intended communication.

Table 4: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 10-12

Type Frequency	Lexis-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	3	2	Good
Group B	3	2	Good
Group C	3	2	Good
Group D	3	2	Good

With respect to the scale of lexis, there were some inadequacies in the choice of correct vocabulary in all the Groups' scripts.

Table 5: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 13-15

Type Frequency	Lexis-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	2	3	Excellent
Group B	2	3	Excellent
Group C	2	3	Excellent
Group D	2	3	Excellent

On the second phase, only rare inappropriate language-related episodes were found in all the Group's texts.

Table 6: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 16-18

Type Frequency	Lexis-Based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	2	3	Excellent
Group B	2	3	Excellent
Group C	1	3	Excellent
Group D	1	3	Excellent

On the last phase, again only rare inappropriacies were observed in the scripts of the students in all the Groups.

Table 7: The number of LREs for all the Groups from sessions 10-12

Type Frequency	Mechanic-based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	12	0	Poor
Group B	13	0	Poor
Group C	6	1	Average
Group D	5	1	Average

Regarding mechanical accuracy, the students in Group A and Group B ignored the conventions of punctuation completely and almost all spellings were inaccurate, however, in Group C and D, low standard of accuracy in punctuation and spelling were observed.

Table 8: The number of LREs for all the groups from sessions 13-15

Type Frequency	Mechanic-based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	7	2	Good
Group B	7	2	Good
Group C	3	3	Excellent
Group D	2	3	Excellent

On the second phase, Group A and B enriched slightly so that there were some inaccuracies in spelling and punctuation. In respect to Group C and D, almost no inaccuracies were observed in the scripts of the students.

Table 9: The number of LREs for all the groups from sessions 16-18

Type Frequency	Mechanic-based LREs	Score	Descriptor
Group A	4	3	Excellent
Group B	4	3	Excellent
Group C	1	3	Excellent
Group D	1	3	Excellent

On the last phase, Group A and B advanced to a great extent. In this stage, like Group C and D, they nearly have no inaccuracies in spelling and punctuation.

In sum up, the less the number of LREs, the more enhancement in writing proficiency will be. As the Tables 1 to 9 show, as the students move from the beginning stages of the introduction of collaborative dialogue at 10-12 sessions which the researchers called phase I towards the last phase which is collaborative dialogue they did in sessions 16-18, there has been a gradual development in terms of the students' writing.

The less the number of the LREs, the higher the writing scores of the students. To understand how these produced LREs exert a strong influence on other aspects of writing skill, this is the query to be answered in the following research questions. Similarly, the other research questions were answered. That is, the researchers looked into the dialogue of all the Groups in terms of form (research question 2&3), of lexis (research question 4) and of mechanics (research question 5&6). In addition to a set of LREs which were used to respond to the research questions stipulated in the recent study, the researchers invited three EFL teachers (Observers) to the class to observe collaborative dialogue technique from session 10 to session 18. The observers were all willing to cooperate. Each observer had devoted half hour of time to observing the class every session.

The Questionnaire's Findings

The closed-ended questionnaires were given to the students on the last week of the course, week ten. There was a 10-item closed-ended questionnaire. They involved statements expressing either a positive/favorable or a negative/unfavorable attitude towards collaborative dialogue. The researchers asked the participants to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with these items by marking. They assigned a scale value to each of the responses (3 for Agree, 2 for Neither Agree Nor Disagree, and 1 for Disagree) (Best & Kahn, 2006). Overall, the students in our present study had a very positive attitude towards collaborative dialogue. When asked whether they found collaborative dialogue helpful in the class for foreign language writing, almost all of them put an x in the Agree box.

10*3=30 Most favourable response possible
10*2=20 A neutral attitude

The score for any student would fall between 10 and 30. Above 20 if opinions tended to be favourable to the given point of view and below 20 if opinions tended to be unfavourable.

Interview's findings

Generally, the interviewed participants considered collaborative dialogue helpful in nature. Mainly, they asserted that collaborative dialogue helped them to generate ideas and improved their grammar, cohesion, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling. Moreover, it made the students take part in discussion after they finished writing, therefore, they found that their writing advanced when they were discussing with the peers concerning the individual drafts. Interestingly, they revealed that the teacher review could be embarrassing, and they shied away from discussing their writing with their teacher. On the other hand, they felt more comfortable with sharing their writing with their peers. In total, the participants' responses to the focus-group interviews showed that most of students were quite supportive of the activity and found it useful.

CONCLUSION

The data presented in the current study are exactly in consistent with Swain and Lapkin' data (1998), claiming the data affords proof for cognitive process in the dialogue of the students because they repeatedly produce alternatives, assess the alternatives, and apply the resulting information to solve their linguistic problems. They also use their native language as a mediational tool in order to control their own behavior, to concentrate on specific second and/or foreign language structures, and to produce and assess alternatives. The interaction occurs amongst the participants advocates the vital role of collaborative activity in the classroom. The best conclusion is that the devised treatment i.e., collaborative dialogue assists the participants to perform better than those in non-collaborative class. Here, we can conclude that if our students get acquainted with the technique of collaborative dialogue and carry out one task collaboratively, they are more successful at accomplishing the task than when they do it individually.

Implications

From a research perspective, the current study similar to the one conducted by Watanabe and Swain (2007), proves the importance of viewing peer-peer collaborative dialogue as a mediator of second and/or foreign writing learning, and the gradual development in the students' writing over the course emphasizes how writing learning happens in interaction, not as a result of interaction. Also, in the same way as Watanabe and Swain's research (2007), the present study advocates the claim that collaborative dialogue is a useful unit of analysis to explore the process and the product of second language and/or foreign language writing learning. When the students are doing collaborative dialogue in order to solve their writing problems, this collaboration can outstrip their competence so that it allows them to extend their present capabilities and knowledge to the higher level of competence.

Suggestions for Further Research

In terms of methodology, we think it would be valuable in future work to combine an analysis of students' collaborative dialogue with the follow-up interviews in order to derive a more fine-grained understanding of the mental process (Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Another suggestion would be to investigate the effects of collaborative dialogue discussions on the speaking skill of the students, the reading expertise of the students, and the listening skill of the students. The results of the present study indicate that collaborative dialogue enrich the writing skill of the participants. Yet, to what extent, it improves speaking skill, reading expertise, or listening skill, if it does, is not clear up to now. In other words, further research explaining other skills in accordance with the use of collaborative dialogue would be a useful follow-up to the current study (Meihami, Meihami, & Varmaghani, 2013). The participants' knowledge of how to collaborate effectively with peers was too limited. One study (Berg, 1999) has showed that the effectiveness of the student collaboration relies on the students' capability to work and solve language-related problems collaboratively. He found that if the students are trained how to do joint activities with peers prior to collaborative activities, it will have a significant effect on promoting scaffolding and learning (Berg, 1999 as cited in Nassaji & Tian, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

The limitations which have been posed in the present research are as follows: The first limitation was related to participants. The researchers liked to have more participants in order to have more reliable results. More samples from different institutions would definitely yield more generalizable results. There was also age limit for the participants and the researchers were forced to conduct the experiment on teenagers. The second limitation was connected with the inability of the researchers in controlling the gender variable. They were limited to one sex i.e., male students. Also, the researchers wanted to give the students more writing assignments in order to get stronger results for the study, but, they did not manage because the research was done during the students' school days, and they always complained about the shortage of the time. Despite the researcher's cognizance of the use of closed-ended questions in quantitative research, they found it right and pertinent to make use of such a questionnaire owing to the students' proficiency in writing. For the questionnaire and focus-group interview to be reliable the researchers should have run them twice, however, owing to time span, this was not feasible.

REFERENCES

- Anton, M., & DiCamilla, F. (1998). Socio-cognitive functions of L1 Collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom. *Canadian Modern*.
- Baradaran, A., & Moezzy, M. (2011). A study of the role of collaborative negotiation in the acquisition of lexical meaning. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 5(12), (pp. 252-259).
- Best, J.W., & Kahn, J, V (2009). *Research in education*. USA: Pearson Education Inc.
- Cook, V. (2008). *Second language learning and language teaching (4th ed.)*. London: Hodder & Education.

- DiCamilla, F., & Anton, M. (1997). Repetition in the collaborative discourse of L2 learners: A Vygotskian perspective. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53, 609-633.
- Donato, R. (1994). Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In J.P. Lantolf, & G.Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp.33-56). Norwood: Ablex.
- Dornyei, Z. (2011). *Research method in applied linguistics*. UK: Oxford Elementary Press.
- Ellis, R. (2012). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Javed, M., Juan, W.X., & Nazli, S. (2013). A study of students' assessment in writing skills of the English language. *International Journal of Instruction*, 6, (pp. 129-140). Retrieved from <http://www.e-iji.net>.
- Lantolf, J.P. (Ed.). (2009). *Sociocultural theory and second language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- La pierre, D. (1994). *Language output in a cooperative learning setting: Determining its effect on second language learning*. University of Toronto: Canada.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Nassaji, H., & Tian, J. (2010). Collaborative and individual output tasks and their effects on learning English phrasal verbs. *Language Teaching Research*, 8, doi: 10.1177/1362168810375364.
- Pool, D., & Patthey-chavez, G. (1994). Locating assisted performance: A study of instructional activity setting and their effects on the discourse of teaching. *Issued in Applied Linguistics*, 5, 3-35.
- Smith, K. M. (2012). Dictoglass. A multi – skill task for accuracy in writing through cooperative learning. Retrieved September, 15, 2013, from [http:// en. Wikipedia.org/wiki/](http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/).
- Swain, M. (1997). Collaborative dialogue: It's contribution to second language learning. *Revista Canaria De Estudios Ingleses*, 34, 115-132.
- Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J.P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp.97-110). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M., Brooks, L., & Tocalli – Beller, A. (2002). Peer-peer dialogue as a means of second language learning. *Annual Review of Applied*, 22, 171-185.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2001). Focus on form through collaborative dialogue: Exploring task effect. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.). *Researching pedagogical tasks: Second language learning, teaching, and testing* (pp.99-118). England: Longman.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. *Modern Language Journal*, 16, 371-391.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2002). Talking it through: Two French immersion learners' response to reformulation. *International Journal of Education Research*, 37, (pp.285-304).
- Watanabe, Y., & Swain, M. (2007). Effect of proficiency differences and patterns of pair interaction on second language learning: Collaborative dialogue between adult ESL learners. *Language Teaching Research*, 11, (pp. 121-142). doi: 10.1177/136216880607074599.

Watanabe, Y., & Swain, M. (2013). Language: Collaborative dialogue as a source of second language learning. *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, 22, pp. (1-5).
doi:1002/9781405198431.wbea10664.

Weigle, S.C. (2008). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yang, L. (2014). Examining the mediational means in collaborative writing: Case studies of undergraduate ESL students in business courses. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 23, (pp.74-88). doi:10.1016/j.slw.2014.01.003.

IMPACT OF FOCUS-ON-FORM TASK INSTRUCTION ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

Ali Roohani

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Shahrekord University, Shahrekord, Iran

E-mail address: roohani.ali@gmail.com

Mahmood Hashemian

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Shahrekord University, Shahrekord, Iran

E-mail address: m72h@hotmail.com

Farzaneh Foroutanfar

M.A. Student of TEFL, Shahrekord University, Shahrekord, Iran

Foroutanfar.farzaneh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

*This study explored and compared the effectiveness of focus-on-form (FonF) task instruction (i.e., input vs. collaborative output tasks) on Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' willingness to communicate (WTC). To achieve the objective, 50 Iranian pre-intermediate EFL students took part in this study. The FonF tasks were presented in the form of input FonF tasks (i.e., textual enhancement, processing instruction, and discourse tasks) and collaborative output FonF tasks (i.e., dictogloss, jigsaw, and text reconstruction tasks) to 2 classes of 50 pre-intermediate Iranian EFL students. Participants answered the pretest-posttest questions of the WTC questionnaire. The analysis of the paired samples *t* test in the input and collaborative output FonF tasks group showed that these types of FonF tasks did not improve the participants' WTC significantly. However, the participants in the collaborative output FonF tasks group outperformed those in the input FonF tasks groups. The results of the study imply that monitoring students' WTC in second/foreign language (L2) and improving it should be considered as one of the goals of L2 teachers and syllabus designers through implementation of collaborative FonF tasks.*

KEYWORDS: Focus on Form; Task Instruction; WTC

INTRODUCTION

Form-focused instruction, as the recent development in grammar pedagogy, is effective when it is used in meaningful communicative contexts (Ellis, 2001; Long, 1991). Consequently, it leads learners to higher level of accuracy in L2. In fact, the goal of L2 teaching is to help the learners communicate both accurately and fluently. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011), communicative language teaching (CLT) and the previous structure-based methods paid little

attention to these aspects, which lead to the advent of a new approach known as focus-on-form (FonF).

FonF refers to an instructional option, which integrates grammar and communication in L2 teaching (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Besides, it refers to “how focal attentional resources are allocated to linguistic forms” (Long & Robinson 1998, p. 27). According to Norris and Ortega (2001), L2 instruction that focuses on form leads to substantial gain in L2 structures and the gains are sustained over time. Moreover, according to Lightbown and Spada (1993), FonF instruction within the context of communicative programs is more effective in developing L2 learning than in the programs which are limited to exclusive, separate emphasis on accuracy or fluency. Also, Loewen (2003) maintains that FonF makes L2 learners notice linguistic items rather than merely focused-on meaning lessons.

According to Long (2000), FonF provides an effective and impressive condition for L2 learning. It is learner-centered and represents L2 learners’ internal syllabus. Moreover, it happens when the L2 learner is attending to the meaning and has a communication problem. He, also, believes that L2 learners can learn most of the L2 grammar accidentally, while their attention is on the meaning. Not only are linguistic structures in the communication approach emphasized, but the attention to grammatical forms is, also, considered as an important factor in task-based instruction. According to Savignon (2005, p. 645), “the CTL [communicative language teaching] does not exclude a focus on metalinguistic awareness or knowledge of rules of syntax.” As Skehan (1996, p. 18) argues, “learners do not simply acquire the language to which they are exposed, however carefully that exposure may be orchestrated by the teacher.”

On the other hand, willingness to communicate (WTC) is considered as an important and effective factor in an L2. It is defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person, or persons, using a L2” (McIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998, p. 547). The importance of communication and L2 learners’ enthusiasm to communicate effectively leads L2 teachers/researchers to design curricula and improve L2 instruction communicatively. In fact, the importance of communication makes L2 learners engage in a communicative context to improve their communicative competence (Savignon, 2005).

McCroskey and Richmond (1987), initially, referred to WTC as the native verbal communication and individual’s general tendency to talk. Then, it was introduced into communication contexts and L2 instruction by McIntyre et al. (1998). They, also, introduced the WTC model as the one in which social, affective, cognitive, and situational variables are involved and can, in turn, predict one’s actual use of that language. In addition, the WTC model is composed of psychological, linguistic, and communicative variables in order to explain L2 communication (McIntyre et al.).

According to Swain and Lapkin (2002), language would be learned effectively in interactive and meaningful contexts in a pragmatic setting, so it is very important to find the variables which help to improve communication and which encourages L2 learners to communicate effectively. Besides, McIntyre et al. (1998) believe that the significant and ultimate aim of L2 learning is to “engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the

willingness actually to communicate in them” (p. 547). In fact, the primary goal of L2 pedagogy is to teach individuals to communicate willingly. Considering this statement, the creation of WTC in L2 classes becomes important.

Consequently, one of the important aspects to consider is the L2 learners’ WTC in the EFL classroom. In fact, WTC is expected to facilitate L2 learning because higher WTC among L2 learners leads to increase opportunity for authentic L2 use (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001), which is a necessary condition for their language development (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). As MacIntyre (2007) has argued, WTC represents the psychological preparedness to use L2 when the opportunity arises. It is believed that the degree of WTC is an important factor in learning an L2 and the ability to communicate in that language. In fact, there is a direct relationship between L2 learners’ WTC and their successes in L2 learning, as the higher WTC a speaker has, the more likely he or she is to succeed in L2 acquisition. As Richmond and Roach (1992) state, high WTC is associated with increased frequency and amount of communication.

As mentioned by MacIntyre and MacKinnon (2007), the choice to speak or to remain silent seems to be a factor in the success of EFL learners. When the opportunity to use English arises, it is usual to have the two options of speaking or refraining from it. According to MacIntyre (2007), both individual factors (e.g., anxiety, motivation, attitude, interpersonal attraction, etc.) and social contextual factors (e.g., ethno-linguistic vitality, language contact, etc.) can influence WTC. One of these factors is the learner’s motivation. However, Dörnyei and Skehan (2003) view L2 WTC as an extension of the motivation construct. Therefore, the relationship between the two concepts becomes an important issue. As Cao and Philp (2006) state, situational WTC could change in the classroom across the three interactional contexts, under the influence of situational variables (i.e., group size and familiarity with interlocutors), the familiarity and interest of tasks under discussion, and the confidence of the L2 learners in relation to the performing tasks. Consequently, performing tasks may influence the L2 learners’ WTC, which is the subject of this study. However, the types of tasks and the processes of performances are the important issues, which should be taken into consideration.

This study was, therefore, designed to contemplate on two possibilities regarding the type of FonF tasks. At the same time, WTC as an important factor in L2 communication enhancement was checked. With great emphasis on communication and training individual to communicate effectively inside as well as outside the classroom, many researchers (e.g., MacIntyre et al., 1998) argue that the main goal of L2 education should be the development of WTC in language instruction and learning. L2 Learners’ attitude to classroom activities is, also, emphasized by researchers working from a sociocultural theoretical perspective. As Lantolf and Thorne (2006) point out, L2 learners are viewed as active agents who assign significance to things and events in their life. This process of L2 learners as the active agents in their learning is appropriate when investigating adult classroom contexts. Such L2 learners display a wide range of learning goals, expectations, and abilities (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Furthermore, although L2 learners’ attitudes to the tasks have been evaluated as an important consideration in explaining their willingness to actively contribute to the task, there has been relatively little classroom-based research on their

willingness toward such tasks. Hence, this study was designed to examine the effect of input-based and collaborative output tasks on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' WTC.

Research on the efficacy of the types of tasks in improving L2 learners' WTC is inconclusive. In addition, there seems to be little research studies which has investigated and compared the effect of FonF instruction tasks (i.e., input vs. collaborative output tasks) on L2 learners' WTC—the concepts which have been recently discussed more theoretically than being tested. As the main consideration, this study focused on the effect of FonF tasks on L2 learners' WTC and it investigated whether the kinds of FonF tasks (i.e. input vs. output-based tasks) improve their WTC effectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Input and collaborative output tasks as the type of FonF instruction have received a considerable attention during recent years. Input tasks of processing instruction approach is based on Lee and VanPatten's (2003) model of input processing, according to which exposure to explicit instruction and input-processing activities helps L2 learners create a connection between form and meaning and this leads to the process of learning grammar from meaning. VanPatten (2002) has argued that "since the aim of this approach is to assist the learner in making form-meaning connections during input processing; it is more appropriate to view it as a type of focus on form" (p. 764). Also, according to Nassaji and Fotos (2011), by understanding how L2 learners process input, affective and comprehensive instructional devices can be made and leads to the input processing acquisition.

As Sharwood-Smith (1991) argues, textual enhancement is a kind of external forms of input enhancement as highlighting the correct form of input. It is, also, an implicit form of input enhancement as it makes L2 learners to pay attention to form, while the main focus is on meaning. In fact, input enhancement is divided into two different dimensions: explicitness and elaboration. The former relates to the degree of how attention is attracted to the forms, and the later refers to the intensity with which enhancement procedures take place. Also, Sharwood-Smith (1991) points to the achievement of input enhancement internally or externally. Internal enhancement happens when L2 learners pay attention to the form by learning strategies. External enhancement happens when the teacher or external operations notice the forms. Consequently, textual enhancement is a kind of external and implicit forms of input enhancement.

Discourse-based pedagogy, as the other input-based FonF task instruction, focuses on the communicative use of grammar, as it refers to the ability to use grammar in communicative discourse. Thus, L2 learners must recognize the communication purpose of the sentence regardless of the obvious meaning of its syntax (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). FonF through discourse is considered as an effective factor in L2 grammar instruction, as it pays attention to meaning and forms as well as utilization of these forms within larger discourse context. In fact, as Levy (1997) argues, L2 learners need to learn chunks of speech, formulaic utterances, and collocations by using communication and merely discourse-level input can provide authentic example of specific grammatical structures.

Collaborative output FonF tasks of dictogloss, reconstruction cloze tasks, and jigsaw tasks, also, were the focus of many studies. Vasiljevic (2010) believes that the dictogloss procedure can improve the development of L2 learners' communicative competence, as L2 learners' communication is much more natural and authentic than in traditional classes. Also, time limitation to reconstruct the text makes L2 learners to use time effectively. Moreover, speaking time is longer in comparison to traditional teacher-centered classroom. Dictogloss, also, promotes L2 learners autonomy, as they are expected to help each other instead of expecting teacher to provide the information. Moreover, text reconstruction task as a task that generates a high number of grammatical language-related episodes is influential. The task is, also, considered to be effective, as it leads L2 learners' conscious attention to grammatical accuracy (García Mayo, 2002; Kowal & Swain, 1997; Storch, 1998). In this task, L2 learners are considered to create and reconstruct a text by inserting and using all the grammatical words to create meaningful and grammatical paragraph.

In addition, another area, which is the subject of the present study, is WTC. It is considered as an important and effective factor in SLA. WTC is defined as "the predisposition toward or away from communicating, given the choice" (MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, & Donovan, 2003, p. 538). It is assumed that the degree of WTC is a factor in learning an L2 and the ability to communicate in that language. Consequently, the importance of communication leads L2 teachers to improve L2 instruction communicably. In fact, the higher WTC a speaker has, the more likely he or she is to succeed in L2 learning. High WTC is associated with increased frequency and amount of communication (Richmond & Roach, 1992).

WTC in L1 was considered as the degree of being introverted or extroverted. McCroskey and Richmond (1991), also, believe that the antecedents of WTC are communicative competence, introversion, self-esteem, and cultural diversity. According to McCroskey and Richmond (1991), WTC in L1 is considered as a trait-like situation and many situational variables such as people's feelings, recent communications, other persons, and what is gained or lost through that communication strongly influence communicative manners. In line with studies on L1 WTC, MacIntyre et al. (1998) adapted WTC to L2 situation and discovered individual differences and their relations to communication behaviors in an L2. They believe that the use of an L2 is associated with the situational differences of competence and intergroup relations. Therefore, it would not be essential to constrain WTC to the trait-like variable.

Theoretical exploration and pedagogical application throughout the current decade have, primarily, promoted the important role of using language to communicate in L2 learning and teaching. Moreover, MacIntyre et al. (1998) argued that the ultimate goal of L2 learning should be to "engender in language students the willingness to seek out communication opportunities and the willingness actually to communicate in them" (p. 547). Based on this argument, MacIntyre et al. (1998) propose that creating WTC should be a proper objective for L2 education.

Regarding this statement, the creation of WTC in L2 classes becomes important. Also, MacIntyre et al. (1998) proposed a heuristic model of the WTC construct with an account of linguistic, communicative, and social psychological variables that might affect one's WTC in a second

language communication context. The trait-like conceptualization of WTC advanced by McCroskey and Richmond (1987) in L1 communication was then extended as a situational variable with both transient and enduring influences in an L2 setting in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) study.

According to MacIntyre et al. (2009) the psychological, linguistic, educational, and communicative aspects of language are not by any means separated; in fact, they are incorporated as the characteristics of L2 learner's experiences. They believe that emotional and cognitive processes impact L2 learning and use significantly and conflictingly. Consequently, sometimes L2 learners have a strong desire for communication, and other times L2 learners are unwilling to communicate. MacIntyre et al. (1998) provide a pyramid model of variables affecting WTC as shown in Figure 1. The model is explained in the following:

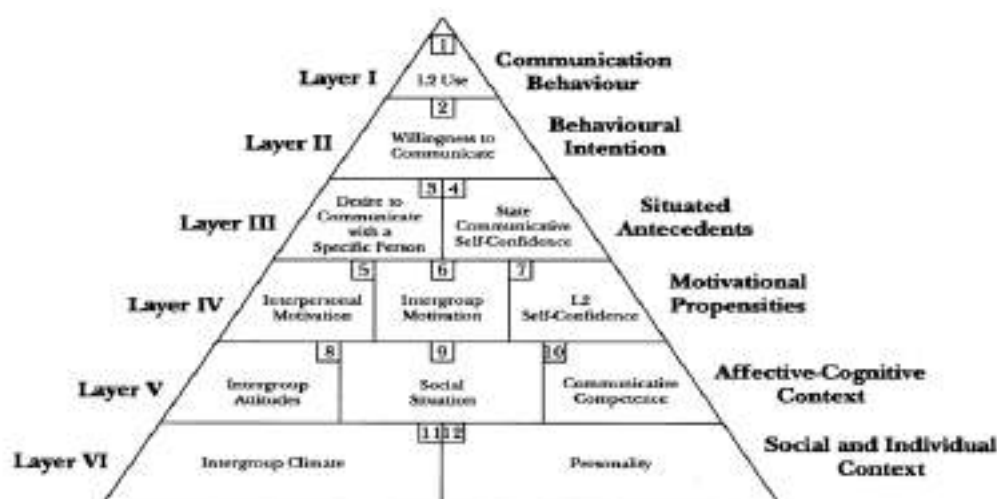


Figure 1: MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) WTC model.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) consider WTC in L2 as a layered pyramid model in which different variables influence L2 learners' eventual L2 use (see Figure 1). WTC is influenced by both situational influences (Layers I, II, III) and enduring influences (Layers IV, V, VI). In fact, the L2 learners have more control over the act of communicating in L2 as they move up the pyramid.

In this pyramid model, they made a distinction between immediate situational factors and enduring influences that underlie L2 WTC. At the top of the hierarchy, the frequency of L2 communication is mentioned. WTC is underneath of L2 use and is influenced by the situational factors of desire to communicate and L2 users' state self-confidence. At the bottom of the layers of the pyramid, social psychological factors, such as personality and intergroup motivation are integrated into the model. The strength of the model lies in the conceptualization of L2 WTC as a situational variable and incorporating both trait and situational predictors of WTC into this model.

According to McIntyer et al. (1998), WTC contains a model which consists of six layers or variables. These layers differ from each other in the kind of their situational or enduring influences on WTC. Situational influences refer to the context that a person functions, in contrast with, enduring influence that is described as the individuals' properties, which can apply to any situation (Riasati & Noordin, 2011). The first three layers are communication behavior, behavior intention, and situated antecedents, which pose situational influence on L2 communication. The last three layers are motivation properties, effective-cognitive context, as well as social and individual context, which make enduring influences on L2 communication (McIntyre et al., 1998).

Over the last two decades, SLA researchers (e.g., Kang, 2005; MacIntyre, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 1998; MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Yashima, 2002) have all emphasized the importance of WTC as a crucial component of modern language instruction. Communicative competence, alone, may not result in actual L2 communication inside or outside the classroom (Dörnyei, 2005). Kang states that "L2 learners with a high level of WTC are more likely to use L2 in authentic communication and facilitate language learning" (p. 278). Therefore, recent researches in WTC investigated its effects on L2 learning.

With regard to the study at Australian National University carried out by Wang (2004), 20 university students learning Modern Chinese from a second-year class at the Australian National University were selected to look at the relationship between students' L2 written performance and their WTC in class. The participants were given a survey about their WTC in class and a language written test. The questionnaires covered the situational settings in language class context, such as willingness to ask the teacher for clarification, willingness to initiate the conversation, and willingness to try new words and phrases. The written test contained grammar items and a short essay writing. The study revealed that there was a relationship between the students' L2 written performance and their WTC in class. In fact, the more willing the students were to communicate in class, the better they did in their L2 written performance.

Also, Freiermuth and Jarrell (2006) investigated the relationship between WTC and online chat. They compared face to face spoken language with using online chat in performing solving tasks. Nine groups, consisting of four participants, took part in the study. Both the questionnaire and the subjects' discourse analysis were investigated and led to the conclusion that online chat provided a comfortable environment and improved L2 participants' WTC.

Another study by Wang and Erlam (2011), investigated the relationship between task-based lessons and L2 learners' WTC. In this study, the L2 learners performed the tasks and the L2 teacher recorded their WTC during the tasks and in variety of contexts. Four students were the main consideration of this inquiry. The tasks helped the learners to reduce their communication anxiety and increase perceived communication competence. The learners' attitudes toward these tasks were positive, and they found these tasks as the fun games that led to their WTC. In fact, all the L2 learners used the L2 when they were doing tasks.

Weaver (2004) examined situational variables underlying WTC in L2 classrooms in relation to task types. His study investigated 1104 Japanese learners' WTC within an L2 classroom at tertiary level. Unlike previous studies that exclusively adopted the WTC scale developed by McCroskey and Richmond (1991), this study used a questionnaire developed by the researcher himself to investigate whether or not the learner's L2 WTC would vary across 17 speaking situations and tasks potentially arising in this social context of a L2 classroom. The findings revealed that the students' WTC varied significantly across the different speaking situations and tasks and suggested that task as a variable, likely, to contribute to changes in WTC in L2 classrooms.

In a subsequent study, Weaver (2005) followed an experimental design to investigate the effect of English instruction and pretask planning on students' level of WTC to do different speaking tasks within an oral communication class. Weaver's study employed a WTC survey ($n = 490$), specifically designed for an L2 classroom. The results showed post-instruction gains in terms of WTC, suggesting that the pretask planning had a positive effect on WTC.

In summary, the review of the related literature shows that more investigation is required to examine the effect of input and collaborative output FonF tasks and WTC. Failure of research in comparing the effect of input vs. collaborative output tasks on different grammatical structures made the present researchers investigate their effect on L2 learners' WTC. Firstly, the importance of communication can never be neglected. Secondly, more attention needs to make this aspect more effective. As a result, WTC, as one of important factors in communication, was examined in the present research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the above issues, this study sought to address the following research questions:

1. Do Form-focused tasks significantly improve Iranian EFL learners' WTC?
2. Do collaborative output tasks increase Iranian EFL learners' WTC more significantly than input-based tasks?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To collect the data, a total of 50 pre-intermediate EFL students were involved in the main study. All the participants were native speakers of Persian who learnt English as a foreign language in Zabansara language Institute in Isfahan, Iran and had no prior experience of being in English-speaking countries. Their age ranged from 16 to 22. After the Oxford Placement Test (OPT), 50 out of the 80 students were selected and divided into two 25 member groups. The study was conducted during an academic term in two pre-intermediate adult classrooms in 2013. The undergraduate participants were attending the class approximately for three days a week and were receiving their education mainly in English as the medium of instruction.

Instruments

In this study, two instruments were employed: OPT and the WTC questionnaire. At first, in order to investigate the homogeneity of the participants in both classes, the OPT was used. It included 100 multiple-choice items. The level required for the research was pre-intermediate, and the scores needed for this level were 60 to 67 out of 100. According to Allen (2004), OPT has both features of highly economical and easy to administer test and these leads to consistently meaningful scores from level 1 (beginner) upwards. Also, the OPT has been calibrated against the proficiency levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the Cambridge ESOL Examinations, and other major international examinations. Meanwhile, the reliability of the test as measured by Cronbach's alpha in the current study was found to be 0.85.

The WTC questionnaire was used in order to check the effect of input vs. collaborative output tasks on the participants' WTC. The participants were supposed to indicate the frequency of time they chose to speak in English in each classroom situation. Further, this questionnaire contained two main parts of inside classroom and outside classroom questions. Each part included 27 items and checked the participants' WTC in both situations. This study estimated the internal consistency of the WTC questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated that the Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was .84.

Procedures

This study had a quasi-experimental design. Fifty EFL learners participated in the main study. They were divided randomly into two groups (i.e., input-based and collaborative output FonF groups). At the beginning of the course, the OPT was used in order to check the homogeneity of both experimental groups (i.e., input-based vs. collaborative output groups). The WTC questionnaire was given to the participants at the beginning and at the end of the course.

The study took place over one term. Several grammatical structures were chosen to be instructed based on two different kinds of tasks. In one group, the input-based FonF tasks (i.e., textual enhancement, processing instruction, and discourse tasks) were used, and, in the other, the collaborative output FonF tasks (i.e., dictogloss, jigsaw, and text reconstruction tasks) were performed. The grammatical structures were the same in both classes; only the kinds of tasks and activities differed.

In the input FonF group, the three input-based tasks of textual enhancement, processing instruction, and discourse tasks were instructed. Processing instruction is divided into two main activities: referential and affective. A referential activity is an activity with a right or wrong answer. An affective activity is concerned with the participants' expression of their opinions. Textual enhancement draws the L2 participants' attention toward linguistic forms by making them more salient using bolding, italicizing, and underlining. Discourse pedagogy focuses on grammar forms and meanings, as well as, use of those forms within larger discourse context.

In the collaborative group, collaborative output FonF tasks were performed. According to Wajnryb (1990), dictogloss contains a warm-up discussion of the topic. Afterwards, instructors

read the text twice, and the students use their notes to reconstruct the text in a small group. Consequently, the learners' text is analyzed and corrected by the teacher and learners. Reconstruction cloze tasks lead L2 learners to produce specific target structures and involve two versions of the text: the original and a cloze version. The original text is read by the teacher at a normal pace. L2 learners listen carefully and take notes of the related content. Afterwards, they receive the cloze version of the text. They fill in the blanks with words and phrases related to the original text; finally, they compare their texts with the original ones and discuss the differences. A jigsaw task is a two-way information gap task in which L2 learners hold different information of a task and are supposed to exchange the different pieces of information to perform the task. The instruction lasted for about 26 sessions, 3 days a week. At the end of the course, the WTC questionnaire was used to check the participants' WTC improvement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics of the pretest and posttest of WTC scores in both the input and collaborative output groups prior and after the treatments were carried out.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the WTC Scores in the Input and Output Groups

Group	Variable	N	Min	Max	M	Std. Dev
Input	Pretest WTC	25	17.35	34.51	28.20	3.96
	Posttest WTC	25	18.66	38.51	28.33	4.06
Output	Pretest WTC	25	21.32	37.67	28.18	3.44
	Posttest WTC	25	24.33	39.83	31.00	4.19

As Table 1 indicates, the mean pretest scores of WTC in the input group and output group were 28.20 and 28.18, respectively. That is, the mean score in the input group was higher. The posttest demonstrated that the scores in the input group and output group were 28.33 and 31.00, respectively. Besides, both groups showed an increase in the scores from the pretests to the posttests.

The first research question inquired if using input-based and collaborative output FonF tasks could significantly improve EFL learners' WTC. To address the first research questions of the study, *paired samples t test* was conducted. Table 2 reports the sample statistics of WTC scores. Also, Table 3 shows the result of the *t test*.

Table 2: Sample Statistics of the Pretest and Posttest WTC

Variable	N	M	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
Pretest WTC	50	28.19	3.67	.51
Posttest WTC	50	29.66	4.30	.60

Table 3 :Paired Samples *t* Test Between the Pretest and Posttest of WTC Scores

		Paired Differences				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
Variable	<i>M</i>	Std. Dev	Std. Mean	Error	95% Confidence			
					Lower	Upper		
Pretest WTC	-1.47	5.20	.73		-2.95	.003	-2.00	.051
Posttest WTC								

According to Table 3, the results show $t = -2.00$ and the significance level is more than 0.05. It can be concluded that there was a not significant difference between the two scores. Thus, the participants' responses to the WTC questions after performing the input and collaborative output tasks were not significantly different. The mean decrease was -1.47, with a 95 % confidence interval stretching from a lower bound of -2.95 to an upper bound of .003.

Moreover, in order to check the effect of the WTC test in the input and output groups, two *t* tests were performed. As Tables 4 and 5 show, the WTC scores did not improve significantly in the input group from the pretest to the posttest, but the WTC scores improved significantly in the output group from the pretest to the posttest.

Table 4: Paired Samples *t* Test of WTC in the Input Group

		Paired Differences				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	<i>M</i>	Std. Dev	Std. Mean	Error	95% Confidence			
					Lower	Upper		
WTC Pretest - WTC Posttest	-.12	4.95	.99		-2.16	1.91	-.127	.900

Table 5: Paired Samples Test of WTC in the Output Group

		Paired Differences				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	<i>M</i>	Std. Dev	Std. Mean	Error	95% Confidence			
					Lower	Upper		
WTC Pretest - WTC Posttest	-2.82	5.19	1.03		-4.96	-.68	-2.71	.012

The second research question asked if the collaborative output tasks were more effective than the input-based tasks in improving the participants' WTC. To address this research question, covariate analyses were conducted. However, it was so important, first, to make sure that the WTC scores had similar variances across both groups. Thus, Levene's test of equality of variance was done (see Table 6):

Table 6: Tests of Equality of Variance WTC Pretest

Test	Variable	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Levene	Pretest WTC	1.34	12	32	.24

Levene tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups. As Table 6 depicts, Levene's statistics was larger than .05. Thus, the variance was equal, and there was no significant difference between the variance of the groups. Also, sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run. The significance value of Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed the normality of the sets of scores. As Table 7 presents, Kolmogorov-Smirnov value means was not significant, and in each group was more than (.05), which manifests the normality of the distribution of the scores. This further supports the homogeneity of the groups before the treatment was carried out. Also, the reliability assumption was met because the internal consistency of the pretest WTC scores was found to be (.84) through running Cronbach's alpha.

Table 7: Tests of Normality

Test	Variable	F	df	Sig.
Input	Pretest WTC	.139	25	.200
Output	Pretest WTC	1.47	25	.173

The other assumption is the influence of treatment on covariate measurement. This assumption was, also, checked because the covariate (pretests) was measured prior to the treatment of the study (manipulation). The results are reported in Table 8. As Table 8 displays, the treatment for the pretest scores was not significant, $F = 3.110$, $p = .054$. There was not an interaction between the treatment and the pretest scores. This indicates that there was not a very significant difference between the two groups in terms of their WTC scores before the treatment was conducted.

Table 8: Analysis of Covariance on the WTC Scores for the Interaction Effect

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	106.234	2	53.117	3.11	.056	.117
Intercept	480.887	1	480.887	28.15	.000	.375
Group* WTC Pretest	106.234	2	53.117	3.11	.054	.054
Error	802.646	47	17.078			
Total Corrected	44922.545	50				
Total	908.880	49				

To address this research question of the study, a one-way covariate test was conducted. The posttest scores from the WTC test were considered as the dependent variable and the pretest scores as the covariate variable. The groups were considered as the independent variables. The error was originally set at .05 when comparing the groups on the grammar variable. The results of analysis of variance for the treatment effect are reported in Table 9.

Table 9: Analysis of Covariance for the Treatment Effect on the WTC Posttest Scores

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Corrected Model	111.81	2	55.90	3.29	.046	.123	
Intercept	488.18	1	488.18	28.78	.000	.380	
WTC Pretest	22.81	1	22.81	1.34	.252	.028	
Group	89.36	1	89.36	5.27	.026	.101	
Error	797.06	47	16.95				
Total	44922.54	50					
Corrected Total	908.88	49					

According to the Table 9, after removing the effect of the pretest, there was a significant difference between the two input and collaborative output groups, $F = 5.27$, $*p < .05$. Therefore, it is approved that there was significant difference in the posttests after the treatments. In fact, the two groups of input and collaborative output showed a significant difference after the instruction.

Discussion

This study investigated the effect of input and collaborative output FonF tasks on Iranian EFL learners' WTC. The result showed that input and collaborative output tasks influenced the participants' WTC, but the improvement was not significant. Thus, the first null hypothesis is not rejected. In this study, the input and collaborative output tasks increased the participants' WTC. Based on the result, these tasks and the importance of L2 learners' attitudes towards classroom tasks and activities are considered important factors in L2 learning motivation. The study by Dornyei and Kormos (2000), in British and Hungarian classes found that the students' engagement in classroom oral activities and tasks correlated significantly with their attitudes towards the language tasks they were asked to perform. In this study, both tasks increased the participants' motivation and, consequently, led to their WTC improvement.

L2 learners' attitude to classroom activities is, also, emphasized by researchers working from a sociocultural theoretical perspective. In the study, the input and collaborative output FonF tasks provided the participants with positive attitude and made them active agents to perform the tasks and receive feedback. As Lantolf and Thorne (2006) argue, L2 learners are viewed as active agents who assign significance to things and events in their life. This process of L2 learners as the active agents in their learning is appropriate when investigating adult classroom contexts. Such L2 learners display a wide range of learning goals, expectations, and abilities.

In this study, both the input and collaborative output tasks provided the participants with the perceived communication competence and low levels of anxiety; however, it was not very effective. According to MacIntyre's (1994) WTC model, WTC was predicted by two variables of perceived communication competence and communication anxiety. That is, the model predicted that high levels of perceived competence combined with low levels of anxiety would lead to greater WTC, and, in turn, more frequent communication in an L2. Although L2 learners' attitudes to the tasks are evaluated as an important consideration in explaining their willingness to

actively contribute to the task, there has been relatively little classroom-based research on their attitude and willingness towards such tasks.

The influence of the input and collaborative output tasks on the participants' WTC was not significant. There are several reasons to support this finding. First, more sufficient time was perhaps required to improve their WTC effectively, and tasks usage over time could lead to the improvement of their WTC. More research is required in order to investigate the effect of different types of tasks overtime and their influence on L2 learners' WTC. Second, as MacIntyre and MacKinnon (2007) mention, the choice to speak or to remain silent seems to be a factor here. According to MacIntyre (2007), both individual factors (i.e., anxiety, motivation, attitudes, interpersonal attraction, etc.) and social contextual factors (i.e., ethno-linguistic vitality, language contact, etc.) either enhance or reduce WTC. Consequently, the influences of these factors on L2 learners' WTC should be considered. Finally, the type of tasks could be a variable affecting the result.

The second research question considered if collaborative output tasks were more effective than input-based tasks in improving the participants' WTC. It was approved that there was a significant difference in the posttest of WTC in the input vs. collaborative output groups. In fact, the two groups of input and collaborative output showed a significant difference after instruction; collaborative output tasks appeared to influence the participants' WTC more. Thus, the last null hypothesis is rejected.

There are several reasons why collaborative output tasks were more effective than input tasks in improving the participants' WTC. The first reason is that collaborative output activities (i.e., jigsaw, text reconstruction, & dictogloss) push L2 learners to develop their interlanguage by drawing their attention to form while they are creating meaning. Consequently, the interactive nature of the collaborative output tasks influenced the participants' WTC and made them more willing to communicate in the classroom. They were in line with sociocultural approach. Some researchers (Lantolf & Appel, 1994) consider sociocultural approach as the knowledge which is constructed through social interaction and between individuals and is then internalized (Vygotsky, 1978). This view has led to the effect of, and interest in, collaborative tasks, where language use and language learning take place simultaneously (Swain & Lapkin, 2002).

In the current study, the collaborative output tasks of reconstruction cloze task, dictogloss, and jigsaw tasks were used. Reconstruction cloze task is claimed to be an effective form-focused task, as L2 learners work collaboratively and peer feedback is available (García Mayo, 2002; Kowal & Swain, 1997; Storch, 1998). In this study, during the reconstruction task, the texts were devoid of function words and the participants had to come up with an accurate product. Consequently, they exchanged their grammatical information and received peer and L2 instructor feedback. Also, dictogloss encouraged them to reflect on their own output (Wajnryb, 2001). As Swain (1998) argues, dictogloss could make L2 learners process syntactically, pay attention to the gaps in their interlanguage, and consider the mismatch between their own language use and L2 (Doughty & Williams, 1998), or notice metatalk on the connections between form and meaning and in relation to the writing process (Kowal & Swain, 2001). Finally, jigsaw task, as an information gap

activity, could lead L2 learners exchange the part of the necessary information and perform the task. According to Swain and Lapkin (2001), jigsaw task is a type of task where opportunities for negotiation of meaning are likely to be generated. WTC in an L2 is defined as the individual's "readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (MacIntyre, et al., 1998, p. 547). As far as the readiness is concerned, language competence is the first thing to have. Good language proficiency will result in good communication. According to this study and concerning the mentioned features of collaborative output tasks, using these tasks may influence L2 learners' language proficiency and, in turn, affect their WTC.

The second reason may be that the collaborative output tasks engaged the participants and attracted their attentions to task orientation. According to Peng and Woodrow (2010), there are three influential factors of teacher support, student cohesiveness, and task orientation in language classrooms. Dorman, Fisher, and Waldrup (2006) define teacher support as the extent to which the teacher helps, supports, trusts, befriends, and is interested in the students. Student cohesiveness refers to the extent to which students know, help, and support each other (Dorman et al., 2006). At last, task orientation refers to the extent to which it is important to complete the activities and solve the problems (Dorman et al., 2006).

It is possible that collaborative output tasks, as the attractive and useful tasks, led to the participants' engagement. In this study, collaborative output tasks were considered to be more effective than input tasks in improving their WTC. In fact, collaborative output tasks may decrease L2 learners' anxiety. In Peng and Woodrow's (2010) study, a negative correlation was found between communication anxiety with L2 WTC, perceived communicative competence, teacher support, student cohesiveness, and task orientation. Also, a positive correlation was found between L2 WTC with perceived communicative competence, teacher support, student cohesiveness, and task orientation.

The last reason is that the collaborative output tasks provided the participants with repeated exposure to grammatical structures. MacIntyre et al. (1998) mention the L2 WTC heuristic model and consider the frequency of L2 use along with the situated approach. At the top of the model, the frequency of L2 communication is mentioned. WTC is placed directly underneath the use of L2. Also, WTC is influenced by the situational factors of L2 learners' desire for communication and self-confidence. Hence, collaborative output tasks could expose L2 learners to grammatical structures repeatedly, and this fulfills WTC heuristic model's requirement of the frequent use of L2. The above finding is inconsistent with the findings made by Barjesteh, Vaseghi, and Neissi (2012) who demonstrated that the Iranian learners were highly WTC in two context-types (i.e., group discussion and meeting) and one receiver-type (i.e., friend). As the majority of Iranian learners have the opportunity of speaking English only in the language classroom, both input and collaborative output tasks, particularly collaborative ones, can provide the chance of group discussion, meeting, and friendly chat.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the influence of input and collaborative output FonF tasks instructions on L2 learners' WTC was examined. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest of the participants' WTC. Also, the analyses revealed that the collaborative output tasks were more effective than the input tasks in improving the participants' WTC. According to this study, collaborative output tasks provide L2 learners with communication opportunities in L2 classes. The only opportunity for EFL learners to use their ability to communicate is in the classroom. Communication is a process in which people influence each other. Communicating in class by performing different types of tasks can make the learning atmosphere more relaxing, which hopefully can lead to better L2 performance with the teacher's better understanding of the students' WTC. Perhaps, the learners' readiness to use those opportunities which arise in the classroom can lead to their success in learning an L2. Monitoring students' WTC and improving their learning skill should, thus, be seen as one of the goals of L2 teachers.

There are still reasons to be cautious about the findings of this study. One limitation could be the sample size of this study. This study aimed to address a specific group of 50 Iranian EFL students. Despite the fact that the number of participants was sufficient for the purpose of the study, a larger sample size would have yielded more robust results so to make stronger generalization. Moreover, the current study did not examine communication orientations of the participants. Another limitation concerns the WTC instrument employed in the current study. Although the validity and reliability of the instrument were checked to satisfy the requirements of data collection, the depth of the information that the self-report tests could collect was limited due to the nature of questionnaire instruments; to obtain more comprehensive information about WTC in L2, qualitative methods such as interview and observation could be employed to complement the data.

REFERENCES

- Allen, L. (2004). *The Oxford placement test*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barjesteh, H., Vaseghi, R., & Neissi, S. (2012). Iranian EFL learners' willingness to communicate across different context- and receiver-types. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(1), 47-54.
- Dorman, J. P., Fisher, D. L., & Waldrup, B. G. (2006). Learning environments, attitudes, efficacy, and 22 perceptions of assessment: A LISREL analysis. In D. L. Fisher & M. S. Khine (Eds.), *Contemporary 23 approaches to research on learning environments* (pp. 1-28). Singapore: World Scientific.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Kormos, J. (2000). The role of individual and social variables in oral task performance. *Language Teaching Research*, 4, 275-300.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Skehan, P. (2003). Individual differences in second language learning. In C. Doughty & M. Long (Eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 589- 630). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

- Doughty, C., & Williams, J. (1998). Pedagogical choices in focus on form. In C. Doughty. & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 197-261). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2001). *Form-focused instruction and second language learning*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Freiermuth, M., & Jarrell, D. (2006). Willingness to communicate: Can online chat help? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16, 189-212.
- García Mayo, M. P. (2002) Interaction in advanced EFL pedagogy: A comparison of form-focused activities. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37(4), 323-341.
- Kang, S.-J. (2005). Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System*, 33, 277-292.
- Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1997). From semantic to syntactic processing: How can we promote it in the immersion classroom? In R. K. Johnson & M. Swain. (Eds.), *Immersion education: International perspectives* (pp. 284-309). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Appel, G. (1994). Theoretical framework: An introduction to Vygotskian perspectives on second language research. In J. P. Lantolf & G. Appel (Eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 1-32). Westport: Ablex Publishing.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S.L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, J., & VanPatten, B. (2003). *Making communicative language teaching happen*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-assisted language learning: Context and conceptualization*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (1993). *How languages are learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Loewen, S. (2003). Variation in the frequency and characteristics of incidental focus on form. *Language Teaching Research*, 7, 315-345.
- Long, M. H. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. de Bot, R. Ginsberg & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Long, M. (2000). Focus on form in task-based language teaching. In R. D. Lambert, & E. Shohamy (Eds.), *Language policy and pedagogy: Essays in honor of A. Ronald Walton* (pp. 179-92). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Long, M., & P. Robinson. (1998). Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp.15-41). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (2007). Willingness to communicate in the second language: Understanding the decision to speak as a volitional process. *Modern Language Journal*, 91, 564-576.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Baker, S. C., Clément, R., & Conrod, S. (2001). Willingness to communicate, social support, and language-learning orientations of immersion students. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 23, 369-388.

- MacIntyre, P. D., Baker, S., Clement, R., & Donovan, L.A., (2003). Talking in order to learn: Willingness to communicate and intensive language programs. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 59, 589-607.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545-562.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Legatto, J. J. (2011). A dynamic system approach to willingness to communicate: Developing an idiodynamic method to capture rapidly changing affect. *Applied Linguistics*, 32(2), 149-171.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & MacKinnon, S. P. (2007). *Embracing affective ambivalence: A research agenda for understanding the interdependent processes of language anxiety and motivation*. In P. Cheng and J.X. Yan (Eds.) *Cultural identity and language anxiety*. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1987). Willingness to communicate and interpersonal communication. In J. C. McCroskey & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *Personality and interpersonal communication* (pp. 129-159). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1991). Willingness to communicate: A cognitive view. In M. Booth-Butterfield (Ed.), *Communication, cognition, and anxiety* (pp. 19-37). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2011). *Teaching grammar in second language classrooms: Integrating form-focused instruction in communicative context*. New York: Routledge.
- Norris, J. & L. Ortega (2001). Does type of instruction make a difference? Substantive findings from a meta-analytic review. In R. Ellis (Ed.), *Form-focused instruction and second language learning* (pp.157-213). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Peng, J., & Woodrow, L. (2010). Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning*, 60(4), 834-876.
- Richmond, V. P., & Roach, K. D. (1992). Willingness to communicate and employee success in U.S. organizations. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 20, 95-115.
- Riasati, M. J., & Noordin .N (2011). Antecedents of willingness to communicate. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 3(2), 74-80.
- Savignon, S. (2005). Communicative language teaching: Strategies and goals. In E. Hinkel, (Ed.), *Handbook on research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 635-51). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. .
- Sharwood-Smith, M. (1993). Input enhancement in instructed SLA: Theoretical bases. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 15, 165-79.
- Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 17, 38-62.
- Storch, N. (1998). A classroom based study: Insights from a collaborative text reconstruction task. *ELT Journal*, 7(4), 176-91.
- Swain, M. (1998). Focus on form through conscious reflection. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp.64-84). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2002). Talking it through: Two French immersion learners' response to reformulation. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 37, 285-304.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2001). Focus on form through collaborative dialogue: Exploring task effects. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching, and assessment* (pp. 167-178). London: Pearson International.
- VanPatten, B. (2002). Processing instruction: An update. *Language Learning*, 52, 755-803.
- Vasiljevic, Z. (2010). Dictogloss as an interactive method of teaching listening comprehension to L2 learners. *English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 41-52.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wajnryb, R. (1990). *Grammar dictation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wang, Y. (2004). *The relationship between second language written performance and the level of willingness to communicate in class: A quantitative analysis of a second-year Chinese class 2004 at the Australian National University*. Paper presented at the 15th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Canberra, Australia.
- Wang, Y.J., & Erlam, R. (2011). Willingness to communicate in the Japanese language classroom: An inquiry learning project in a year 7 classroom. *The New Zealand Language Teacher*, 37, 39-44.
- Weaver, C. (2004). *Learner's willingness to communicate within a language class-room*. Paper presented at the inaugural CLS international conference, Singapore.
- Weaver, C. (2005). Using the Rasch model to develop a measure of second language learners' willingness to communicate within a language classroom. *Journal of Applied Measurement*, 6(4), 396-408.
- Yashima, T. (2002). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context, *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(1), 54-66.

COMPARISON OF THE DICTIONARY EQUIVALENTS OF BANKING TERMINOLOGY AND THOSE SUGGESTED BY BANKING EXPERTS ACCORDING TO KATAMBA (2006) AND TAJVIDI'S (2012) FRAMEWORK

Dr. Kourosh Akef

Associate Professor, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch,
kourosh.akef@gmail.com

Morteza Khodabandeh

Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
m.kh2312@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, technical terminology translation plays an important role in human life. Specific groups of people all over the world refer to learn these terminologies in order to be familiar with a subject and improve their knowledge in that domain. On the other hand, saving the technical translation equivalent is a particularly salient challenge for technical translators. The present study was conducted to investigate the difference between the translation of banking terminology in the dictionaries and that used by banking experts. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 40 Banking experts, consisting of male and female in different ages, were randomly selected from six banks. They were given a questionnaire including 197 sentences consisting of 214 underlined banking terminologies. The obtained data was analyzed and the results of the present study indicated that there is no activity by Persian Language and Literature Academy in making equivalents for economic terminology. Moreover, the results demonstrated the insufficiency of dictionaries in offering the equivalents for some economic terminologies. Besides, banking experts mostly suggested their own equivalents for the terminologies, but in some cases the offered translation by experts, were not unified or sometimes entirely opposite and in some cases, they offered descriptive definition for the terminologies. Thus, the results were interpreted to have implications for the educational system of translation studies to enhance its syllabus in training the technical translators. The significance of this research lies in the fact that the Persian Language and Literature Academy, which is responsible for creating economic terminology equivalents, develop a unified procedure for this purpose.

KEYWORDS: Technical Terminology, Technical Translation, Banking Terminology, Banking Terminology Translation

INTRODUCTION

Around the world, translation plays an important role in human life. When thinking about it, everything in life is a translation. Nowadays, technical text is one of those texts that play an important role in human life, because these texts help readers solve problems. Markel (2003)

quotes "technical communication is not meant to express a writer's creativity or to entertain readers; it is intended to help readers learn or do something" (p: 8). Reading these texts is generally not an end in itself. People normally read technical documents because they want to be able to do something else, for instance learn how to use software or find out about the design details of a particular device. As Dobrin (1983) explains, "technical writing adapts technology to the user" (p: 247).

Technical translation involves translation of documents produced by technical writers or more specifically, texts that relate to technological subject areas or texts which deal with technological information and the practical application of science. The presence of specialized terminology is a feature of technical texts. Specialized terminology by itself is not sufficient for classifying a text as "technical", since numerous disciplines and subjects which are not "technical" possess what can be regarded as specialized terminology (Byrne, 2006).

Moreover, many non-technical documents are aimed at specific groups, but technical documents are more special, regarding the audience they are aimed at, than most documents (Byrne 2006, p: 47). It means that these special groups of people refer to these texts, in order to be familiar with a subject and increase their knowledge in that area.

Additionally, he also adds that with the increasing level of globalization of world markets and the ever-shrinking nature of the world because of modern communications, transport and multinational companies, there have been quite significant changes in the way international markets and communications work. An increasing number of companies are using English as a working language, so these technical texts should be transferred between companies and countries with different languages (Pinchuck, 1977).

The aim of technical translation is to present new technical information to the wide new audiences, not to reproduce the source text, or reflect its style or language. Technical translation is a communicative service provided in response to a very definite demand for technical information, which is easily accessible so these texts should be comprehensible, clear, and fast in delivery (Byrne, 2006).

Technical translation as technical text has different kinds; "It is commonly supposed that technical translation includes not only the translation of text in medicine and engineering but also such disciplines as economic, psychology, sociology, geography and law texts" (Javier, 2004,p:92). One kind of technical texts as Javier mentions is economic text, which is practical and consists of financial, banking etc. Stolez (2003) also defines that "economic text is not just a "source text," it has to be conceived as a text from the word of economics"(p: 188).

As Stolez (2003) believes: Economic texts have long been a central field of translation activity and hence of study and analysis. The core of economic specialized language is found in academic articles or business reports, financial accounts, forms, purchase or license contracts, etc. About the characteristics of economic texts there are some ideas such as" the discourse is often mathematical, with lots of formulas and proofs. Second, writing styles vary widely. Authors are

very dry and technical; a few are rather eloquent "(Neugeboren & Jacobson, 2001, p: 9). They also believe that economic writers do not have to be a great "writers" to produce good economics writings. This is because economics writing is different from many other types of writing. It is essentially technical writing, where the goal is not to turn a clever phrase, hold the reader in suspense, or create multi-layered nuance, but rather to achieve clarity. Elegant prose is nice, but clarity is the only style that is relevant for this purposes .

Others such as Byrne (2006) believes that technical translators needs to impersonate the original author who is generally, though not always, an expert in a particular field and they need to write with the same authority as an expert in the target language. Therefore, in this case, the challenge for the technical translator is to be able to research subjects and to have expert knowledge of the way experts in a particular field write texts. Byrne summarizes the essential areas of expertise for technical translators as subject knowledge, writing skills, research skills, knowledge of genres and text types and pedagogical skills. In other words nonliterary translation according to Galinski and Budin (1993, p: 209) is :

The non-literary translator must also be in possession of considerable subject matter knowledge (emphasis added)". Although technical translators have different concerns, such as transferring the information accurately, correctly and effectively, their challenge is to ensure that all of the relevant information is conveyed in such a way that the readers can use the information easily, properly and effectively. Their aim is precisely the same as that of technical writing, but on the whole when considering all the above mentioned characteristics, two factors are prominent; one is the translators' subject knowledge and the other is their translation ability or even their writing skill in translation (Byrne, 2006). Fluck (1992) defines these two factors in another way "the ideal non-literary translator is often defined as a sort of a combination of the subject matter expert and the trained translator".

Technical translation covers the translation of many kinds of specialized texts in science and technology, and in other disciplines such as economics and medicine (Williams & Chesterman, 2002). Especially compared with literary translation, Aixelá (2004) argues against the view that scientific prose can be perfectly or more easily translated: "The contrary is true: the extremely high requirements set for scientific and technical translation mark it out clearly from other genres, making it into an independent research field in its own right." One kind of technical texts as Javier (2004), mentions is economic text, which is practical and consists of financial, banking etc. Stolez (2003) also defines that economic text is not just a source text; it has to be conceived as a text from the word of economics .

Economy is a branch in social studies, which aims to study the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth. Knowledge in economy helps in understanding economic condition of a person or a country or understanding how the various economic agents behave or interact with each other and how the economic activities take place. Therefore, studies in economy are crucial in many aspects. In every society, laws sound to be the result of its economic conditions and development. The relationship between law and economics has increased nowadays according to

economic activity and expansion so that a new discipline called as Economic Law has been emerged .

As economic translation is a kind of technical translation, also because the bankers do economic translation for the economic documents and journals of their own organizations, as well as giving banking services to their customers it is the economy translator who should choose the exact word from the equivalents by his/her economic appreciation. But based on the website of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, and phone talking with Mr. Mahrami, the public relations manager of the academy, there is no activity in the selection of equivalents for banking terminologies by the academy. Since different equivalents offered for economic terminology by different dictionaries, besides the lack of existence of equivalents for economic terminology in some dictionaries, there is no, based on the researcher's experience as a banker, uniform procedure in the selection of the equivalents for banking terminologies by translators. Therefore, at present research, two factors such as subject knowledge and rate of banking experts' acceptability, which may influence the quality of selected equivalents and their suggestions for banking terminologies, will be discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As a field, technical translation has been recognized, studied, and developed since the 1960s. Thompson (1967), Daniel (1967) and Finch (1969) argue that Stemming from the field of translation studies, the field of technical translation traditionally emphasized much importance on the source language from which a text is translated. However, over the years, there has been a different movement from this traditional approach to focus on the purpose of the translation, and on the intended audience. In this regard, Kingscott, (2002) maintains that perhaps this is because only 5-10% of items in a technical document are terminology, while the other 90-95% of the text is language, most likely in a natural style of the source language .

Newmark (1988) believes that technical translation is only one subset of the different types of professional translation. It is the largest subset as far as output is concerned. Currently, more than 90% of all professionally translated work is done by technical translators, highlighting the importance and significance of the field (Kingscott, 2002).

What Is Translation?

The definition of translation as mentioned in the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003), as to change words into a different language or change something into a new form, especially to turn a plan in to reality. Nonetheless, translation has been variously defined. The following represent some chronological definitions, which have been uttered by eminent features of translation field:

Bassnett (1980, p.11) says that "What is generally regarded as translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the SL will be presented as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted ."

Seleskovitch (1977) believes that translation is a separate activity from interpretation. He defines translation in this way: "Translation is often a code-switching operation implying that a sequence of symbols from one language is substituted for a sequence of symbols in another language." It seems that the definition above focuses on the structure of translation rather than the meaning transference.

Translation Competence

A translator is a person who expresses in a language (generally in his/her mother tongue and writing) what is written in another language. It is obvious that translation is much more than just knowing two languages. There is something that distinguishes a bilingual person from a professional translator: translation competence. The competence needed to translate has also evolved due to different factors, mainly technological factors .

First of all, the term competence and then more specifically the term translation competence will be defined. Competence is the combination of skills, attitudes, and behavior that leads to an individual being able to perform a certain task to a given level. Translation competence is "a complex concept that has been addressed by a number of researchers in the field of Translation Studies" Ezpeleta (2005: 136).

Translation Equivalence

An equivalent term should thus primarily represent the referred concept by its informative content and be usable from the perspective of its user. Secondly, but still important, comes the demand for coherence with the practice of the field and linguistic and terminological acceptability. In this study, translation equivalence refers to a specific kind of technical equivalence, which is used in banks as banking terminologies.

In this regard, Karimi (2006) argues that the process of finding equivalents in two languages is that the translator should first decode the source text (ST). That is, to figure out the meaning message/intention of the original speaker or writer, and then ask himself or herself how the same decoded meaning/message/intention is encoded in the target text (TT). Kade (1968) also suggested four equivalent types: (a) Total (one-to-one correspondence), (b) Facultative (one-to-many correspondence), (c) Approximation (one-to-part-of-one correspondence), (d) Null (no correspondence).

Technical Translation

Technical translation covers the translation of many kinds of specialized texts in science and technology, and in other disciplines such as economics and medicine (Williams and Chesterman, 2002). As translations send technical information throughout the world, a wide range of people can use it. The aim of technical translation is to transmit technical information, as Pinchuck (1977) believes, and this would be just half of the story. Although, he states that technical texts are utilitarian and are intended to serve a relatively finite purpose, namely to clearly present information to the target language readers, there is more to technical translation than just simply transmitting information.

Technical Competence

Technical competence is the ability to perform the activities within a defined standard, consistently and over time. In addition, knowledge of skills in the exercises of, practices required for successful accomplishment of a business, job, and task.

Economics

There is a variety of modern definitions of economics. Some of the differences may reflect evolving views of the subject itself or different views among economists Backhouse, Roger E, and Steven Medema (2008). Antoine de Montchrestien (1615) believes that the earlier term for 'economics' was political economy. It is adapted from the French Mercantilist usage of *économie politique*, which extended economy from the ancient Greek term for household management to the national realm as public administration of the affairs of state. James Steuart (1767) wrote the first book in English with 'political economy' in the title, explaining that just as:

Economy, in general, is the art of providing for all the wants of a family, so the science of political economy seeks to secure a certain fund of subsistence for all the inhabitants, to obviate every circumstance which may render it precarious; to provide every things necessary for supplying the wants of the society, and to employ the inhabitants in such manner as naturally to create reciprocal relations and dependencies between them, so as to supply one another with reciprocal wants.

Translation of Economic Texts

Economics is a broad and complex subject field with several sub-fields like macro- economics, micro economics and economics of a particular state and like that. For perfect economic translation, the economic translator must have in-depth knowledge on the particular part of economics that he or she is going to translate. For non-academic economic document translation, knowledge on the specific field is required. By the way, proficiency in both source and target languages is necessary for accurate economic translation. Robbins (1932) believes that economic translation is the translation of documents related to economics as an academic discipline and non-academic documents like bank articles, sales reports, and more. In this regard, based on Newmark's (1988) definition, economic texts are technical texts and consequently their translation is a part of technical translation. Newmark (1988) believes that technical translation is a kind of specialized translation, institutional translation, the area of politics, commerce, finance, government etc.

Terminology

Terminology is regarded as the systematic designation of defined concepts within a specific field, requiring specialized knowledge and the authorization to exercise a specific profession connected to this specialized knowledge. Terminology is also defined socially: people with specific qualifications for exercising a given profession also connect it to language use in specific professional situations .One might say that since in the realm of science and technology, a set of standard terminology with predefined equivalents exist, there is no terminological level problem in translating technical texts. However, International standardized terminology is very rare (Stolze, 2009). The reason is that new technical concepts are made every day. Many dictionaries

suggested meanings for technical concepts are not equivalent to the original because of different cultural implications and backgrounds.

Banking Terminology

Banking terminology refers to terminologies that are used in banking process in journals, especially in the International Affair Department, Business Affair Department, Money Laundering Department, and the Letter of Credit Department of selected branches that are dealing with foreign countries. These affairs include export, import, and opening of letter of credit.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the difference between translation of banking terminology in dictionaries and that used by banking experts?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this research were banking experts. To this regard, 40 banking experts participated in this study. They were male and female, between 35 to 45 years old. They had years of experience in the fields of English translation, English teaching, English literature, General Linguistics, Applied linguistics, Economics, Management, and political law. They were employees of the International Affair Department, Business Affair Department, Money Laundering Department, and Selected Branches of six Iranian Banks, Melli, Eghtesad Novin, Tejarat, Refah, Sepah, and Keshavarzi.

Material

In order to fulfill the purpose of the present study, three different dictionaries and eight books were chosen as material. The chosen materials were as follows.

- Aria Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionary (2011)
 - Aryanpour Dictionary (1988)
 - Farhang Moaser Money, Banking and International Finance Dictionary (2011)
 - Uniform Rules for Collections (1996)
 - Force Majeure and Hardship Clause (2003)
 - Uniform Customs and Practice for Documentary Credits
 - Uniform Rules for Demand Guarantees
 - Uniform Rules for Bank Payment Obligations
 - United Nations convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea
 - Incoterms 2010 International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Rules for the Use of Domestic and International of Trade Terms
 - Case Study on Documentary Credits (Problems, Queries, Answers)
- (ICC) International Chamber of Commerce, The World Business Organization, publishes these books.

Instrumentation

In order to capture all possible results of the research question, the instrumentation was cautiously presented in one section, which has been arranged in one questionnaire package. The questionnaire package was a banking terminology equivalents. The test used in this research was economic terminology translation test, consisting of one hundred and ninety seven sentences which included two hundred and fourteen banking terminologies. In every sentence, there was at least one underlined banking terminology that was extracted from sources that are used in banks. These sources were prepared from ICC (International chamber of commerce) and its equivalents in Persian language from three dictionaries, i.e. Aria Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionary, Aryanpour Dictionary, and Farhang Moaser Money, Banking and International Finance Dictionary.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was based on the Katamba and Tajvidi's model . (Katamba, 2006), in productivity of word-formation, explains three kinds of productivity:

Procedure

After preparing banking sources such as articles, books, and journals, all banking terminologies, which were two hundred and fifteen (excluding the repeated ones), were extracted and written down. From those sources, a questionnaire that consisted of four choices A, B, C, and D was prepared. Then, the researcher found Persian equivalents for those banking terminologies from three different dictionaries and wrote them in the choices A, B, and C. In the next step the researcher requested forty banking experts to select the best equivalent from one of the choices of A, B, and C. If none of the choices were equivalent for the underlined banking terminology, they were requested to write their own equivalents in choice D, based on their own banking experience. In the last step, the selected answers by banking experts were compared and analyzed on (Katamba, 2006) and (Tajvidi's, 2000) framework model to select the best equivalent for banking terminologies.

Collecting the data

The present study reports the data analysis in a chronological order, discusses the description of banking terminologies equivalents in Persian language at first, and then illustrates the inferential analysis performed on the research question.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the results tabulated in the table 1, most of the banking experts provided their own equivalents for underlined banking terminologies. The total descriptive result of the questionnaire investigation is as follows:

Table 1: Results Summary of the Questionnaire

Choice	A	B	C	D	N	Total
Frequency	5	7	7	15	6	40
Percentage	%11.90	%17.48	%18.74	%36.37	%15.51	%100

As can be seen in the above table, 5 out of 40 banking experts equal to 11.90 percent, have chosen banking terminology equivalents from choice A, which its equivalents in Persian language were extracted from Aria Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionary. 7 out of 40 banking experts equal to 17.48 percent, chose B, which its equivalents were extracted from Aryanpur Dictionary, and 7 out of 40 banking experts equal to 18.74 percent, choice C, which its equivalents were extracted from Farhang Moaser Money, Banking and International Finance Dictionary.

In addition, banking experts were asked to write their own equivalents in choice D if none of choices A, B, or C were equivalents for underlined banking terminologies in the questionnaire. In this regard, 15 out of 40 banking experts equal to 36.37 percent, produced their own equivalents for underlined banking terminologies in choice D. Moreover, banking experts were requested to select choice N if they had no comments on the underlined banking terminologies. In this regard, 6 out of 40 banking experts equal to 15.51 percent, had no comment. The total indicates that 100 percent of the choices were chosen by 40 banking experts.

As mentioned before, 15 out of 40 banking experts equal to 36.37 percent, made their own equivalents for underlined banking terminologies. Compound banking terminologies were part of them and the overall frequency and percentage were illustrated in the table below:

Table 2: Percentage of suggested equivalents of samples for compound words

Items (Compound words)	Equivalents in Persian Language	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Remitting Bank	بانک و اگذارنده، بانک فرستنده، بانک ارسال کننده، بانک و اگذارنده در کشور فروشنده، بانک پرداخت کننده، بانک ظرف صادر کننده، بانک واریز کننده،	%0.14	0.06	%36.37	40
Performing Party	انجام دهنده، طرف مجری، شرکت انجام دهنده حمل و نقل، شرکت عامل، عامل حمل، طرف تهیه کننده کننده کالا، شخص عملیاتی، اجرا قرارداد	%0.33	0.13	%36.37	40

The examples above were samples of compound words for banking terminologies in this study, whose equivalents were produced by banking experts in Persian language. Apparently, whether based on the subject knowledge of banking experts or not, approximately most of banking experts tend to create their own equivalents for a number of compound words of banking terminologies.

Phrases

There are a number of phrases among banking terminologies, but in the compassion of compound words, banking experts offered their own less equivalents for those phrases.

Table 3: Percentage of suggested equivalents for banking terminology phrases

Items (phrases)	Equivalents in Persian Language (Offered By Banking Experts)	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Bill of Exchange	No comment	0	0	%36.37	40
Bill of Lading	بارنامه، بارنامه کشتی	%27.5		%36.37	40

The Influence of Education on the Equivalent Selection

Moreover, while analyzing the data, the researcher came to an finding that in the offering of the equivalents for banking terminologies, that were offered by banking experts, who had Ph.D educational degree, were different from other equivalents which were offered by other banking experts. The samples of this category were tabulated in table 4:

Table 4: Samples of PHD degree banking expert equivalents for banking terminologies

Items (Banking terminologies)	Equivalent(s) offered by Ph.D Degree Experts	Other Experts Equivalents
Facsimile	نگار دور	فکس، رونوشت برابر اصل، کپی برابر اصل،

Apparently, based on data analysis of the samples of Ph.D degree banking expert equivalents, there is a significant difference between Ph.D degree banking expert equivalents and those offered by other experts. In the following sentence, "Details of the drawee, including full name, postal address, or the domicile at which presentation is to be made as well as applicable telex, telephone and facsimile numbers", It is entirely clear that as "facsimile" is not a document and "دورنگار" is a proper equivalent, which is offered by a Ph.D degree banking expert, rather than the equivalent "رونوشت برابر اصل، کپی برابر اصل" which was suggested by other experts that talks about a document or "فکس" that is foreignized. Moreover, foreignization is one of the problems in finding equivalents for a number of banking terminologies. After analysis, the results were revealed and are indicated in the following table.

Table 5: Samples of foreignization equivalents for banking terminologies

Items (Banking Terminologies)	Choice A	Choice B	Choice C	Choice D (Experts Suggestion)
Perforate	##	سوراخ کردن	##	Perforate

According to table 5, there are no equivalents for these samples of banking terminologies in Persian language and that experts used the exact English words while translating, as well as while

talking to bank customers. The problem is that the customers who deal with banking affairs, especially with the International Foreign Affairs Department, do not understand the exact meaning of these terminologies. In this regard, since all of the banking terminologies are international expressions, there were no choices and alternative options for banking experts. Thus, they use the English words as an equivalent for banking terminologies.

Significant Differences and oppositions to the Selected Equivalents

According to the results of this study, the researcher found that there are significant differences among the presented equivalents for banking terminologies by banking experts. After identifying the opposite equivalents, their classification is as follows:

Table 6: Samples of Significant differences and oppositions in the selected equivalents

Items (Banking Terminologies)	Choice D (Banking Experts' Comments)	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Free Out	هزینه تخلیه از کشتی، تخلیه کامل، مسیر دریایی درست، آزادسازی، تخلیه کامل کشتی در پایان قرارداد، بدون هزینه تخلیه	%0.13	0.05	%36.37	40
Relent	با مشتری مدارا کردن، چشم پوشی کردن، تخفیف دادن، قبول نکردن، زیربارن رفتن، قبول کردن، نرم شدن	%0.17	0.07	%36.37	40
Attestation de verification	گواهی تطبیق، تأیید قبولی، تصدیق گواهی، صحه، احراز، اصالت، سرویس تأیید گواهی، انگلیسی نیست	%0.20	0.08	%36.37	40

As can be seen, in the data analysis of banking terminologies, the researcher found significant differences among the samples of the presented equivalents in choice D. In this regard, a number of banking experts produced their own equivalents as they were dealing with a general text, and use general equivalents for an economic expression. In the terminologies "free out" and "relent", respectively 0.05 and 0.07 out of 40 banking experts equal to 0.13 and 0.17 percent, offered their own equivalents. Apparently, in both cases, banking experts have an opposite idea about them. Moreover, in the expression "attestation de verification" a number of banking experts believed that the mentioned word is not an English word and had no idea about it, but other experts offered their own equivalents.

Descriptive Explanation and Collocation of Banking Terminology Equivalents

When words appear next to banking terms and within a banking context, their meanings may differ from their general or common meanings. Collocation is a problem known as a translator's trap. For instance, based on Aria Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionary, and Farhang Moaser Money, Banking and International Finance Dictionary, the equivalent for the compound word "advising bank" is "بانک ابلاغ کننده". But most banking experts believe that since the word "ابلاغیه" has judicial meaning, hence there is no collocation between "بانک" and "ابلاغیه", and in this regard the violence of collocation range in Persian language occurs according to most

banking experts as the proper equivalent for “advising bank “is” بانک اطلاع دهنده”. Apparently, deciding upon collocations and their meaning are important issue in banking terminology equivalents.

Table 7: Samples of collocation of equivalents

Item (banking terminology)	Choice D (Banking Experts' Comments)	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Advising Bank	بانک اطلاع دهنده	%0.31	0.12	%36.37	40

According to table 7, 0.12 out of 40 banking experts equal to 0.31 percent, offered “ بانک اطلاع دهنده” as an equivalent for “advising bank”.

Moreover, Based on Newmark (1988), “usually descriptive terms which suddenly become technical terms, their meaning sometimes hides innocently behind a more general or figurative meaning”. Due to the results, a number of banking terminologies are categorized in the following table.

Table 8: Samples of Descriptive explanation of banking terminology equivalents

Items(Banking Terminologies)	Choice D Banking experts' explanation	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Negotiation	پرداخت وجه اسناد پس از معامله توسط بانک گشایش کننده	%0.06	0.02	%36.37	40

As table 8, shows, based on the principle of economy, it is not possible to consider equivalents for a number of banking terminologies, thus the experts have to describe the term and use it as an equivalent.

Failure of Banking Experts in Giving Banking Terminology Equivalents

After analyzing the results of this study, the researcher found that banking experts could not offer their own equivalents for a number of banking terminologies, even for some simple ones. The following table shows the results.

Table 9: Samples of Failure of Banking Experts in Giving Banking Terminology Equivalents

Item (banking terminology)	Choice N No Comment	Percentage	Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Intended	###	%0.11	0.04	%15.51	40

According to table 9, the results show that a number of banking experts were unable to offer a number of terminology equivalents. For the item "Intended", it was predicted that most of the

banking experts knew the terminology equivalent in Persian language, but 0.04 out of 40 banking experts equal to 0.11 percent of them were unable to offer it.

All Agreement of Banking Experts in Compound Words Equivalents of Banking Terminologies

By analyzing the results of this study, the researcher came to an interesting result. For a number of banking terminologies especially compound words the equivalents of banking terminologies were approximately chosen by common consent of banking experts. The results are shown below:

Table 10: Samples of all agreement of banking experts compound words equivalents of banking terminologies

Item (banking terminologies)	Choice D	Percentage	Frequency	Common Consent percentage	Common Consent Frequency	Total Percentage	Total Frequency
Foreign Debt	بدهی خارجی	%0.40	0.16	%0.34	0.13	%36.37	40

As was previously mentioned, banking experts tend to offer their own equivalents for compound words. As seen among the samples, a number of compound word equivalents, offered by banking experts, are the same suggested equivalents. For example, for the term “foreign debt” 0.16 out of 40 banking experts equal to 0.40 percent, offered their own equivalents, in which 0.34 percent of offered equivalents for the term is "بدهی خارجی".

Shortage of Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionaries in Offering Banking Terminology Equivalents

After analyzing the prepared questionnaire of banking terminologies, which were answered by banking experts, the researcher found that there were no equivalents for a number of banking terms in Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionaries. A number of banking experts selected the equivalents from Aryanpour General Dictionary, in which the offered equivalents were not related to banking and economics. Table 11, indicates the results.

Table 11: Samples of shortage of banking and economic specialized dictionaries in offering the banking terminology equivalents

Item (banking terminology)	Choice A	Choice C	Percentage Choices A and C	Frequency Choices A and C	Total Percentage choice A	Total Frequency choice A	Total Percentage choice C	Total Frequency choice C
Courier	0	0	0	0	%11.90	5	%18.74	7
Initiative	0	0	0	0	%11.90	5	%18.74	7

According to table 11, it is clear that there are no equivalents for the underlined term in the choices A and C that respectively were extracted from Aria Banking and Economic Specialized Dictionary, and Farhang Moaser Money, Banking and International Finance Dictionary.

In the investigation of banking expert's skills or their tendencies to suggest their own equivalents for banking terminologies, which were described throughout this study. Therefore, what was conspicuous here was that in comparison of the translation of banking terminology in the dictionaries and that used by banking experts, the researcher found that banking experts, to a large extent, reflected their own equivalents for most of the banking terminologies. As there is no activity by the Persian Language and Literature Academy in developing equivalents for economic, financial, and banking terminologies in Persian language, the researcher had to compare banking terminology equivalents in and among dictionaries and banking experts. It was concluded that through this study that more investigation and work is needed in financial translation field from both sides, the banking experts and, especially, the Academy, which is responsible in these areas. It is necessary for the Academy to make a reliable reference of equivalents for economic, financial, and banking terminologies.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of this study, the researcher came up with the conclusion that there is no effort by the Persian Language and Literature Academy to make equivalents for economic terminologies. Moreover, the results demonstrated that there were no equivalents for a number of economic terms in dictionaries, even in specialized ones. Besides, banking experts mostly suggested their own equivalents for them. But among them, there were significant differences or entirely opposite and descriptive definitions for a number of the equivalents .

The outcome of this study was that by scrutinizing various aspects of banking terminology equivalents, and by examining the ways they have been translated, the researcher concluded that there are no equivalents for a number of economic terms in dictionaries, even in specialized ones. Besides, the banking experts' current information is not enough in suggesting economic equivalents, and thus more investigation and work is needed in the economic translation field by banking experts. Moreover, there is a need for an academy to create a teamwork effort in the field of economic terminology translation, in the sense of being more specific, in order to develop a reliable reference for presenting proper equivalents in economic translations.

Limitations of the study

As the limitations of this research, it is necessary to mention that: the gender and age of the experts is not considered in this research. Also, despite the variety of economic texts that contains banking terminology, there are not enough proficient translators for these texts. In fact, many economic texts are not translated yet. Since in this research it is necessary to compare the dictionary equivalents of banking terminology and those suggested by banking experts, therefore, despite the many books in this regard, only seven books which are most commonly used in banks are selected as the materials of this research.

On the other hand, as the researcher is a banker, thus he prefers to work on economic translation. But, it is out of reach of this study to analyze the equivalent of all types of economical terminology. Therefore, only banking terminology is chosen as the main focus of this research.

REFERENCES

- Aixelá, F., & Javier. (2004). The Study of Technical and Scientific translation: An Examination of Its Historical Development. *Journal of specialized translation*, 11, 2. An Examination of its Historical Development Journal of specialized Autonomy in Scientific and Technical Translation training.
- Antoine de Montchrestien.(1985). *Traicté de l'oeconomie politique*. F. Billacois, ed., 1999, critical edition, preview. Retive from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoine_de_Montchrestien.
- Backhouse and Steven (2008). "economics, definition of," *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, 2nd Edition, pp. 720-22.
- Bassnett, S. (1980, revised edition 1991). *Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, P.11
- Byrne, J. (2006). *Technical Translation: Usability Strategies for Translating Technical Documentation*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer; p.2-11, 47-96
- Dobrin, D. N.(1983). *What's Technical About Technical Writing? Central Works in Technical Communication of Harvard University*.
- Ezpeleta, P. (2005). "La noción de género en la planificación de la traducción de la primera lengua extranjera" in I. García Izquierdo (ed.) (2005). p. 135. Retrive from <http://translationjournal.net/journal/46competence.htm>.
- Fluck, H. (1992). *Didaktik der Fachsprachen. Aufgaben und Arbeitsfelder, Konzepte und Perspektiven im Sprachbereich Deutsch*. Tübingen. Gunter Narr Verlag. (Forum für Fachsprachenforschung; Band 16.p.221
- Galinski, Ch. & Budin, G. (1993). *Scientific and Technical Translation, American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series*, Volume VI 1993. Edited by Sue Ellen Wright and Leland D. Wright, Jr. John. Benjamins Publishing Company. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. 209-215.
- James Steuart .(1967). *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy: Being An Essay on the Science of Domestic Policy in Free Nations*, v. 1, [title page] and pp. 2-3, Oliver and Boyd for the Scottish Economic Society. Title page and Book I, "Introduction," , pp. 15, 17, as quoted in Peter Groenwegen (1987 [2008]), "'political economy' and 'economics'," *The New Palgrave: A Dictionary of Economics*, v. 3, p. 905.
- Javier,F.A.(2004). *The Study of Technical and Scientific Translation: An Examination of its Historical Development. Jurnal of Specialized Translation*, 1, 92
- Kade, O. (1968). *Zufall und Gesetzmäßigkeit in der Übersetzung*, Leipzig: VEB
- Karimi, L. (January 2006). Equivalence in translation. *Online Translation Journal*,10(1). Retrieved on January 6, 2010 from Hamedan, Iran.
- Kingscott,G. (2002).Technical translation and related disciplines. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 10 (4), 247-255.
- Markel, M.(2003). *Technical Communication*, Bedford/Saint Martin's.
- Neugeboren, R., & Jacobson, M.(2001). *Writing Economics*. Harvard: President and Fellows
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice-Hall
- Pinchuck, I. (1977). *Scientific and Technical Translation*. London: Deutsch..
- Robinson, D. (2003). *Performative Linguistics: Speaking and Translating as Doing Thing With Words*. London and NewYork: Rotledge.

- Seleskovitch, D. (1977). *Why interpreting is not tantamount to translating languages. Incorporated linguist*, Institute of Linguists, London.
- Stolez, R. (2003). Vagueness in economic texts as a translation problem Across Languages and Cultures, 4(2), 187-203.
- Stolez, R.(2009). Dealing with cultural elements in technical texts for Translation, Darmstadt University of Technology. *Jurnal of Cultural Translation*, 11.
- Thompson, Daniel (1967). "Theophilus Presbyter: Word and Meaning in Technical Translation." *Medieval Academy of America* 42.2: 313-339. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2854679>.
- Williams, J. & Chesterman, A. (2002). *The MAP*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THREE DIFFERENT GENRES ON THE BASIS OF HOLLIDAY'S SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR FRAMEWORK

Pezhman Bagheri

Department of Foreign Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Bahram Hadian

Department of Foreign Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

This genre-based study aimed to investigate three different genres on the basis of Holliday's ideational met function. To this end, three genres, drawn from high school and university books of Iran, have been selected for the investigation. The purpose was to see whether we can consider some unique characteristics for each genre in terms of used processes or not. The three genres used in this study were economy, biology, and theology. In order to determine the frequency of different processes of ideational met function, the verbs indicating the processes have been counted. After data analysis, it was found that in three mentioned genres, the relational and martial processes have been used with more frequently as compared with other processes, and relational process have been used in theology genre with less frequently as compared with the other two genres. Furthermore, the economy genre was similar to biology genre in terms of the frequently of existing processes. But, both economy and biology genres were quite different from theology genre. The overall conclusion is that the aim of biology and economy genres is to demonstrate the relationship between the phenomena which are of concrete nature, and the theology genre pays much more attention to man and his behavior. Finally, the findings of this study can provide worthwhile implications and insights in light with educational and scientific objectives, which are useful for textbook designers, teachers and other practitioners. The insights resulting from this study can also be influential for educational objectives and methods.

KEYWORDS: Genres, Metafunction, Process, Context, Content Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

According to Swales (1990, p.58), a genre “comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style”. This definition has prompted lots of researchers to carry out different studies with the aim of analyzing different texts; to the extent that lots of structural components of different text types along with their distribution patterns have been identified.

Many textbooks all over the world have been designed and developed based on these genre-based analyses. Generally speaking, genre is associated with the applied specific situation as well as the specific communication goals. It should be noted that "a genre consists of three basic parts: the context of the situation, role and relations between the two parts, the first feature-language" (Baber & Conrad, 2009). In other words, a genre is first described based on its salient grammatical and lexical characteristics; in addition, its situation context is described. For example, whether a text is written or oral, or whether it is interactive or not, and what is the communication goal? On the other hand, the relationship between the linguistic features and properties of context (e. g, the purpose of the association) should be determined. That is because genre is basically a functional approach. Hence, there is an intertwined interaction between genre- based studies and linguistic doctrines, and many studies have used linguistic doctrines in analyzing written genres. One of the functional linguistic doctrines that have been widely used in analyzing spoken and written genres is Holliday's systemic functional grammar. This theory is a functional theory of language. In other words, it explores the language in terms of its functioning in human lives (Tavernier, 2004). Systemic-functional linguistics (SFL), as its name suggests, considers function and semantics as the basis of human language and communicative activity (Martin, Mathieson & Painter, 1997). The term 'systemic' refers to the view of language as "a network of systems, or interrelated sets of options for making meaning" (Halliday, 1994, p.15).

One of the basic concepts in Holliday's systemic functional grammar is language metafunctions. Halliday (1985) identified three metafunctions, namely ideational, interpersonal and textual. The ideational met function of language deals with language as representation: it focuses on the role of language in representing and shaping reality. Language is able to fulfill this function by subdividing reality into processes that take place, entities that can take part in these processes (living beings; concrete and abstract things), and qualities that we can use to describe these entities (Tavernier's, 2004). As Holliday and Mathieson note (1997, p.14), "the ideational meatfunction is concerned with 'ideation' that is grammatical resources for construing our experience of the world around us and inside us. One of its major grammatical systems is TRANSITIVITY, the resource for construing our experience the flux of 'goings-on', as structural configurations; each consisting of a process, the participants involved in the process, and circumstances attendant on it." As different types of processes are used in the analysis, so the concentration is being made on describing the different types of processes and their associated configurations of particular roles. This study is based on ideational functional language which consists of six types of processes one of the functions of a clause is to represent experience: to describe the events and states of the real (and unreal) world. In the SFL model, a representation of experience consists of: 1.Processes Processes: what kind of event/state is being described. 2. Participants, Participants: the entities involved in the process, e.g., Actor, Sayers, Sensor, etc. 3.Circumstances Circumstances: specifying the when, where, why and how of the process.

Register is also an important notion in Holliday's systemic functional grammar, which is based on the selection among different varieties of the language. This selection is not actually accidental and is restricted based on the given register. Halliday (1990) interprets this notion as "a semantic concept" which "can be defined as a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode, and tenor."(p.38).The linguistic features

(specific expressions, lexicon-grammatical and phonological features) and the particular values of the three dimensions of field, mode and tenor determine the functional variety of a language (Halliday, 1994, p.22). These three parameters can be used to specify the context of situation in which language is used. Field of discourse is defined as “the total event, in which the text is functioning, together with the purposive activity of the speaker or writer; it thus includes the subject-matter as one element in it” (p. 22). The field describes activities and processes that are happening at the time of speech. The analysis of this parameter focuses on the entire situation, e.g. when a mother talks to her child. The mode of discourse refers to “the function of the text in the event, including therefore both the channel taken by the language – spoken or written, extempore or prepared – and its [genre], or rhetorical mode, as narrative, didactic, persuasive, ‘phatic communion’ and so on” (ibid). This variable determines the role and function of language in a particular situation. When analyzing the mode of a text, the main question is ‘What is achieved by the use of language in this context?’ For example, a fairy tale (in written form) may have a narrative or entertaining function. A spoken conversation can be argumentative (in a discussion) or phatic (e.g. to contact someone or to keep in touch with someone). Tenor of discourse (sometimes also referred to as style) describes the people that take part in an event as well as their relationships and statuses. “The tenor refers to the type of role interaction, the set of relevant social relations, permanent and temporary, among the participants involved” (Halliday 1994, p.22). There might be a specific hierarchy between the interlocutors, e.g. when the head of a business talks to an employee, or they may have only a temporary relationship, e.g. when a person asks an unknown pedestrian for the time. All three variables (field, mode, tenor) taken together enable people to characterize the situational context specifically, and, thus, to recreate part of the language that is being used (Halliday, 1994).

On the account given above, different processes may be used in different genres. As an example, in instructions it is believed that substantial processes are used more common as compared with other processes. On the other hand, in news and reporting genres, verbal processes are used more often. Therefore, based on the kind of genre, the frequency of processes are different, and since the change of the processes play an essential role in determining the meaning of the texts, it seems important to find out what processes are used more in different text types. Hence, this study is conducted to finding out how the processes of ideational metafunction are distributed in three different genres, namely biology, theology and economics aiming to find out how the kind of genre can influence the frequency of processes. Resolving this issue can bring about some worthwhile insights in designing textbooks for students at schools and universities.

PERVIOUS STUDIES

Many studies, using Linguistics doctrines, have analyzed literary genres. For example, Hassan (1989) has analyzed the text from the point of view of functionalism. He believes that this approach can enhance the quality of education, and it also can resolve the social problems. That is because this way the instructors can teach better and learners can better understand and learn the language.

At the end of her dissertation titled as examining discourse texts in Sport in Persian, Sudabeh Zarei (1999) reported that like any language, the language of sport has its own vocabulary treasures and processes. In this context, the speaker sometimes uses specific terms and sometimes borrows words from a foreign language and sometimes uses fixed processes in the language. On the other hand, because of the similarities between sports and combat phenomenon, some words in this specified operational field has come into sport genres.

In a genre-based article conducted by Aghagolzade, Kord Zafaranlu and Razavian (2011), four Persian short stories from Jalal Ahmad and Sadegh Hedayat have been analyzed based on transient state within Halliday's functional grammar. The frequency of occurrence of the metafunctional ideational processes, after reviewing all the verbs in the stories, has been considered as a style index. The goal of the authors was to determine the attitude of Al Ahmad and Hedayat through the verb used that show the met functional ideational processes in the works of these authors. So to achieve this goal, They first extract all the verbs and used six ideational processes. In each of the short stories Setar and Vasvas from Al Ahmed and David koozhposht and Madeleine by Hedayat, the extracted processes were grouped based on Halliday's theory. After that the percentage and frequency of types of processes have been specified. In the end, they concluded that because Al-Ahmad in his stories has used more substantail process, so he has the more realistic view. According to what we have in the definition of substantail process, since substantial process are more tangible and concrete concepts , it can be said that their conclusion seems fairly reasonable.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The question that this study is going to answer is:

1. How do the different processes of ideational language metafiction differ in terms of frequency in economy, biology and theology?

METHODOLOGY

Since this study tries to compare the frequency of ideational processes in three different genres, it can be considered as a genre-based study in which three different genres on the basis of Halliday's ideational metafunction, especially their processes are compared. The processes to be compared are mental, verbal, relational, substantial, existential, and behavioral processes.

Materials

In line with the research objectives, three different genres were compared. Each of the three selected genres consists of 30 pages. The number of sentences in all three of genres is the same. Three selected genre are: a religious text (theology), an economic text and a biology text. The reason for the selection of these three genres is that each of the selected genres has its own structure, specialized words, and style .The texts to be analyzed have been drawn from high school and college text books in Iran.

Data collection and analysis

To gather data, this study tried to count all the paragraphs used in the texts and classify them based on the type of processes. They type of processes was determined through the kind of verbs they used. Furthermore, that a diagram for each text according to frequency of processes has been shown. Furthermore, for each genre the percentage of processes have been estimated and displayed in a separate table. After determining the frequency of the processes, (x2) chi-square has been find out whether there is a significant difference among the occurrence of processes in different genres

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result of economic text

176 processes have been economic texts. A sample of analyzing economic text is presented in appendix A. Table 1 illustrates the frequency of each process.

Table1: The number and percentage of in the context of economic processes

types of process	relational	substantial	existential	behavioral	verbal	mental
frequency of process	74	56	16	14	11	0
	%42	%32	%9	%8	%6	%3

As Table 1 shows the most economic process in economic text is relational. Figure (4-1) also demonstrates this point clearly:

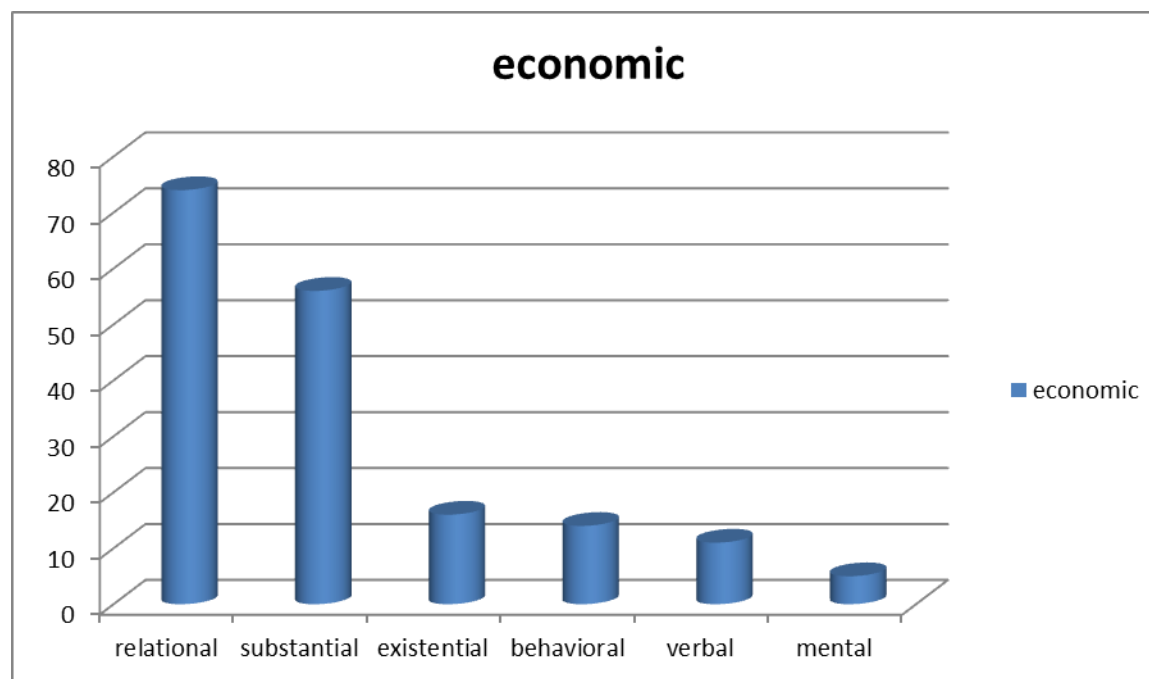


Figure 1: Distribution of economic genre processes

Result of biology text

As table 2 shows, like the economic genre of the most frequent process here is also relational. After relational process, substantial process is more common than other processes. A sample of analyzing biology text is presented in appendix B.

Table 2: The number and percentage of in the context of biology processes

types of process	relational	substantial	existential	behavioral	verbal	mental
frequency of process	93	49	29	10	19	3
	%46	%24	%14	%5	%9	%2

In addition, the frequency of processes is also illustrated through following graph.

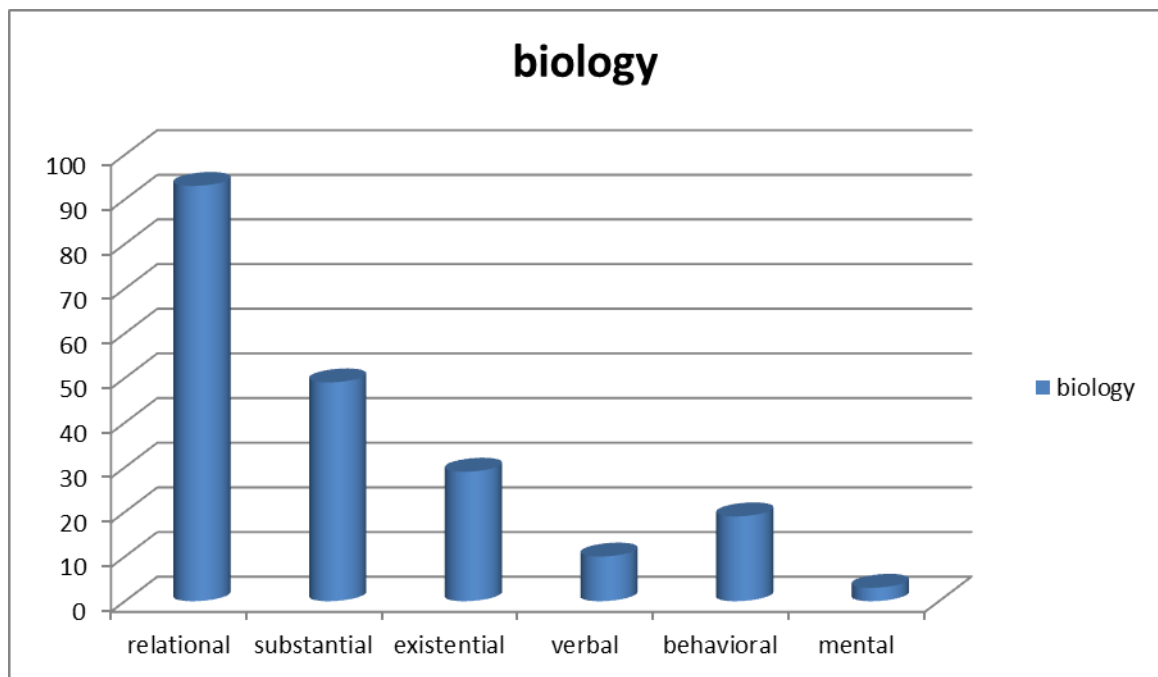


Figure 2: Distribution of processes in biology genre

Result of theology text

The analysis showed that the total of number processes is 242. A sample of analyzing theology text is presented in appendix C. The table below shows the number and type of each process used in this genre.

Table 3: The number and percentage of in the context of theology processes

types of process	relational	substantial	existential	behavioral	verbal	mental
frequency of process	67	83	32	19	27	14
	%28	%35	%13	%10	%8	%6

As the table 3 shows the most frequent process in this genre is substantial. After this process, the relational process is used more often. The following graphs also confirm this point:

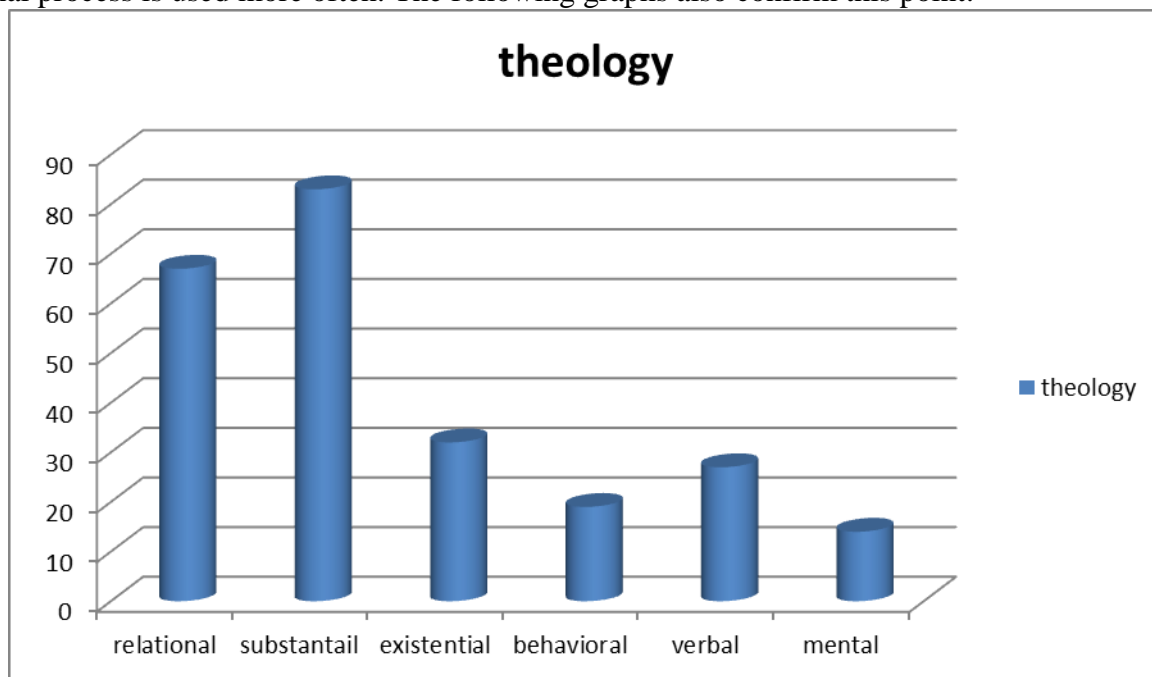


Figure 3: Distribution of processes in theology genre

In what follows, the distribution of processes for three genres and how they are distributed differently are indicated clearly:

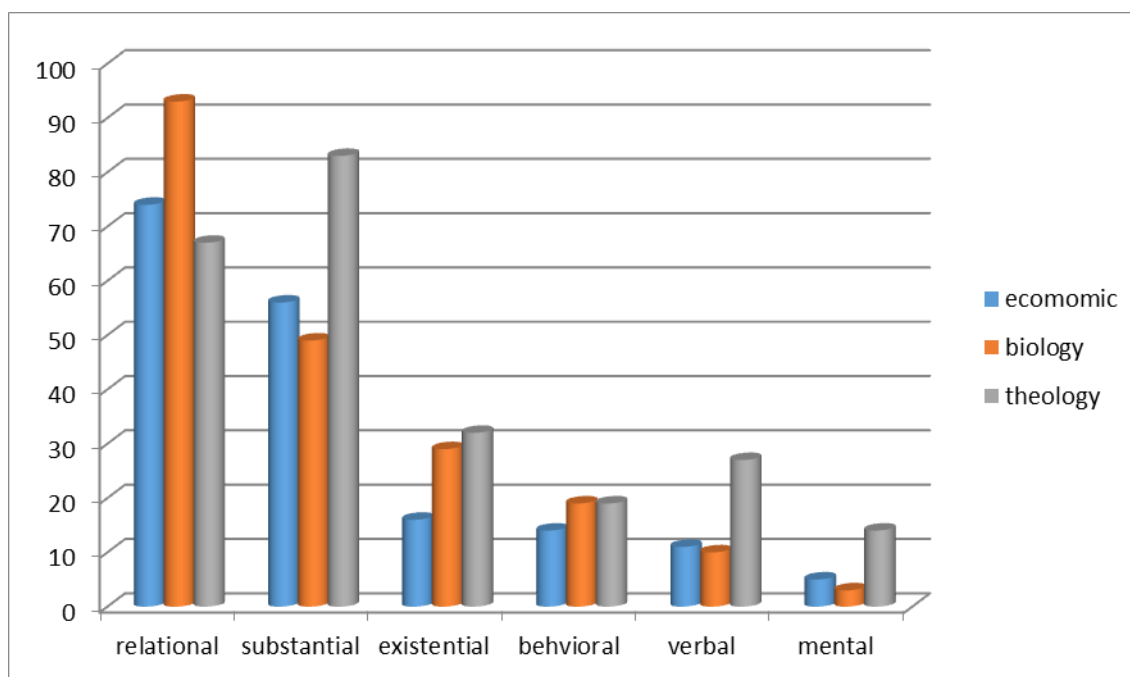


Figure 4: Distribution of processes in three genres

Additionally, the Chi-square results showed that there are significant differences in terms of using processes in three different genres.

Table 4: Chi-square values for the selected text processes

	Value	d f	Sig
Chi- square in theology & economic	5.608	1	.032
Chi-square in economic & theology	6.196	1	.041
Chi-square in economic & biology	4.809	1	.07
P<0.05	Critical Value= 3.84		

As the values showed there is a statistically significant among the distribution of processes in different selected genres. In what follows, we try to justify these differences.

Discussion

Now it's time to answer the question of the research based on the result of the study. As was mention before: How is the frequency of the ideational processes in economy, biology and theology? as was seen in the economic text, a total of 176 processes, and the highest process that has been used in this context, was the relational process the reason is that this process deal with economic phenomena using linking verbs after relational process, the substantial process had the highest frequency, which indicate the important of material issues in this genre. On the other hand the mental process was the least abundant. In other words, this process is rarely used in Economic texts. Thus, the interpretation of this genre with regards to not having mental concepts should not be difficult (a part from technical words). All in all, it can be said that economic text is virtually made up of relational and substantial processes. The abundant of these two processes indicate that in economic, the purposes of material action are accompanied with economic phenomena (Clark, Feldman, & Gentler, 2000).

Relational process was also the most frequent process in biology text, and mental process was the least frequent, and it may be because biology deals with concrete stuff rather than mental entities (Lucy, 2000). Finally, in theology text substantial process was use more often. It seems that theology uses substantial processes to focus on what human being does in the word.

The result also show that economy text had less processes compared with the other three genres and that is because this genre uses less clauses and less verbs as a result.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to find out how different processes of ideational metafunction language are distributed in three different genres. The results of the study showed that each genre regarding its communicative goal has its own distribution of processes. The overall conclusion is that the aim of biology and economy genres is to demonstrate the relationship between the phenomena which are of concrete nature, and the theology genre pays much more attention to man and his behavior. The findings of this study have some valuable implication for textbook

designers and teachers in increasing their awareness of how different genres have used different processes to convey meaning. There are some limitations with this study which should be considered. The first limitation concerns with the number of texts used in the study. Furthermore, finding relevant literature regarding the application of Holliday's theory for Persian text types was difficult.

REFERENCES

- Zarei, S. (1999). *Examining discourse texts in sport in Persian*, MA dissertation, Isfahan, Isfahan University.
- Aghagolzade, F., Kord Zafaranlu, A., & Razavian, H. (2011). Style of story based on verb: functional approach, *Journal of poetry and prose style in Persian*, 2(4), 28-38.
- Beaugrande, R. D., & Dressler, W. (1981). *An Introduction to Text Linguistics*. London: Longman.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1983). *Analysing Genre. Language use in professional settings*. London. Longman.
- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). *Register, Genre and Style*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2009). *Register, Genre and Style*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Borkin, A. (1984). *Problems in form and function*. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Clark, G. L., Feldman, M. P., & Gertler, M. S. (2000). *The Oxford Handbook of Economy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dooley, R. A., & Levinsohn, S. H. (2001) *Analyzing Discourse : A Manual of Basic Concepts*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Erteschik, & Shir Nomi. (2007). *Information Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eugenia, C. S. (2005). *The Syntax- Information Structure*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Fasold, R. W. (1990). *The Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Fillmore, C. J. (1981). *Pragmatics and the description of discourse*. In P. Cole, *Radical pragmatics* (pp. 143-166). New York: Academic Press.
- Geoff, T. (2004). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.
- Givon, T. (1984). *Syntax: A Functional Typological Introduction*. Hague: John.
- Gregory, M. A. (1978). *Language and Situation: Language varieties in their social contexts*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, London: Arnold.
- Halliday, M. (1967). Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English. *Journal of Linguistics* , 3, 37–81.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1971). "Linguistic function and literary style: An inquiry into the language of William Golding's 'The Inheritors' ", In: *Essays in Modern Stylistics*, ed. D. C. Freeman, London, Methuen.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, Ch. (2004), *An Introduction to Functional Grammar, 3rd edition*, London, Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd.
- Halliday, M.A.K., & Hasan, R (1976), *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Lucy, J. (1992). *Language Diversity and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomson, G. (2004). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press.
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. London, Routledge.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English for academic and research settings*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Taverniers, M. (2004). Grammatical metaphors in English. Retrieved from the Web December 10, 2011, from <http://www.users.Ugent.be/~mtaverni/>. Therefore, for him,

APPENDIXESA: SAMPLE OF ANALYZING ECONOMIC TEXT

فعالان صحنه‌ی اقتصاد، تولیدکنندگان، توزیع‌کنندگان و مصرف‌کنندگان هستند. تولیدکنندگان کالای تولیدی خود را در قبال پول می‌فروشند، توزیع‌کنندگان به ازای خدمتی که ارائه می‌دهند پول دریافت می‌کنند و مصرف‌کنندگان با پرداخت پول، چیزی را که به آن نیاز است، می‌خرند. بدون حضور پول هر یک از مجموعه‌های ذکر شده با مشکل روبه‌رو می‌شود. پول با اجرای نقش حساس خود، زمینه‌ی فعالیت‌های اقتصادی خود را و گسترش آن را برای دست‌اندرکاران صحنه‌ی اقتصاد فراهم می‌آورد. شاید این نکته به ذهن شما خطور کند که از طریق معاوضه نیز می‌توان داد و ستد را انجام داد و به این ترتیب، به حضور پول در صحنه‌ی اقتصاد نیازی نیست اما همانطور که پیش از این گفتیم، مبادله‌ی پایاپای با مشکلاتی همراه بود که برای رفع آن‌ها پول بعنوان وسیله‌ی مبادله تبدیل شد. همانطور که در پیکره بالا دیده می‌شود فرایند رابطه‌ی بافعالی مانند شدن، بودن، و هستن، و فرایند مادی با افعالی مانند فروختن، خریدن و دریافت کردن بیشتر از فرایندهای دیگر یافت می‌شوند. در مقابل فقط یک نمونه از فرایند ذهنی که در عبارت به ذهن خطور کردن نمایان می‌شود یک نمونه فرایند کلامی که از طریق فعل گفتن استفاده شده، در این متن وجود دارد.

APPENDIXESB: SAMPLE OF ANALYZING BIOLOGYTEXT

اگر هر نوکلئوتید علامت رمز یک آمینواسید باشد، بازهای A ، G ، C و T علامت‌های رمز چهار نوع آمینو اسید می‌شوند. بنابراین فقط چهار نوع آمینو اسید علامت رمز خواهند داشت. بدیهی است که رمز یک حرفی جوابگوی 20 نوع آمینو اسید نخواهد بود. در صورتی که رمز دو حرفی باشد فقط 16 نوع آمینو اسید علامت رمز خواهند داشت. بنابراین رمز دو حرفی نیز جوابگوی 20 نوع آمینو اسید نخواهد بود. در صورتی که رمز سه حرفی باشد، 64 رمز سه حرفی به دست می‌آید که بیشتر از تعداد رمز لازم برای 20 نوع آمینو اسید می‌باشد. در این صورت یک آمینواسید ممکن است بیش از یک رمز داشته باشد. در واقع رمزهای نوکلئیک اسیدها سه حرفی هستند. متن بالا مملو از فرایند رابطه‌ی می‌باشد که با افعال ربطی بیان شده‌اند. این متن به خوبی نشان می‌دهد که فرایند رابطه‌ی نقش بسیار مهمی در تدوین متن‌های زیست-شناسی دارد.

APPENDIXESC: SAMPLE OF ANALYZING THEOLOGY TEXT

خداوند، در قرآن کریم، خودش را نور آسمان‌ها و زمین معرفی می‌کند. نور بودن خدا به چه معناست؟ نور، آن چیزی است که خودش پیدا و آشکار است و سبب پیدایی و آشکار شدن چیزهای دیگر می‌شود. همین نور معمولی را در نظر بگیریم نور یک چراغ در اتاق، هم خودش روشن است و هم سبب روشن و آشکار شدن اشیای داخل اتاق می‌شود. نور بودن خداوند بسیار برتر و بالاتر است. او نور هستی است. یعنی تمام موجوداتی که در هستی وجود دارند وجود خود را از او می‌گیرند، و به سبب او پیدا و آشکار می‌شوند و وجودشان به وجود او وابسته است. به همین جهت هر چیزی در این جهان، بی‌انگ وجود خالق و آیه‌ای از آیات الهی محسوب می‌شود. امیر مؤمنان علی می‌فرماید: سپاس خدای را که موجودات را آفرید و با این کار خود را برای آفریدگان تجلی کرد.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REFLECTIVE TEACHING AND EFL TEACHERS' EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Hooshang Yazdani

Hooshang Yazdani, Assistant Professor, Arak University

Majid Amerian

Majid Amerian, Assistant Professor, Arak University

Ahmad Hadadi

Ahmad Hadadi, M.A, Arak University

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the relationship between reflective teaching and EFL teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. The participants in this study consist of fifty English as foreign language (EFL) teachers of Dourod city in IRAN. The data for this study was collected via three different instruments, namely questionnaires, observation, and document analysis. First, the participants completed three questionnaires, the first one dealt with some personal information about participants and their teaching interest. The second questionnaire dealt with the statements relating to teachers' cognitions on their teaching process, (Adopted from Levin, B. (2001)). This questionnaire consisted of some statements checking different aspects of their teaching process. The third questionnaire prepared by Hilisbourugh Colledge in 1968 is a questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. This questionnaire deals with the evaluation of different aspects of students' achievement. Following the administration of questionnaires, some random observations were carried out. Data management and analysis were conducted with SPSS software. I also used the teachers' evaluation of students' achievement in the form of standardized tests, submitted by the participants to support the findings from the third questionnaires. The analysis revealed that most of the participants' practices were consistent with their stated cognitions in all aspects. The analysis of the data also revealed that many of the teachers in this study are not aware of the outcomes of their stated cognitions on their teaching process, and consequently, on their evaluation of students' achievement. The results of this study revealed that there is a moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. The results of this study implicated that the local in-service teacher education and training program should aid teachers in identifying and refining their evaluation of students' achievement, as a means of improving their beliefs Towards teaching and consequently evaluation process.

KEYWORDS: Reflective teaching; Teachers' evaluation; Students' achievement;
In-service Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Reflective practice has been widely researched, starting with John Dewey in 1933, who introduced the idea of reflective thought, described as an active consideration of any belief in the light of the prior knowledge and future objectives. Before the 1970s, research in the area of teacher cognition was influenced by Behaviorism. Research in the effectiveness of teaching was measured through the correlation of students' performance. During the 1980s and the years after, researchers investigated a number of different aspects and dimensions of teachers' cognitions. The main focus was on studying the way teachers think about their own works, their mental processes in planning and carrying out their teaching process, the kind of decisions made in the course of teaching, and how these beliefs may change over time.

Teacher cognition researchers have been concerned with identifying teachers' cognitions and their practices with respect to specific subject matters, foreign/second language was also among the subject which has received attention in this respect. Comparison of teachers' teaching practices with their stated cognitions has been among the common concerns as it could be inferred from Borg (2009). Researchers have employed different instruments which are classified into four categories, including self-reports, verbal commentaries, observations, and reflective writing. Applying these instruments, the researchers have produced data from pre-service and in-service teachers in different contexts as suggested by Borg (2006).

In language teacher cognition research, however, not all the curricular areas within the field of foreign/second language learning have received adequate attention. Evaluation of students' achievement is among those instances in language teacher cognition research which have been scarcely regarded in studies on teachers' cognition and practice.

Purpose of the study

This study might be helpful for those pre-service teachers who want to prepare themselves for teaching in an unexpected classroom situation. Wright (2010) states that "research and states of practice provide us [teacher educators] with inspiration for our own teacher education practice" (p.289). Integral to the process of evaluating students' achievement is that of self-evaluation by teachers. This is so because a question such as how mentally prepared were students for a given lesson cannot be divorced from the question of the degree to which the teacher tries to focus students' attention on the learning activities. During the evaluation process, the literature also suggests that teachers should include an assessment of their actions in relation to the learning activities presented and students' participation in these activities. That is why, the individual teachers are also to benefit from the results of this study, if they care about teaching as their job.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Reflective Teaching

This section deals with a brief historical overview of reflective teaching research. In this area of research, different aspects of reflective teaching and teachers' reflection are reviewed.

Background of the reflective teaching

Language teaching research in the 1970s, can originally be seen as some classroom studies, in which there was a "process-product approach toward teaching. That is, the teachers' practical teaching and the learners' achievement were observed to see how much a particular type of teaching would lead to learners' learning". If they were found to be effective, the procedures would be recognized as helpful ones which could be adopted by other teachers (Borg, 2006, pp. 5-6).

The beginning of reflective teaching research, focusing on teachers' thought, however, can be traced back to the publication of the report by National Institute of Education in 1975. "The report, then, urged for considering the relationship between thought and action as far as the teachers are concerned" (quoted in Borg, 2006, p. 7). Therefore, the researchers began to think on and search teachers' thought as one of the factors affecting their teaching behavior.

In the studies that were done in the 1970-80s, however, the subject matter to be taught was neglected. This is what Shulman (1986) refers to as "missing paradigm". Shulman (1986) suggested the term "content knowledge" including subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge which is to be used in a study of teacher cognition" (as cited in Tsui, 2003, p. 50). They can be defined, respectively, as knowledge of the subject matter (i.e. what is to be taught) and the knowledge of how to teach a particular subject matter. That is why teachers' knowledge of the subject matter to be taught became significant in reflective teaching.

Richards (1990, p. 12) believes that second language teacher education is to "provide opportunities to acquire the skills and competencies of effective teachers." This involves an awareness and understanding of the helpful skills and competencies on the part of the teacher educators. It should be noted that to understand teachers and teaching, and consequently those skills and competencies, as Borg (2009) states, we need to understand "the thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs that influence what teachers do" and also language teacher cognition research "has made a significant contribution to our understandings of the process of becoming, being, and developing professionally as a teacher" (p. 163).

The focus of language teacher cognition research, primarily, was on first language and it was "in the mid-1990s" to quote Borg (2009), that "second and foreign language teacher cognition research emerged" (p. 163). Since then, the research on second/foreign language teacher cognition has been mostly on five major themes: cognitions of novice teachers, in-service language teacher cognitions and stated practices, cognitions and practices of in-service teachers, cognitive change in in-service teachers, and comparison of novice and expert language teachers, as inferred from (Borg, 2006). In the present study, the third theme, i.e., cognitions and practices of in-service teachers, has been mainly focused upon. That is, the aim was to compare teachers' stated cognitions with regard to evaluating students' achievement and what they do inside the classroom.

Reflection-in-action and Reflection-on-action

Reflection-in-action involves teachers in critically thinking on the spot, in 'the thick of things' as discussed by (Schon 1983) about what is being taught and the intended outcome, sometimes having to assess, revise and implement new approaches and activities immediately. Schon (1987) stated that reflection occurs before and after action. This he refers to as reflection-on-action. Therefore, before teaching, teachers reflect and plan their teaching procedure and, after doing it, they consider or think about what occurred.

Areas of research in language teacher cognition

This section provides a review of the studies in language teacher cognition with regard to different curricular areas. Although this study focuses on foreign language teaching, this does not mean that language has been the only subject of studies in language teacher cognition research. Many studies can be found in relation to subjects other than language teaching. Conroy (2009) in teaching mathematics, Kenreich (2004) with geography teachers, and Zembylas (2005) with elementary school teacher.

Among the language skills, reading and writing have received some attention and in the language components, grammar can be claimed to have received the most attention in language teacher cognition research and it seems that evaluating students' achievement has been studied rarely. Communicative language teaching also was studied from this perspective. It should be mentioned that the order in which the groups of studies are presented here is based on the amount of attention that has been given to each area.

Grammar in language teacher cognition research

"Grammar has been one of the areas in language teacher cognition research which has received remarkable attention" (Borg, 2006, p. 109). Review of the related literature shows that studies focusing on grammar have concerned with one of the three dimensions discussed in this section. A group of teacher cognition researchers has focused on teachers' *declarative knowledge*. That is, they investigated teachers' knowledge of what they were teaching (rather than how to teach it). Andrews (1999) realized that non-native teachers did better in their knowledge about language than the native ones. It was noted that this knowledge does not suffice, although it is necessary. Berry (1997) has studied students' knowledge of grammar by using a questionnaire to teachers' estimation of their students' knowledge. Many incongruities were observed between what the students knew and what the teachers thought their students would know. These incongruities were not helpful at all, as they would not lead to a satisfaction of the expectations. It was observed that teachers' views about teaching grammar were based on their own learning experiences rather than formal research (as cited in Borg, 2003).

Beliefs about teaching grammar

In another group of studies, the focus has been on teachers' stated beliefs about teaching grammar. In Iran, this focus has been observed in a few of studies, that two of them reviewed here. Farshchi (2009) studied 117 male and female teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar and teaching grammar by using questionnaire. The results show that teachers' gender and the place they taught were of determined factor. In another study by Moini (2009), the beliefs of 130

Iranian teachers by means of a grammar belief questionnaire have been reviewed. The findings showed that teachers' educational backgrounds and experiences were significantly influential. In addition, their workplace seemed to have a determined role in their beliefs, although the gender difference was not influential.

Teachers' grammar teaching representing their cognitions

These kinds of studies mainly considered teachers' stated cognition with respect to some specific behavior. In one of the recent studies, Borg (2005), following "an exploratory-interpretive view of research," (p. 326) considers teachers' grammar teaching and the cognitions behind these by analyzing two EFL teachers from different countries through interviews, observation, and found that for one of them, his knowledge of grammar was thought to be the influential element in the way he treated grammar in class while this was not the case for the other participant. In another study in Turkey in an 18-month period Borg and Philipps through using interviews and observations found that teachers' beliefs are of two kinds: core and peripheral, claiming that although the teachers may peripherally seem to be incongruent with their beliefs, their practices are in line with their core beliefs.

Reading in language teacher cognition research

Some of the studies on language teacher cognition have focused on Reading. Johnson (1992) studied practices and beliefs of six novice teachers and found that "novice teachers with little experience in teaching apply the most functional and recent theoretical stance whereas more experienced ones apply the least recent beliefs". (p. 528). In an Iranian context, Khonamri and Salimi did a study in 2010, which dealt with high school teachers' beliefs on reading strategies and incongruities between the stated beliefs and the stated practices through questionnaires. Although most of the participants declared that it is necessary to explicitly teach the reading strategies, their reported practices did not indicate their beliefs (Khonamri and Salimi, 2010).

Writing in language teacher cognition research

Another area in language teacher cognition research which has been dealt with very peripherally is writing. Tsui (1996) studied the experience of an EFL teacher with respect to process writing for two years and found that teachers' cognitions and practices change by passing of time. He also sheds some light on the way in which "institutional and curricular factors can restrict teacher's capabilities to carry out actions they feel are desirable" (Borg, 2003, p. 103).

Vocabulary in language teacher cognition research

One of the few studies in teacher cognition research focusing on vocabulary instruction is a Ph.D. dissertation by Zhang (2008). In this study, Zhang examined seven Chinese EFL teachers through interview, observation, and stimulated recalls to understand their knowledge of vocabulary instruction, their practical vocabulary teaching, and the relationship between their cognition and practices. The findings showed that teachers were in appropriate level from the aspect of knowledge of vocabulary instruction. The knowledge was found to contain three different broad categories of knowing a word, i.e., form, meaning, and use. The observed practices were reported to be congruent with their cognitions except for their practices on the pragmatic use of the words

and this mismatch, according to Tsui (2003), was considered being probably due to the teachers' own lack of knowledge.

Teachers' evaluation of students' achievement

In this section, I deal with teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. Before I do so, let me discuss evaluating students' achievement, how it is used and what its characteristics are.

Evaluation of students' achievement

Steinberg (1991) supported the idea that evaluation is an integral part of learning development. Through regular evaluation, the teacher is better able to prepare work on students' learning needs in mind and will be able to address individual problems when they arise. Moreover, the process, if carried out effectively, will eventuate into students' progress and the improvement of teaching procedure.

James (1983), while agreeing with the statement that evaluation should be an on-going process, took the idea further, when she stated that teachers should be deliberate in planning for evaluation. In the process of planning for evaluation, they should determine the purpose and decide on the means of measuring the processes and outcomes and collect information via observation and careful monitoring of activities. This statement highlights the fact that observation and monitoring of activities are critical to the process of evaluating students' achievement. If teachers are to follow James-Reid's idea, there is the need to firmly establish, before teaching process, what to observe. For example, as Moyles (2002) states in a classroom they may look at how often individual students interact with them or, while checking for students' understanding of a particular concept or skills, they may look at the number of those who indicated and those who remained neutral. At the end of the teaching session, observations made during the session should be critically evaluated via the use of questions. The act of questioning is an integral aspect of the evaluation process. Highlighted later in this chapter are the kinds of questions used at the evaluation stage of teaching process. Other characteristics of evaluation highlighted by James included the fact that evaluation does not have to be on a large scale and that, overall, evaluation is concerned with the process and product of teaching, that is, teaching procedure and the outcome or results, which is, student learning.

There seems to be a consensus according to Sparapani (2000) that questions regarding students' response to various learning activities are necessary during evaluation process. However, these questions should not only focus on the achievement of cognitive skills but also on the affective. The following are some practical suggestions of how to assess students during the process of evaluating, according to Ferris and Hedgcock (1998), Foxworth (2004). They suggest the need to ask yourself: How well did students respond to the activities you planned? Were they mentally prepared for the learning activity? Were they actively involved in the learning process most of the time? Did all students learn something from the content taught? Then, try to recognize the cause of problems you encountered. Record what worked and what did not work well. Search to identify students with special weaknesses and to whom special attention must be given.

How teachers evaluate students' achievement

There are many questions which are essentials in evaluating students' achievement, such as forms of evaluation, areas to evaluate, and process of evaluation are critical to an understanding of how teachers evaluate students' achievement.

The forms of evaluating students' achievement

Computer software specifically designed for evaluation has revolutionized the form and process used by teachers to evaluate students' achievement. Bryant (1992) elaborating on the use of computer software in the process of evaluation, states that it enables the conversion of check sheets used for evaluating students' progress into electronic form making them more quantifiable. It enables not only the assessment of students and records their progress on the computer, but it also generates reports that can be used for parent reporting sessions and offer greater flexibility in modifying various aspects of a written report. It also enables teachers to reflect on the abilities that they wish to measure and minimize 'paperwork' because it allows the scanning of actual copies of students' work into the computer and have them easily available for reference.

Evaluating teachers' performance during teaching process

Integral to the process of evaluating students is that of self-evaluation by teachers. This is so because a question such as how mentally prepared were students for a given course of instruction cannot be separated from the question of the degree to which the teacher tried to focus students' attention on the learning activities.

The literature does not exclude teachers looking at their actions during evaluation process. Rather, it encourages critical assessment via the use of questions directed at teachers' actions during teaching process. Ferris (1998) support this idea. During the evaluation process, the literature also suggests that teachers should include an assessment of their actions in relation to the learning activities presented and students' participation in these activities. During this process, Foxworth (2004) suggests a number of useful questions. For example, teachers should ask, "Did I guide the students through problems or examples, checking how well they were doing? Did I assess whether or not the students were ready to go on to independent practice? " (p.65). The other areas that would require teachers' attention during evaluation process are teaching methods and objectives.

Reflective Teaching and evaluation of students' achievement

Having identified potentially how teachers' evaluate students' achievement, I try to examine what actions and thoughts indicate their use of reflective teaching in their evaluating students' achievement. As stated in the foregoing discussion by James (1983), the overall aim of the process of evaluation is to enable teachers to prepare work with students learning needs in mind but, more important, if the process is carried out effectively, it will eventuate into students' progress and the improvement of teaching and the teacher as a teacher. The idea of teacher and students' progress is integral to reflective teaching. According to Cole (1997), Coyle (2002), reflective teachers are involved in analyzing, discussing, evaluating, changing, and developing their practice, which will eventuate into student improvement.

There are a number of other characteristics of reflective teaching which demand that teachers, recall, consider and evaluate their teaching experiences as a means of improving future ones, as inferred from (Farrell, 2001; Coyle, 2002). Elder and Paul (1994) pointed out that teachers need to think critically. This involves the willingness to question, take risks in learning, try out new strategies and ideas, seek alternatives, take control of learning, use higher order thinking skills and be able to reflect upon their own learning processes. According to Cunningham (2001), they discuss and analyze with others problems they encounter in their classroom, to aid their analysis of situations, which can eventuate into improved future classroom encounters. Reiman (1999) suggests that they identify personal meaning and or significance of a classroom or school situation, confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and, indeed, their competence. In addition, they should include self-examination. This involves assessing beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that lead to self-understanding and self-improvement which can eventuate into being a better teacher-learner, thus facilitating necessary changes both in self, others and teaching context, as inferred from (Coyle, 2002; Posner, 1989; Hatton & Smith 1995). Calderhead (1992) stated that reflective teachers also analyze and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what they have learnt to inform decision-making, planning and future action, and this can eventuate into school improvement.

RESEARCH ASUMPTIONS

Based on the related literature, it can be assumed that reflective teaching influences their practices as it could be also induced from Foxworth (2004). That is, their cognitions are among the factors in taking responsibility for their actions as mentioned by Farrel (2001). Since, reflective teaching and its relationship with evaluating students' achievement have not been the focus of the recent studies, to a considerable extent, the nature of such a relationship will be investigated in this study.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study tries to answer the following question.

Is there any relationship between reflective teaching and EFL teachers' evaluation of students' achievement?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The research hypothesis of this study is as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

participants

In order to answer the research question for this study, and understanding the action of reflective teachers, fifty participants who were teachers, teaching in high schools were selected. The participants include both male and female teachers having different teaching experience.

Regarding the sampling procedure in this study, it should be mentioned that it took place purposefully. To do this, different criteria were considered. One of these criteria was the awareness of teachers with the concept of reflective teaching and what reflective teachers do in their classes. If they had enough knowledge about the concept of reflective teaching, they would be selected as a participant in this study and if they had not, they would be acquainted with it. Based on that, the researcher talked to sixty five teachers among whom fifty agreed to participate in this study. The purpose and the data collection procedure of the study were clarified, besides the things they were asked to perform.

Instrumentations

The data for this study was collected through three different sources, as follows:

Questionnaires

The main sources of data collection in this study were three questionnaires. They contain closed and ranked questions and also open-ended questions. In order to collect some biographical information and become familiar with participants' characteristics, their teaching experiences and also their teaching interest, I prepared and distributed the first questionnaire. The second questionnaire deals with some questions relating to teachers' cognitions on their teaching process. This questionnaire consisted of some questions that ask respondents (teachers) if they have checked different aspects of their teaching procedure or not. In this questionnaire, participants are required to see if they have checked some basic elements in their teaching process or not. Those elements are categories such as: Purpose for learning, attention, learner-centered focus, thinking skills, assessment, anticipation of problems and finally evaluation. In the second questionnaire, the teachers are asked to answer the questions about their reflection which deals with evaluating students' achievement. In the third questionnaire, the participants were required to complete three sections. In the first section, respondents were asked to answer to questions that deal with the number of students on first day roster and also number of students who failed to complete the course due to the quality of the work or lack of attendance. In section two, the respondents were asked to check the general education core curriculum statements (minimum of three) that they chose as applicable to this course. Finally, participants must evaluate students' performance as measured against your selected general education and cluster outcomes. In order to reduce the difficulty that some of the respondents had in translating the questionnaires, I provided respondents with Persian equivalent of questionnaires which this also improves validity of the results of this study. The questionnaires of this study have been used in different articles and this could illuminate that they are reliable and valid enough to be adopted for this study, I also calculated their reliability value for them which this also could validate the results of the study. My supervisor and advisor also affirmed this issue. Members of the committee and subcommittee must be thanked to allow me to use their questionnaires.

Observations

As the second source of data, the researcher had some class observations which were all recorded during fall semester. For this reason, at first, I prepared an observation sheet which controlled different aspects of the second questionnaire, and then, compared what I observed in their teaching practices with their stated cognitions on second questionnaire. The researcher made these observations randomly for ten of the participants in order to confirm or reject the data obtained from the second questionnaire answered by participants.

Documentary analysis

The fact that meaning and perception are evident in documents, as inferred from Hodder (2000) affirms the use of documentary analysis. Hence, the analysis of a document could reveal many of the author's perspectives. One way to elicit people's perceptions is to examine their writings. For this study, participants' stated cognitions to questionnaire for faculty evaluation of students' performance and their evaluation of students' achievement in the form of final English language tests are compared and analyzed.

Data Analysis

This section deals with the data analysis procedures that have been followed for this study. As it was mentioned earlier, for analyzing the data, the software, **SPSS 21**, has been used.

Descriptive and statistical analysis

To analyze the data in this study and to answer the research question, descriptive statistics in the form of graphs for describing participants' characteristics and also their answers to different questions in questionnaires was used. In inferential section, to determine the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used, and also to specify whether there is a relationship between the variables in this study Pearson Correlation was used.

In this study, for analyzing the data, at first, descriptive statistics was used to reveal the participants' characteristics such as: age, gender, teaching experience and so on, next description of respondents' responses to different questions in questionnaires was carried out, then, respondents' stated responses to questionnaires were compared with observations. Finally, based on the hypothesis, to specify the accuracy of the data obtained in previous section, related statistical tests were used by using spss21 software. In order to receive a clear picture or a detailed description of some of the participants' responses who comment to some of the questions in questionnaires, the researcher also employed both a within case and a cross case analysis of the respondents' comments to some of the questions in the questionnaires.

Within-case analysis

The within-case analysis involved a detailed description of each participant's stated response to different questions in questionnaires. The purpose as stated by Creswell (1998), was to allow me to become intimately familiar with each participant's response to different questions, which in turn allowed me to identify the unique patterns in each of their views and according to Eisenhardt (1989), performing this process accelerated the cross-case comparison. The fact that there was no set standard formats to carrying out within-case analysis or content analysis, as stated by

Eisenhardt (1989), gave me the freedom to create my own with the help of the writing of Powell and Renner (2003).

Cross-case analysis

A cross-case analysis is valuable to compare the cases systematically to see factors that are present in all the responses, those that are present in some responses and not others, and those that are entirely absent. Day (1999) is of the opinion that researchers give little thought or effort to the involvement or learning of teachers who are their subjects. A cross-case analysis involves examining themes or categories across cases, to find those that were common to all cases. I started this process with the development of categories based on my examination of the responses from the within-case analysis. In cross-case analysis process, I first categorized the answers given to the questionnaires, through a process of moving between these responses, I looked for similarities and differences, as suggested by (Powell & Renner, 2003). I then through a process of further analysis, draw conclusions about differences and similarities in respondents' views, according to the identified category.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, at first, participants' responses to self-reflection questionnaire and questionnaire for faculty evaluation of students' performance will be presented. Next the observations have been made to determine the congruity between responses and their practices with respect to what they have checked in self-reflection questionnaire. Then, teachers' evaluation of students' achievement in the form of final tests have been provided to possibly confirm the findings obtained from the questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. Participants' real names for the ethical matters and with the same aim, presenting some exact personal data is avoided according to Borg (2009) and Duff (2008). Participants' responses to self reflection questionnaire have been classified in Table 1. In this table FY stands for frequency of participants who check the question in their teaching. FN stands for frequency of participants who did not check the question in their teaching. PY stands for percentage of participants who check the question and PN stands for percentage of participants who did not check the question in their teaching process.

Table 1: Participants' stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire

Self-reflection questionnaire	F FY	F FN	PPY	PPN
Did you share your objectives with the students you were teaching? If not? Why not?	42	8	84%	16%
Why are objectives important?	32	18	64%	36%
Did you tell the students why they were learning the information in your lesson?	24	26	48%	52%
If not, did you ask the students to share what they would get out of learning the information?	15	35	30%	70%
If neither you nor the students set a purpose for learning, why not?	9	41	18%	82%
Why is setting a purpose for learning important?	27	23	54%	46%
Did you capture their attention?	41	9	82%	18%
Did you keep their attention?	26	24	52%	48%
If not, what would you do differently?	7	43	14%	86%
Was the lesson appropriate for most of the students at the age level?	42	8	84%	16%
If not, was it too easy or too hard?	13	37	26%	74%
Was the lesson related to the students' interest? How do you know?	30	20	60%	40%
Did you build on the students' knowledge?	35	15	70%	30%
If yes, how do you know? If not, why not?	11	39	22%	78%
Why should you build on prior knowledge?	19	31	38%	62%
Did you discuss meta-cognition with the students? If not, why not?	14	36	28%	72%
Why should the students discuss meta-cognition?	8	42	16%	84%
Did you assess student learning and performance? If not, why not?	28	22	56%	44%
If yes, was your assessment in line with your objectives?	34	16	68%	32%
Was your assessment authentic? If yes, how do you know?	17	33	34%	66%
Did the students achieve your objectives?	27	23	54%	46%
Which ones did they achieve?	14	36	28%	72%
Which ones do you not know whether they achieved?	10	40	20%	80%
Did you teach or assess for transfer? If not, why not?	13	37	26%	74%
Why is transfer important?	10	40	20%	80%
Did you have enough time? did you have plans for what to do with the extra time?	40	10	80%	20%
Were there any problems that you had anticipated? Describe what happened.	32	18	64%	36%
Were there any problems that you had not anticipated? Describe what happened.	19	31	38%	62%
What worked best about your lesson?	33	17	66%	34%

Table 2 reveals that to what extent there is congruity between participants' stated cognitions and their observed practice.

Table 2: Teachers' stated cognitions with respect to observed practice

Observations	Frequency of matched	Frequency of not matched	Percentage of matched	Percentage of not matched
Observation 1	23	8	74%	26%
Observation 2	28	3	90%	10%
Observation 3	30	1	97%	3%
Observation 4	27	4	87%	13%
Observation 5	27	4	87%	13%
Observation 6	28	3	90%	10%
Observation 7	23	8	74%	26%
Observation 8	29	2	94%	6%
Observation 9	30	1	97%	3%
Observation 10	23	8	74%	26%

Table 3: Pearson correlation formulae for hypothesis testing

Correlation value	Results	Error value	Significant value
0.555	correlated	0.05	0.000

Discussion

To provide a discussion of the findings of the study, in this section the research question is restated again, and the answer to this question will be developed as follows: The research question was this: *Is there relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement?*

According to Borg (2009), it is not a flaw if teachers' stated cognitions are not in line with their practices. Important point is to explore the possible reasons of such incongruities. I checked the categories which they answered in questionnaires and made a comparison between what I observed in their teaching practices which were registered in the observation sheets. The results showed that there is a difference between respondents' stated cognitions and their practices and it could be inferred from table 1&2. It seems that participants' cognitions to self reflection questionnaire, mostly match with what they perform in their classes, although in some cases some incongruity observed in what they have checked in self reflection questionnaire and their practices.

Questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance was used to reveal participants' cognitions with respect to evaluating students' achievement. To see to what extent

they are congruent with their stated cognitions, participants' final tests of students' performance were used to determine to what extent they are right with respect to their cognitions. Analyzing participants' final tests revealed that participants are in correspondent with their stated cognitions in most of the cases but some incongruities were also recognized. In order to analyze some of the participants' comments on some questions in questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance, within case and cross case analysis of responses were carried out. Analysis of participants' responses revealed the similarities and differences among participants' responses with respect to different categories of questionnaire for faculty evaluation of student performance. It also brought about some of the participants' cognitions on the surface which may not be derived from their responses to questionnaires. Based on what literature revealed with regard to reflective teaching and evaluating student's achievement, especially as Foxworth (2004) suggests that some crucial questions such as: 'Did I guide the students through problems or examples, checking how well they were doing?' 'Did I assess whether or not the students were ready to go on to independent practice?' It seems that there is a kind of relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of student achievement. To determine the normality of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used, and also to specify whether there is a relationship between the variables in this study Pearson Correlation was used. Table 3 revealed that since the significance value for two variables which are teachers' cognitions and their evaluation of students' achievement is likely bigger than the value of (.5) ($\text{sig} > 0.05$), consequently, teachers' cognitions and their evaluation of students' achievement could be regarded as normal variables.

Table 3 depicted that correlation value was equal to 0.555, which signifies the existence of the moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement. Consequently, it seems that researcher's hypothesis was confirmed. Taking into consideration what has been stated with respect to reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of students' achievement, it seems that there is a moderate relationship between reflective teaching and teachers' evaluation of student achievement and this relationship could modify teachers' evaluation of student achievement if they "reflected on their actions before and after their actions" as suggested by Schon (1987). In order to depict this relationship some graphs were provided as follows

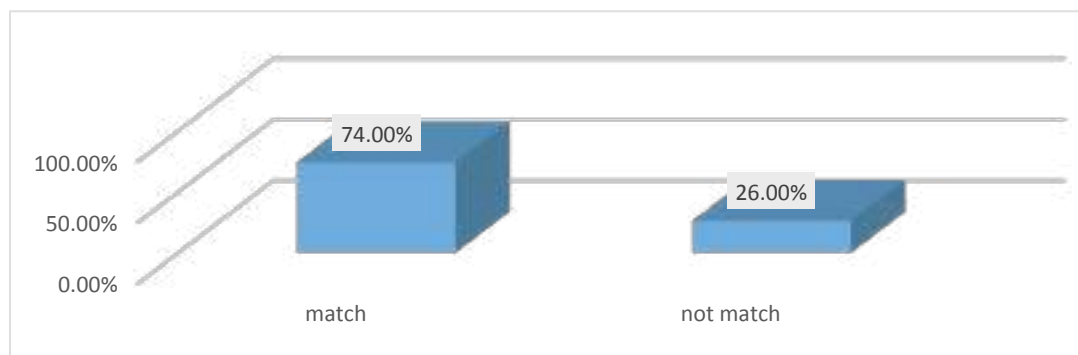


Fig 1: Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 1

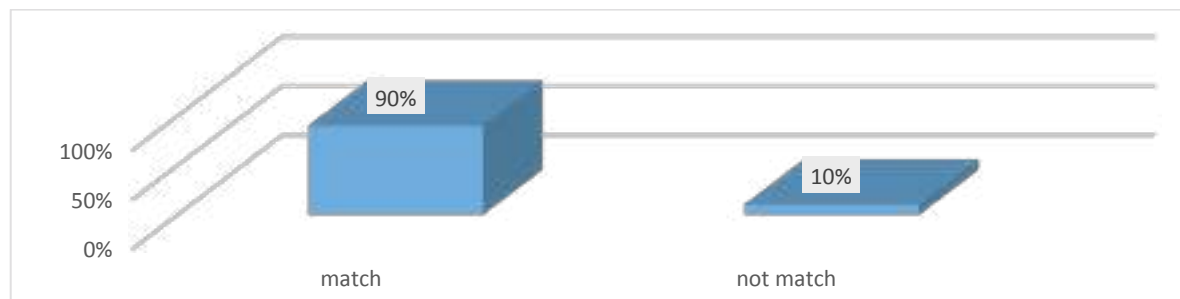


Fig 2: Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 2

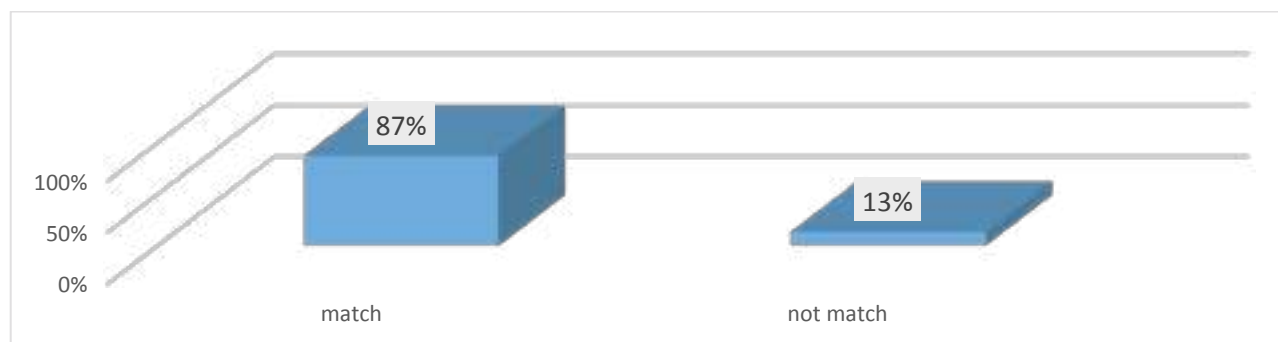


Fig 3: Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 3 & 4

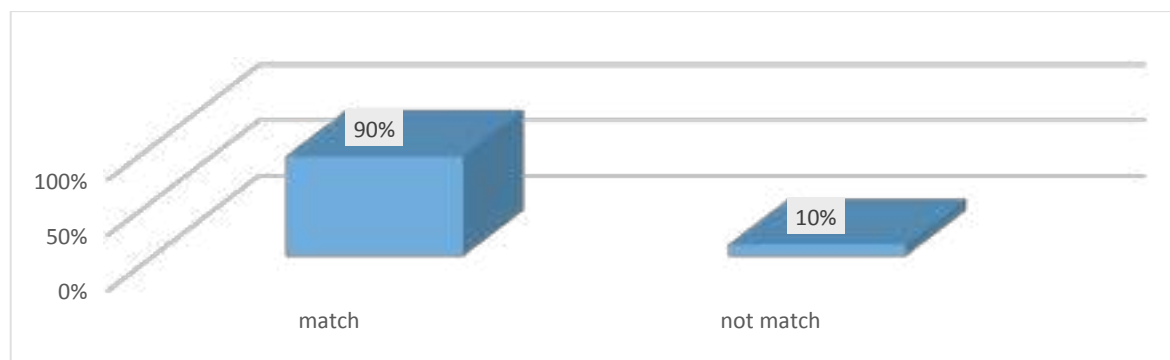


Fig 4: Percentage of correspondence between stated responses to self-reflection questionnaire and observed practice for participant 5

CONCLUSION

An overview of the results of the study suggests that there exists a moderate relationship between the participants' beliefs, emotions or mood, practical knowledge, teaching context and evaluation of students' achievement. However, the results of the study also strongly suggests that reflection was pertinent to the relationship. It helped participants in coping with, understanding the characteristics of the relationship, and using their understanding to make appropriate decisions and adjustments to teaching and learning. Adjustments were usually conducive to learning and sensitive to context and situation.

Based on the results of the study, reflection also seems to be a tool to safeguard feelings or emotions, preserve self, and job. Above all, it helped respondents to cope with perceived contextual challenges. The results of the study probably point to the fact that schools' contexts exerted influence. Therefore, I am of the opinion that they need to be monitored to reduce the negative effect they may have on teachers and, by extension, on evaluation of students' achievement. What is required in the ever changing, demanding, and sometimes-difficult schools' contexts are teachers who employ a model of teaching which incorporates an understanding of their particular contexts, personal beliefs, practical knowledge and particular content knowledge. This model possibly enables them to survive the many contextual constraints and irritations and allow them to draw on knowledge to solve problems that are unique to their particular teaching

situation. This model likely enables creative and innovative approaches to classroom and school situations and problems, which lead to improved learning opportunities for students. Reflective teaching provides an excellent opportunity to achieve these. So, if after I reflected on a challenge to my beliefs about an aspect of teaching, given the constancy of the conceptual frameworks of the areas being considered, I could decide to end a teaching process with a video instead of the written work, as I had previously intended. Alternatively, I may decide to use one method or activity over another quite successfully, as long as my decisions and subsequent actions are for a purpose, would benefit students, would aid in transmitting information and could be evaluated to ascertain what and how much the students learnt.

From this study, I found the following to be pertinent elements of the teaching and learning process: students' cognitive and affective needs, administratively mandated policy, teachers' belief, practical knowledge (knowing what works), and the use of questions for reflection on action and reflection in action. These were pertinent because the respondents frequently engaged with these elements. Based on these, a useful conceptual framework for the local teacher education and training program should aim to develop teachers who are sensitive not only to the cognitive, but also to the affective needs of students, and be able to adapt administratively mandated policy to their unique context. It also may develop teachers who are able to critically examine their beliefs and practical knowledge, as a means of improving their practices.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, S. (1999). 'All these like little name things': A comparative study of language Teachers' explicit knowledge of grammar and grammatical terminology. *Language Awareness*, 8(3/4), 143-15
- Berry, R. (1997). *Teachers' awareness of learners knowledge*: The case of meta-linguistic terminology. *Language Awareness*, 6.2-3, 136-146.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. London: Continuum.
- Borg, S. (2009). Language teacher cognition. In A. Burns & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education* (pp. 163- 171). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Calderhead, J. (1992). The Role of reflection in Learning to Teach In Valli Linda (1992). *Reflective Teacher Education : Cases and Critiques USA*: State University of New York.
- Cole , A. L. (1997). *Impediments to Reflective practice towards a new agenda for research on teaching*. In Teachers and Teaching; theory and practice 3.1
- Conroy, J. A. (2009). *Walking the walk, talking the talk: Pre-service teacher conceptions about their own mathematics teaching*. Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of California.
- Coyle, D. (2002). *The Case for Reflective Model of Teacher Education in Fundamental Principles*. Module Ed.D School of Education University of Nottingham.
- Creswell, J. H. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design choosing among five traditions*. SAGE Publishing International, USA London, India.
- Cunningham, F. M. (2001). *Reflective teaching Practice in Adult ESL in Eric Digest USA*: Washington DC
- Day, C. (1999). *Researching teaching through reflective practice: Methodologies and practices for Understanding Pedagogy* 215 –232 London: Falmer press.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relations of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: D.C. Heath.
- Duff, P. A. (2008). *Case study research in applied linguistics*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Farshchi, S. (2009). *Exploring the teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar in Iran's state high schools and private institutes*. Paper presented at the TELL SI 7, Yazd University.
- Ferris, D., & Hedgcock, J. S. (1998) *Teaching ESL Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice*. Mahwah, NJ.
- Foxworth, A. (2004). *Have you thought about this?* RMC Research Corporation File Updated August 19, 2004
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14 (4), 352-550.
- Elder, L., & Paul, R. (1994). Critical Thinking: Why we must transform our teaching. *Journal of Developmental Education*
- Hatton , N., & Smith, D. (1995). Facilitating reflection; issues and research, *In Forum of Education Volume*, 50 (1).

- Hodder, I. (2000). The interpretation of documents material culture in Norman, K. D., & Yvonna, S. L. The landscape of qualitative research theories and Issues Sage USA.
- James, R. O. (1983). Teaching its management and function, Kingston Publishers Limited, Kingston Jamaica
- Johnson, K. (2003). *Designing language teaching tasks*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Johnson, K. E. (1992). Learning to teach: Instructional actions and decisions of pre-service ESL teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(3), 507-535.
- Kenrich, T. W. (2004). Beliefs, classroom practices, and professional development activities of teacher consultants. *Journal of Geography*, 103(4), 153-160.
- Khonamri, F., & Salimi, M. (2010). The Interplay between EFL high school teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices regarding reading strategies. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and language)*, 4(1), 96-107.
- Moini, M. R. (2009). The impact of EFL teachers' cognition on teaching foreign language Grammar. *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji*, 49 (special issue), 141-164.
- Moyles, J. (2002). *Observation in Coleman Marianne and Briggs*. Ann, R. J., *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. Paul Chapman Publishing London;Sag.
- Posner, G. J. (1989). *Field Experience methods of Reflective Teaching*. New York: Longman Publishing group.
- Powell, T. E., & Renner, M. (2003). *Analyzing qualitative data*, University of Wisconsin-Extension USA.
- Reiman, A. J. (1999). Guided reflective Practice: *An overview of writings about teaching*.
- Richards, J. C. (1990). The dilemma of teacher education in second language teaching. In J.C Richards & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Second language teacher education* (pp. 3-15). New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Schön, D.A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals thinking action*. New York: Basic Book.
- Schon, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- York-Barr, J., Sommers, W. A., Ghore, G. S., & Montie, J. (2001). *Reflective practice to improve schools: An action guide for educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). *Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22
- Sparapani, E. F. (2000). The Effect of Teaching for Higher-Level Thinking: *An Analysis of Teacher Reactions In Education* 121.1: 80
- Steinberg, E. R. (1991). *Teaching Computers to Teach* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Hillsdale, NJ USA.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (1996). Learning how to teach ESL writing. In D. Freeman & J.C. Richards (Eds.), *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 97-119). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tsui, A. B. M. (2003). *Understanding expertise in teaching: Case studies of ESL teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wright, T. (2010). Second language teacher education: Review of research on practice. *Language Teaching*, 43(3), 259-296.

Zembylas, M. (2005). Beyond teacher cognition and teacher beliefs: The value of the ethnography of emotions in teaching. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 18(4), 465-487.

Zhang, W. (2008). *In search of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' knowledge of vocabulary instruction*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, Georgia State University.

THE IMPACT OF BILINGUALISM ON LEARNING ENGLISH VOCABULARIES AMONG FEMALE BILINGUAL PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

Yaghoub Sobhani

Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, Science and Research Branch
Jaccob004@yahoo.com

Elkhas Vaysi

Assistant professor of Payame e Noor university, Iran
Elkas@yahoo.com

Farideh Zergani

Shohada e Hovaizeh University Of Technology, SUSANGERD , Khuzestan, Iran
zerganifarideh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In recent century, bilingualism notion as a research goal has been studied and analyzed in different areas such as linguistics, psychology, learners education, and sociology (Bhatia & Ritchie 2004). Because bilingualism is an interesting and old topic in education and language learning, the aim of this study presents the results of the effects bilingualism on learning new English vocabularies on female Iranian pre-school children, who can speak Farsi and Arabic (bilinguals). This research attempted to find that whether bilingual female children would learn new vocabularies better than monolingual ones or not. In order to answer this question the study was conducted in Susangerd in Iran, the city with more than 70% bilingual. All of participants of this study were Iranian female primary school learners between 9- 10 years. These participants were selected randomly from four English institutes. In order to find homogenous participants the placement test used, after that participants divided in two groups (bilingual and monolingual) then we used pre test, treatment and post test. The data were collected, and analyzed by use of t-test. Finally, The findings of the study show that bilingualism can play high role in learning and understanding confusion English vocabularies among female primary school learners. Moreover, knowing the meaning of English vocabularies in two languages can facilitate English vocabularies learning.

KEYWORDS: bilingualism, monolingual, vocabulary, primary school, female learners.

INTRODUCTION

Contrasting bilingual with monolingual has attracted by too many studies over the past 100 years. These research tried to answer that whether bi or multilingual kids work as well as monolinguals in each field of their languages acquisition, or not.

In this study the main reason behind selecting the effect of bilingualism was my experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). These experiences lead me to great interest in the process of language acquisition, exclusively the acquisition of two or third languages simultaneously. So the aim of this study is exploring the effect of being bilingual on female primary-school kids when they want to learn new English vocabularies in institute or language schools. As you know many kids around the world learn and use more than one language, and they do this in different ways. Some kids learn two languages from birth and others start to learn a second language when they go to daycare or preschool. In this study, I focus on female bilingual children who know two languages from birth, or shortly after birth. In other words, I focus on Iranian children who have two first languages (Arabic-Farsi) and they could speak both languages very well.

According to some linguistics learning two languages from birth occurs when family speak different languages and decide to use their different languages to raise their child. In other families, the parents may speak the same language, but it is different from the language used in the community at large, for example, Arabic- or Turkish-speaking parents in the Iran. These parents might decide to use only Arabic or only Turkish at home while the child is exposed to Farsi or English with most children in language school they encounter outside the home. The study aim to find that when children continue to develop their abilities in two languages throughout their primary school years, can they gain and understand a new English words faster than monolingual or not. Some scientists believe that Learners/ Individuals who are bilingual switch between two different language systems. Their brains are very active and flexible (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000). Some other claim bilingual kids benefit academically in many ways. Because they are able to switch between languages, they develop more flexible approaches to thinking through problems. Their ability to read and think in two different languages promotes higher levels of abstract thought, which is critically important in learning (Diaz, 1985).

More than half of the world's population is bilingual and two thirds of the world's children grow up in a bilingual environment (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004). Mackey (2000) claims that bilingualism is the ability to produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language.

Definitions of the main key expressions

Arabic language

Arabic is the official language in many countries including Egypt, Iraq, Libya, K.S.A and north of Africa. Arabic is also the language of Koran. So Muslim of all nationalities such as Iranian and Arab are familiar with it. There are many Arabic dialects, but there is only one version that is taught in schools and used by the media (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia-2009).

Persian Language

Persian Language, also known Farsi, is the most widely spoken member Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranian languages, a subfamily of the Indo-European languages. It is the language of Iran (formerly Persia) and is also widely spoken in Afghanistan and, in an archaic form, in Tajikistan and the Pamirs mountain region. Modern Persia had developed by the 9th century. Persian has absorbed a vast Arabic vocabulary (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia-2009).

Bilingualism

Up to now, there is no agreed definition of bilingualism among scientists and researchers. Because they believe that bilingualism is a complex psychological and socio-cultural linguistic behavior and has multi-dimensional features. Mackey (2000) claims that bilingualism is the ability to produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language. Bloomfield (1933) believed bilinguals could be defined as individuals who have native like control of two languages. Briefly, bilingualism is the ability to use two languages. Although, defining bilingualism is complex since people with different bilingual features could be classified as bilingual.

A lot of bilinguals had learned two languages at the same time, most of time in early childhood and as a result of the parents or friends bilingualism. These individuals are called simultaneous bilinguals and bilingual who had learned a language after than the other for example as the result of living in a foreign country or academically learning a second language at a school or university are usually called consecutive bilinguals. Normally, simultaneous bilinguals have a more native like accent in two languages, although older learners may have useful knowledge about language, that could help them in the language learning. Bilingualism can be observed everywhere in the world. It is said that “more than half of the world’s population is bilingual and two thirds of the world’s children grow up in a bilingual environment (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004).

The Benefits of Being Bilingual on kids

Bing bilingual helping kids in many cases of interaction, such as interaction with family, community and culture. Bilingual kids are also able to make new friends and create great relationships in their second language .Latest research had also found that children who raised in bilingual condition shown better self control and confidence which is an important factor of school success. Some bilingual teachers say bilingual kids are more advanced than monolingual ones in solving problems requiring the inhibition of misleading information.

In the past, some families thought learning more than one language could be bad for a kids, but nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, there are great advantages to knowing more than one language. For example, some of linguists claim that knowing a another language clearly benefits a kid's cognitive development. In recent century, the findings of studies addressed that bilingual kids had function as:

learning other languages (Jessner, 2008)

thinking about language(Castro et al,2011)

focusing, remembering, and making decisions (Bialystok, 2001)

understanding math concepts and solving word problems more easily (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000)

developing strong thinking skills (Kessler & Quinn, 1980)

using logic (Bialystok, 2001)

Moreover, research shows that bilingualism may delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Bialystok (2009) notes that superiority of bilingualism can be found in tasks and processes demanding a high level of selective attention as well as inhibitory control.

King and Mackey (2009) have indicated potential benefits of bilingualism. One of the most important benefits of bilingualism was taken for granted, bilingual kids know multiple languages, which is important for employment, travel, speaking with members of one's extended family, maintaining a connection to family culture and history, and making new friends from different backgrounds.

Bilingualism and vocabulary

Generally, vocabulary knowledge, based to unique systems of concepts or notions that are acquired in special condition refers to their varying levels of usage and complexity. Although grammar is the essential component of English language, vocabulary is beyond any doubt regarded the most indispensable elements of any language. Vermeer (2001) notes that, vocabularies are the primary carriers of meaning.

Recent research confirms that bilinguals generally control a smaller vocabulary in each language than monolinguals (Bialystok, 2009). Similarly, some evidence suggesting that bilingualism constrains children's vocabulary development. Bilinguals tend to attain lower scores on receptive vocabulary tests. In a study in which 40 children were tested in the Peabody Vocabulary Test, Bialystok & Feng (2009) further confirmed the above-mentioned results.

Feng (2009) further confirmed the above-mentioned results. The participants were divided into two groups, one bilingual group and one monolingual group, and later compared in terms of vocabulary size. The same pattern of results emerged in this study. Bilinguals share an overall smaller average vocabulary in each language than their monolingual peers (Bialystok, 2009).

However, modern researchers have put these results into question. As opposed to Pearson (1993) argue that bilingual children share the same variety of vocabulary sizes as monolingual children. Pearson (1993) argued that both languages must be taken into account when evaluating the development of vocabulary in bilingual children. They take on a holistic approach to the study of bilingualism and argue that it is inappropriate to evaluate bilingual individuals' linguistic skills based on single-language performances, as a bilingual speaker by no means equals two monolingual speakers in one (Pearson 1993).

Rather than comparing monolingual and bilingual children in terms of vocabulary in each language, Pearson (1993) compared monolingual and bilingual children in both total vocabulary and total conceptual vocabulary and found that the overall bilingual vocabulary was comparable to the monolingual one. Although each individual language included fewer words than what is found in the vocabulary of monolingual children, monolinguals did not outperform bilinguals in terms of total vocabulary size (Pearson 1993).

Taking both total vocabulary and total conceptual vocabulary into account, their research demonstrates that bilingual vocabulary development reflects the monolingual rate of development in children between 8 and 30 months of age (Pearson 1993). It is therefore unfair to judge bilingual children's language abilities based on performance in only one of the two languages. Although bilingual children acquire translation equivalents for most words, the exposure to some words is "circumstance-specific" which makes translation equivalents superfluous.

EFL Background in Iran

Like other Asian countries, Iran regarded as an EFL country. The Iranian communicate with each other by using Persian (an official language).

Sociologists believe that, economic and business factors played important roles in spreading English in Iran. Because Iran plays a leading role in supporting of the world economy through its contribution to international organizations.

Generally, during the last five decades Iran economy has grown rapidly. The economic power of Iran mostly dependent on the oil products. The raised of the economy of Iran after world war II has achieved worldwide attention and interest among other nations. So, Iran became a great economic market for P.R.C, European countries and Japan as well. This considerable factor effect the English learning at schools and language institutes. Moreover, as an active member of the UN, Iran had deep political relationships with too many native and nonnative countries of English as well. For these activities and economic movements, for most of Iranian English language used as universal communicative tool and most of Iranian family send their kids to English schools to learn it before they go school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research into bilingualism effect on individuals had been addressed in research literature and worldwide. Studies on the effects of bilingualism on cognitive issues began with the using of IQ tests and most of those studies shown negative effects of bilingualism on children's intellectual development. Adler (2001) notes that an interest in the way bilingual students learn vocabularies and solve mathematical problems has drawn on variety of theoretical frame works. Romanie (1995) claimed most of the studies done before the 1960s indicated that monolingual kids were better than bilingual ones in different skills related to verbal and non-verbal abilities. Kaushanskaya and Marian (2009) suggest that monolinguals' ability to learn new words depends on whether they learn new words silently or out loud. Conversely, bilinguals' performance does not depend on any particular learning strategy, and they can acquire new words efficiently under any learning conditions. Paradis (2009) said, bilingual kids produced more right-headed compounds than monolinguals.

In a 2001 Bialystok showed that bilinguals did indeed show enhanced executive control, a quality that has been linked, among other things, to better academic performance. Grosjean(2008) said,

bilingual person is an integrated/ unique language user, and must not be thought of as a double_ monolingual.

THE QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

The present study aims to answer the following research question:

Research Questions:

Are there any benefits in bilingualism on learning new English vocabularies among female Iranian primary school students?

Hypotheses:

H1. Bilingual female students (Farsi-Arabic) learn English vocabularies better than monolinguals?

H0 .There is no difference between bilingual and monolingual female students in learning new English vocabulary.

METHODOLOGY

The present part of this research presents the main methodological principles that build framework of study. This research was conducted in a small city in khouzestan province in southeast of Iran.

Participants

The participants of current study in two groups were homogenous in terms of context (same city) age (9–10 years old), nationality (they were all Iranian), sex (they were all female), and level of instruction (beginners). The participants were selected randomly from state and private schools (Safir, Rahele, Shokoh, Somayie), and then divided into two groups, based on their language background.

14 Female studentsPersian monolingual

14 Female students Persia_ Arabic bilingual

Instruments

In this study, in order to find and reach the main goals of research, two forms of tests were applied during the research. The following instruments were used:

Placement Test for Kids: Contains 35 multiple choice tests .Cited from Dynamic Teaching Corporation 2014 .

Elementary Vocabulary book (Thomas, 1990). Elementary Vocabulary book, is for students who are doing a starter course in English and want to check and improve their basic vocabulary. The book presents fundamental vocabularies that students will need to know at an early stage of their studies.

EFL Vocabulary Tests book (Meara, 2010). This book contains tests that design to be used with learners of EFL/ESL. These tests were graded into 6 levels of difficulty, and there were 20 tests

at each stage. The basic tests are Levels one and two. These tests cover the vocabulary of English that every speaker needs to know if they want to understand what they hear or read.

Subject	TEST NUMBER
Placement Test for Kids	35
Elementary Vocabulary book	40
EFL Vocabulary Tests book	40

Procedure

In order to find the purpose of this study, these research steps were followed:

First of all, the aim of the researcher was to choose a homogenous of participants. As mention before, participants were homogenous in context, sex, age and nationality. The Placement Test was given to 44 bilingual and monolingual females learners. The placement test was objective and each test just had one correct answer. the result shown that only 32 ones (15 monolingual and 17 bilingual) could pass the exam but we only select only 28 learners in both groups based on the best obtained scores. After finishing grouping with names BG and MG the pre test based on Elementary Vocabulary book addressed to participants of both groups. The pre test was objective and contained 40 test, the participants should answer the test at 45 minutes. by finishing pre test we had a treatment , the treatment was on based of EFL Vocabulary Tests book .the treatment sessions were 12 ones at Safir Institute in Susangerd and the timing for each sessions was 40 minutes on different days as below:

MG on even days from 5:30 to 6:10 P.M

BG on odd days from 5:30 to 6:10 P.M

The sessions were three days a week, after finishing treatment the participants were given four free days to study for (post-test). The post test include 40 objective tests and its style was similar to pre test but a bit harder.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of research we tried to present the data that collected concerning the study topic. The data were collected by using different elements such as Placement Test, pre test and post test based on the subjects that introduced before .(Elementary Vocabulary book and EFL Vocabulary Tests book). These result will be show through tables and figures. The purpose of the pretest was to make certain that the MG and BG were homogeneous at the outset of the study. T-test was used to help achieve the purpose of the pretest. The results of the t-test analysis for the comparison of the MG and BG are presented below.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing the monolingual and bilingual pre test Scores

group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre test	monolingual	14	16.8571	1.83375	.49009
	bilingual	14	17.2857	1.72888	.46206

Such descriptive statistics as mean and standard deviation are shown for both groups in Table 1. The mean score of the BG ($M = 17.2$) is greater than the mean score of the MG ($M = 16.8$). This difference does not seem to be significant, but to ascertain whether it is or not, one needs to look down the Sig (2-tailed) column in the t-test table below.

Table 2: Results of the Independent-Samples T-Test for Comparing the monolingual and bilingual pre test Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
		F.	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
TG Pretest	Equal Variances Assumed	.003	.956	-.636	26	.530	-.42857	.67356	1.8131 0	.95596
	Equal Variances not Assumed			-.636	25.91 0	.530	-.42857	.67356	1.8133 4	.9561 9

According to Table 2 there is not a statistically significant difference in pretest scores of MG ($M = 16.8$, $SD = 1.8$) and BG ($M = 17.2$, $SD = 1.7$) and the $p = .53$ (two-tailed). This is so because the p value is greater than the specified level of significance (i.e. .05). The conclusion would be that the two groups were heterogeneous prior to the experiment. The results of the pretest are also graphically shown in Figure 1.

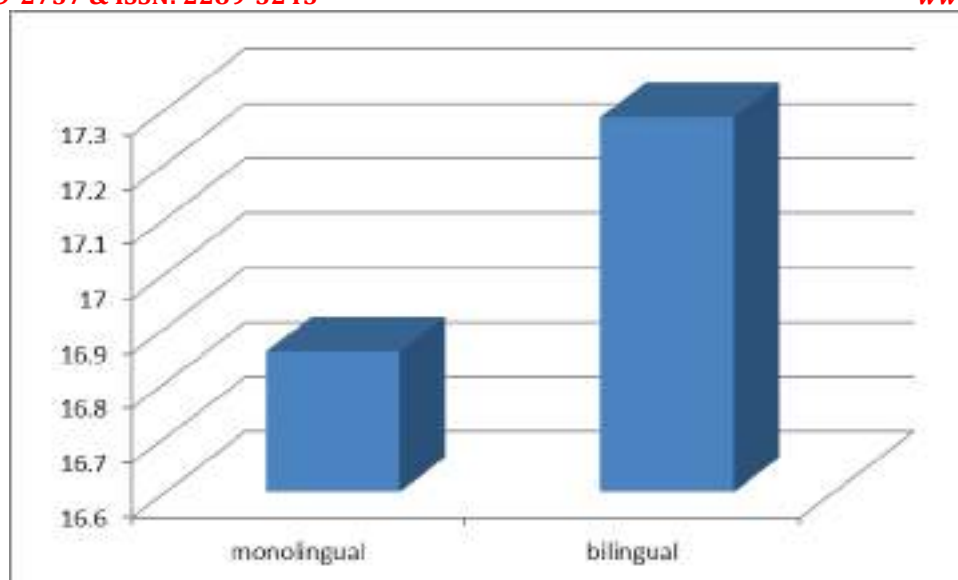


Figure 1: The Mean Scores of the monolingual and bilingual on the Pre test

As it can be seen in Figure 1, the difference between the pretest scores of the MG and BG was only infinitesimal.

Result of the Research Question

After the treatment sessions ended, the posttest was given to the participants of the study. The research question of the study asked that: Are there any benefits in bilingualism on learning new English vocabularies among female Iranian primary school students? Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Comparing the monolingual and bilingual post test Scores

group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
post test	monolingual	14	17.0714	1.59153	.42535
	bilingual	14	18.6429	1.33631	.35714

As you can see in Table 3, the mean score of BG learners ($M=18.64$) is greater than the mean of MG ($M = 17.07$). To make certain that the difference is indeed statistically significant; the following t-test table should be consulted.

Table 4: Results of the Independent-Samples T-Test for Comparing the monolingual and bilingual post test Scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
		F.	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
TG Pretest	Equal Variances Assumed	.134	.718	2.82 9	26	.009	-1.57134	.55541	2.7130 8	-.4297 7
	Equal Variances not Assumed			2.82 9	25.24 4	.009	-1.57134	.55541	2.7130 8	-.4281 1

As you see that the p value is less than the specified level of significance ($.009 < .05$), it could be concluded that there was a significant difference between the posttest scores of the learners in the BG ($M = 18.64$ $SD = 1.33$) and MG scores ($M = 17.07$ $SD = 1.59$). Another bar chart is also drawn for the analyses related scores:

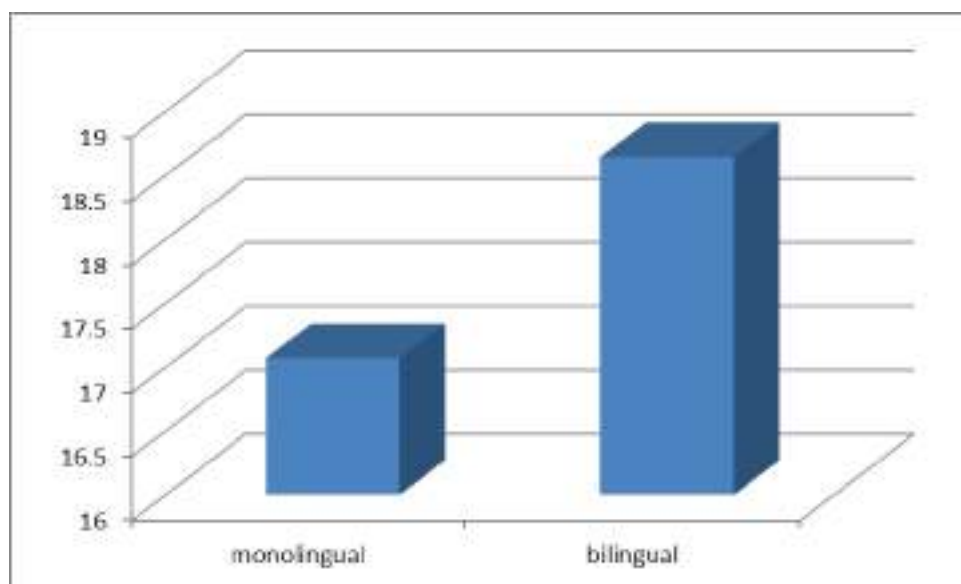


Figure 2: The Mean Scores of the monolingual and bilingual on the post test

This bar chart also signifies the great difference between the posttest scores of the learners in both groups. This result implies that the two groups performed differently on the posttest, indicating that the difference between BG and MG was statistically significant. The paired samples t-test analysis revealed that there was a difference between pretest and posttest scores of the learners in both groups. Likewise, a t-test was conducted and the results showed that learners' performance on the posttest outweighed their performance on the pretest. So we found that, the

training (treatment) along four weeks was affective and bilingualism had a significant positive effect on learning English vocabularies among female primary school learners.

CONCLUSION

Today, bilingualism is a feature not just of people, but also of communities. States, countries, or communities in which two or maybe more languages are used in which can be called bilingual community. For instance Algeria (in north of Africa) regarded a bilingual country because French and Arabic are official languages there. Some cities in Iran are also regarded bilingual cities or communities, because most of the people there can speak Arabic and Farsi very well, although Arabic has no official status. In the analysis part of this study it was indicated that bilingualism has positive effects on English language acquisition. That analysis also addressed that female bilingual kids were more successful than monolinguals in learning new vocabularies of English language. This is due to that, there are too many words that common in three languages. Moreover during treatment sometimes the bilingual teacher used both languages (Arabic and Persian) to describe or definite some confusion English vocabularies, and because of this competence the bilingual group learn those vocabularies faster and better than monolingual ones. For more research, it is suggested that the study can be conducted with larger number of participants from all of Republic, so the study will be more practical and useful to find the differences between bilingual and monolingual kids regarding the level of education ,age and sex. It suggests that in bilingual parts of country the government can design bilingual education programs in schools and university like many European countries.

Limitations

The present study suffered from several numbers of limitations and delimitations which will pose inevitable restrictions on the generalizability of its findings which are as below:

There were limitations in generalizability of the results and findings of this study since the level of proficiency was limited to primary school level and participants were randomly selected from 4 language institutes.

It was a very hard task to find 28 students with the suitable characteristics for this study and to convince them to attend in all treatment sessions.

The above-mentioned limitations and some other limitations such as time limitation, cultural limitation and linguistic background of participants must be taken into consideration before any conclusions and generalization based on the findings and results of this study. So any generalizability of the findings of this study must be treated and interpreted cautiously.

REFERENCES

- Akhtar, N., & Menjivar, J. A. (2012). Cognitive and linguistic correlates of early exposure to more than one language. In J. B. Benson (Ed.), *Advances in child development and behavior*, (42) (pp. 41–78).

- Bialystok, E. (2001). *Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bialystok, E. (2009). Bilingualism. *Language and Cognition*, 12(1), 3-11
- Bialystok, E., & Feng, X. (2009). Language proficiency and executive control in proactive interference: Evidence from monolingual and bilingual children and adults. *Brain and Language*, 109, 93-100.
- Bloomfield, L. (1933). *Language*. London: Allen and Unwin
- Bialystok, E., & Kenji, H. (1994). *In Other Words: The Science and Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bhatia, T. K., & Ritchie, W. C. (2004). *The handbook of bilingualism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Castro, D. C., Ayankoya, B., & Kasprzak, C. (2011). *The new voices/Nuevas voces: Guide to cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Grosjean, F. (2008). *Studying Bilinguals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hakuta, K. (1986). *The Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Jessner, U. (2008) *Teaching third languages: Findings, trends and challenges*. University of Innsbruck, Austria.
- Kessler, C., & Quinn, M. E. (1980). *Positive effects of bilingualism on science problem-solving abilities*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- King, K., & Mackey, A. (2009). *The bilingual edge*. Ontario, Canada: HarperCollins.
- Kovács and Mehler, (2009). *Cognitive gains in 7-month-old bilingual infants*. Harvard University, Cambridge.
- Mackey, W. F. (2000). *The description of bilingualism*. In L. Wei (ed.), *The bilingualism reader*. London: Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia-2009.
- Pardis, J. (2009). The impact of input factors on bilingual development. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*, 1(1), 67-71
- Pearson, B. (1993). *Lexical development in bilingual infants and toddlers: Comparison to monolingual norms*. University of Miami.
- Pearson, B. (2008). *Raising a bilingual child*. New York: Random House.
- Vermeer, A. (2001). Breadth and depth of vocabulary in relation to L1/L2 acquisition and frequency of Input. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 22(2), 217-234.
- Zelasko, N., & Antunez, B. (2000). *If your child learns in two languages*. National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education

LEXICAL PRESUPPOSITION TRIGGERS: A SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO VAGUENESS

Sayyed Amir Sheikhan

Department of Linguistics, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: sheikhan.amir@ut.ac.ir (Corresponding Author)

Valiollah Hosseinpour

Department of Linguistics, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Ali Afkhami

Department of Linguistics, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Zahra Golzadeh

Department of Linguistics, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT

Antonyms play a significant role in everyday conversations. According to the Croft's point of view (Craft & Cruse, 2004) of classification of adjectives, their application in conversation can lead to vagueness and hence misconception. This paper is an attempt to provide an analysis for the application of a few lexical presupposition triggers in sentences containing gradable antonyms in order to make presuppositions for assigning the scale to scale-free adjectives and hence, remove vagueness. To this end, the authors clung on their own linguistic intuition as well as administration of a survey followed by a qualitative analysis of the data. The research revealed that Persian speakers, when using comparative structures containing comparative free-scale gradable antonym, whenever scale specification is necessary use two types of lexical presuppositions called 'intensifier' and 'receder'. Their shared characteristics is that they lack any semantic content and even lack any similar grammatical function in other contexts. The implication of utilising these lexical presupposition triggers would be removing vagueness within a course of conversation.

KEYWORDS: Lexical Presupposition Triggers, Vagueness, Gradable Antonyms

INTRODUCTION

Due to the great importance and everyday application of comparisons, and significant function and application of adjectives, specifically speaking antonyms, in conversations and linguistic functions, antonyms and their characteristics (semantics of antonyms) have always been the subject of study since Aristotle. In the recent decade, also, a great number of researchers have paid significant attention to characteristics of gradable antonyms and their classification and have presented some categories. According to the Croft's point of view (Craft & Cruse, 2004) of classification of the adjectives and considering the fact that since in his perspective there is at least one group of adjectives -disjunct equipollent- having the characteristics of system-specific and scale-free, their application in conversation can lead to vagueness and hence misconception, the authors

have studied one of the strategies used by the speakers to make the message scale-specific. This paper is an attempt to provide an analysis for the application of a few lexical presupposition triggers in sentences containing gradable antonyms, or as Craft puts it disjunct equipollents, in order to make presuppositions for assigning the scale to scale-free adjectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vagueness and presupposition triggers in general and lexical presupposition triggers in particular have been scrutinized in different languages. Drave (2001) conducted a corpus-based study into the forms and functions of vague language in intercultural conversations between speakers of English and Cantonese. It was found that, whilst English speakers use more vague language than Cantonese speakers, the range of different types and major collocations were similar for the two groups of speakers. In addition, the results showed that there were important functional differences.

In another study on vagueness, Channell (1994) categorizes vagueness and focuses on linguistic expressions that are, in Sadock's (1977) formulation, "purposely and unabashedly vague" (1994: 20). She provides a comprehensive description of different ways of approximating quantities in English, of various ways of referring vaguely to categories (e.g. with tags such as or something like that), and of totally vague words.

Schmid (2001) studied lexical presupposition triggers, namely abstract nouns. This study showed that depending on the types of nouns that English speakers use, speakers can exploit the *N-be-that*-construction in the service of an array of presuppositions, among them existential and factive semantic ones as well as pragmatic ones.

In their recent work, Chemla and Bott (2013) developed and tested two processing accounts of presupposition projection, the *global-first* model and the *local-first* model. They tested these predictions using a verification task. The results showed that across two experiments, using different materials and instructions, participants were faster to derive the global interpretation than the local interpretation, in contrast to the local-first model.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the present study the following research questions are addressed:
How Persian speakers avoid vagueness while using gradable antonyms?
What role do presupposition triggers play in avoiding vagueness?
What are the lexical presupposition triggers used to avoid vagueness?

METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the authors -all Persian native speakers- exploited their linguistic intuition to provide the study with some data. To this end, first and second named authors came up with the example sentences as the data which were then double checked by the third and fourth named au-

thored in terms of their grammaticality and acceptability as well as the implications they may have. In addition, in order to have more reliable study, we have demonstrated occasional surveys to shed light on the implications of the Persian sentences. It is note worthy to mention that all the participants were Persian native speakers and university students. The data was then subjected to a close qualitative analysis in the light of the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gradable antonyms

While discussing lexical semantic relations, the term semantic opposition is used as a general tag for a couple of relations among lexicons. But semantic opposition consists of various kinds with having unique characteristics. Antonyms usually consist of verbs, nouns and adjectives. The present study targets gradable adjectives. According to the research revealed in Kennedy (2007), Kennedy and McNally (2005), Kameon, et al. (2011), adjectives can be categorized by their syntactic-semantic behaviors in two main categories of absolute and relative adjectives. The differences can be summarized as follows:

B. Syntactic criteria: negating either pole of the antonyms can be considered as the proof of the other pole. For example:

(1) The door is open.

means:

(2) The door is not closed.

On the other hand:

(3) The door is big.

does not mean:

(4) The door is not small.

B. Semantic criteria: using any type of adjectives peculiar to structure of the other type is not allowed.

(5a) The door is utterly closed.

(5b) *The door is utterly big.

(6a) * The door is very closed.

(6b) The door is very big.

(7a) * This door is more closed that the other one.

(7b) This door is bigger than the other one.

Hence, it can be concluded that relative adjectives share the same characteristics, which is being gradable. That is, all of them are gradable.

(8) and (9) are not ungrammatical with any substitution for a and b if relative antonyms are used:

X, Y, W, Z

(8) X is more a than Y, or

(9) W is more b than Z

So we can call them gradable antonyms. But Croft and Cruse (2004) believe that the classifica-

tion does not suffice since the words categorized, as antonyms are not all the same and have different characteristics. They categorize relative antonyms into four categories; overlapping antonyms, monoscalar, disjunct equipollent, parallel equipollent. The present research targets comparative structures containing gradable antonyms (relative antonyms) belonging to the category of disjunct equipollent. These antonyms have the following characteristics:

A. Both poles of the axis are scale-specified, i.e. on the axis formed by the two poles of adjectives a and b, for the arguments X and Y:

(10a) If X is more a than Y,
one cannot necessarily conclude that:

(10b) X is a.

And inevitably:

(10c) Y is b.

B. Both poles of the axis are system-specified, i.e. in the mentioned axis all the time and in any condition:

If (11a) is true, it cannot be claimed that (11b) is always true.

(11a) X is more b than Y.

(11b) Y is more a than X.

The interaction of the two characteristics mentioned above makes a neutral point in the middle of the axis (Kennedy, 2007), which is usually stated by a neutral adjective. For example, considering an axis with the antonyms 'hot' and 'cold' being the pole, there is a median point which Persian speakers define as 'velarm', meaning tepid. In fact, for the two maximum standard adjectives 'hot' and 'cold', there is a common minimum standard adjective named 'tepid'.

Vagueness

In comparative sentences containing comparative structure, disjunct equipollent antonyms, due to feature A, are scale-free. Consider the following example:

(12a) Jack is fatter than Tom.

(12a) Can be interpreted differently in different contexts. Consider the following contexts:

(12b) Jack is a middle-aged man who is 56 kg in weight and Tom is his twin brother who is 54 kg in weight.

(12c) Jack is a middle-aged man who is 143 kg in weight and Tom is his twin brother who is 140 kg in weight.

(12d) Jack is middle-aged man who is 90 kg in weight and Tom is a nine-year-old boy who is 18

Therefore, the feature scale-free of the comparative adjective 'fatter' is extended to the whole sentence and has made it scale-free. In this condition, it is only with the help of a context that one can judge, for example, the conditions of (12c) whether:

(13a) Jack is fat.

(13b) Tom is fat.

or unlike the mentioned adjective in the sentence, for the context (12b) judge:

(14a) Jack is thin.

(14b) Tom is thin.

However, context conditions are not always clear. In some occasions, the judgment about the context is not the same, or even the speaker and listener are uninformed about their same judgment about the context. In such a condition, the speaker and listener should employ a strategy to adjust their same judgment on a specific scale. The trend can be named 'Scale Specification'; a prevalent strategy among Persian speakers to use lexical presupposition triggers.

The word 'ham', meaning 'also' and 'even'

The word 'ham' is used in two positions in these sentences:

(15) Jack ham az Tom chaghtar ast.

Jack even than Tom fatter is

Even Jack is fatter than Tom.

(16) Jack az Tom ham chaghtar ast.

Jack is Tom also fatter is

Jack is also fatter than Tom.

The present paper first deals with (16).

Having asked any Persian speaker what assumption (16) holds, we assume that the answer is similar to (17) -16 Persian speakers were surveyed and solely one different answer was observed.

(17) Tom is fat.

Now, the question is that whether (17) is the presupposition, entailment or Grecian inference for (16)? First, we adjust the superficial-logical features of the presupposition for the above-mentioned example. Considering the sentence (2) as p and (17) as q , the logical features of the presupposition (Saeed, 2003) are as follows:

- A. $\text{if } p \equiv T \rightarrow q \equiv T$
B. $\text{if } p \equiv F \rightarrow q \equiv T$

C. $if\ q \equiv T \rightarrow p \equiv (T\ OR\ F)$

The given example fully confirms features A and C, but has a dual function for feature B.

- (18) Jack az Tom ham chaghtar nist.
Jack than Tom even fatter not
Jack isn't even fatter than Tom. (NOT Tom is fat)
- (19) In Jack nist ke az Tom ham chaghtar ast.
This Jack isn't who than Tom also fatter is
It isn't Jack who is also fatter than Tom. (Tom is fat.)

Both two negations are common in references and it is usually expected to keep one presupposition in the two types of negation and remove the implication or entailment. However, such examples have a weird reaction toward the test and the issue demands further study. Now we study the semantic features of presupposition and adjust to the table provided by the references.

Table 1: Comparing the features of presupposition, entailment and implication

	Entailment	Presupposition	Implication
Projection when embedded	No	Yes	No
Cancelable when embedded	---	Yes	---
Cancelable when unembedded	No	No	Yes

Projection Feature

(20) Negation:

In Jack nist ke az Tom ham bolandtar ast.
This Jack isn't that than Tom also taller is
It is not Jack who is also taller than Tom. (i.e. Tom is tall.)

(21) Making an introduction for the condition:

Agar Jack az Tom ham sari'tar bashad, mosabeghe ra mibarad.
If Jack than Tom also faster be , race (object marker) wins
If Jack is also faster than Tom, he will win the race. (i.e. Tom is fast.)

(22) Making question:

Aya Jack az Tom ham khasistar ast?
(Question marker) Jack than Tom also stingier is
Is Jack also (even) stingier than Tom? (i.e. Tom is stingy.)

(23) Possibility:

Ehtemalan Jack az Tom ham shoja'tar ast.
Possibly Jack than Tom also more courageous is
Possibly, Jack is more courageous than Tom. (i.e. Tom is courageous.)

(24) Probability:

In ke Jack az Tom ham chaghtar bashad, momken ast.
This that Jack than Tom also fatter to be , probable is
Probably Jack is also (even) fatter than Tom. (i.e. Tom is fat.)

(25) Belief:

Mike mo'taghad ast Jack az Tom ham naghash behtari ast.
Mike believes Jack than Tom also painter better is
Mike believes that Jack is also (even) a better painter than Tom. (i.e. Tom is a good painter.)

It is clear that the assumption in (17) has the projection feature.

Deletion without substitution

(26) ? Jack az Tom ham chaghtar ast, harchand Tom chagh nist.

Jack than Tom also fatter is , however Tom fat isn't

Jack is also (even) fatter than Tom; however, Tom is not fat.

(27) ? In ketab az an pirahan ham gerantar ast, ama an pirahan geran nist.

This book than that shirt also more expensive is, but that shirt expensive isn't

The book is also (even) more expensive than the shirt, although the shirt is not expensive.

As is implied –at least based on the authors' linguistic intuition- that (26) and (27) are unacceptable. And the unacceptability is merely due to the presence of the word 'ham'. A comparison with the acceptable sentences (28) and (29) confirms the claim.

(28) Jack az Tom chaghtar ast, harchand Tom chagh nist.

Jack than Tom fatter is, however Tom fat isn't

Jack is fatter than Tom; however, Tom is not fat.

(29) In ketab az an pirahan gerantar ast, ama an pirahan geran nist.

This book than that shirt more expensive is, but that shirt expensive isn't

The book is more expensive than the shirt, although the shirt is not expensive.

Deletion with Substitution

(30) Ehtemalan Jack az Tom ham shoja'tar ast, harchand Tom shoja' nist.

Possibly Jack than Tom also more courageous is, however Tom courageous isn't

Possibly, Jack is also more courageous than Tom; however, Tom is not courageous.

(31) Agar Tom chagh bashad, Jack az Tom ham chaghtar ast.

If Tom fat to be , Jack than Tom also fatter is

If Tom is fat, Jack is also fatter than Tom.

(32) Mike mo'taghad ast ahu az yuzpalang ham sari'tar ast, ama yuzpalang sari' nist.

Mike believes deer than panther also (even) faster is, but panther fast isn't

Mike believes that deer is also (even) faster than panther, but panther is not fast.

Considering examples (21) to (23), it can be said that the assumption presented in (8) and the like sentences behave similarly to presuppositions. Most specifically, example (22), which is the most

famous and the commonest remover structure in recourses, vividly illustrates this feature.

The word ‘digar’, meaning ‘else’ or ‘anymore’

The word ‘digar’ is used in two positions in these sentences:

(33) Jack digar az Tom chaghtar ast.
Jack else than Tom fatter is
Jack, else, is fatter than Tom.

(34) Jack az Tom digar chaghtar ast.
Jack than Tom else fatter is
Jack is fatter than Tom, else.

It can be judged about these two sentences that both convey the same descriptive semantic content. However, their emphatic meaning can differ. Hence, at this level of study, these two sentences can be considered as paraphrases. Anyhow, to observe the structural similarity to the previous examples, the sentence (34) has been used as the main subject.

Having asked any Persian speaker what assumption (33) and (34) hold, we assume that the answer is similar to (35) - 16 Persian speakers were surveyed and 16 similar judgments were observed.

(35) Tom is not that much fat.

Once more, the query rises whether (35) is really the presupposition for (34)? Hence, similar to the steps taken to study whether ‘ham’ is a presupposition trigger, ‘digar’ has been studied.

The mentioned example finely adjusts to the features A and B mentioned in part 4; however, it has a dual behaviour toward feature B. This dual behavior is even more complicated that the sentence structure with raising negation doesn’t seem to be acceptable.

(36) Jack az Tom digar chaghtar nist.
Jack than Tom anymore fatter isn’t
Jack isn’t fatter than Tom anymore. (NOT Tom is not that much fat.)

(37) (*) In Jack nist ke az Tom digar chaghtar ast.
This Jack isn’t who than Tom anymore fatter is
It isn’t Jack who is fatter than Tom anymore. (Tom is not that much fat.)

Again, table (1) is illustrated for an easy comparison of the features as table (2).

Table 2: Comparing the features of presupposition, entailment and implication

	Entailment	Presupposition	Implication
Projection when embedded	No	Yes	No
Cancelable when embedded	---	Yes	---
Cancelable when unembedded	No	No	Yes

Projection Feature

(38) Negation:

In Jack nist ke az Tom dige bolandtar ast.
This Jack isn't that than Tom else taller is
This is not Jack who is else taller than Tom. (i.e. Tom is not that much tall.)

(39) Making an introduction for the condition:

Agar Jack dige az Tom sari'tar bashab, mosabeghe ra mibarad.
If Jack else than Tom faster to be , race (object marker) wins
If Jack is else faster than Tom, he will win the race. (i.e. Tom is not that fast.)

(40) Making question:

Aya Jack az Tom dige khasistar ast?
(Question marker) Jack than Tom else stingier is?
Is Jack else stingier than Tom? (i.e. Tom is not that much stingy.)

(41) Possibility:

Ehtemalan Jack dige az Tom shoja'tar ast.
Possibly Jack else than Tom more courageous is
Possibly, Jack is else more courageous than Tom. (i.e. Tom is not that much courageous.)

(42) Probability:

In ke Jack az Tom dige chaghtar bashad, momken ast.
This that Jack than Tom else fatter to be , probable is
Probably Jack is else fatter than Tom. (i.e. Tom is not that much fat.)

(43) Belief:

Mike mo'taghad ast Jack az Tom dige naghast behtari ast.
Mike believes Jack than Tom else painter better is
Mike believes that Jack is else a better painter than Tom. (i.e. Tom is not that much a good painter.)

It is clear that the assumption in (34) has the projection feature.

Deletion without substitution

(44) ? Jack az Tom ke chaghtar ast, harchand Tom chagh ast.

Jack than Tom else fatter is, however Tom fat is
Jack is else fatter than Tom; however, Tom is fat.

(45) ? In ketab az aan pirahan ke gerantar ast, ama an pirahan geran ast.

This book than that shirt else more expensive is , but that shirt expensive is
The book is else more expensive than the shirt, although the shirt is expensive.

As is implied –at least based on the authors' linguistic intuition- (44) and (45) are unacceptable and weird. And the unacceptability is again merely due to the lack of the word 'digar'. A Com-

parison with the acceptable sentences (46) and (47) confirms the claim.

- (46) Jack az Tom chaghtar ast, harchand Tom chagh nist.
Jack than Tom fatter is, however Tom fat isn't
Jack is fatter than Tom; however, Tom is not fat.
- (47) In ketab az an pirahan gerantar ast, ama an pirahan geran nist.
This book than that shirt more expensive is, but that shirt expensive isn't
The book is more expensive than the shirt, although the shirt is not expensive.

Deletion with substitution

- (48) Ehtemalan Jack az Tom ham shoja'tar ast, harchand Tom shoja' nist.
Possibly Jack than Tom also more courageous is, however Tom courageous isn't
Possibly, Jack is also more courageous than Tom; however, Tom is not courageous.
- (49) Agar Tom ghach bashad, Jack az Tom ham chaghtar ast.
If Tom fat to be, Jack than Tom also fatter is
If Tom is fat, Jack is also fatter than Tom.
- (50) Mike mo'taghad ast aahu az yuzpalang ham sari'tar ast, ama yuzpalang sari' nist.
Mike believes deer than panther also faster is, but panther fast isn't
Mike believes that deer is also faster than panther, but panther is not fast.

Considering examples (48) to (50), it can be said that the assumption presented in (34) and the like sentences behave similarly to presuppositions.

CONCLUSION

According to the studies in this research, it can be concluded that Persian speakers, when using comparative structures containing comparative free-scale gradable antonym, whenever scale specification is necessary can use two types of lexical presupposition triggers in line with determining the position of the mentioned noun in the sentence on axis of the adjective.

The first type of these presupposition triggers can be called 'intensifier' or 'advancer' presupposition trigger. This type, in which the word 'ham' was mentioned as an example and contains the word 'hatta'-meaning 'even'- and the phrase 'hatta....ham'-meaning 'even also'-, advances the internal argument of the adjectival predicate mentioned in the sentence on the axis of the adjective to intensify the external argument of the adjectival phrase in the sentence in having that adjective.

The second type of these presupposition triggers can be named 'receder' or 'extenuator' presupposition triggers. This type, in which the word 'dige' was mentioned as an example and contains the word 'ke'- and the phrase 'ke.....dige', 'recede' the internal argument of the adjectival predicate mentioned in the sentence on the axis of the adjective to extenuate the external argument of the adjectival phrase in the sentence in having that adjective.

The shared characteristics of these two types of lexical presupposition triggers which differenti-

ates them from the other lexical presupposition triggers is that these types lack any semantic content and even lack any similar grammatical function in other contexts, and their only function is to make these presuppositions in order to specify the scale. It is noteworthy to mention that the current study only explicated a few number of the strategies to avoid vagueness, however, attempt can be made to elaborate upon the other strategies exploited by speakers not to sound vague.

REFERENCES

- Abusch, D. (2002). Lexical alternatives as a source of pragmatic presuppositions. In *Semantics and Linguistic Theory* (pp. 1-19).
- Asher, N. (2013). Implicatures and discourse structure. *Lingua*, 132, 13-28.
- Carston, R. (2008). *Thoughts and utterances: The pragmatics of explicit communication*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Channell, J. (1994). *Vague language*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Chemla, E., & Bott, L. (2013). Processing presuppositions: Dynamic semantics vs pragmatic enrichment. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 28(3), 241-260.
- Cole, P., & Sadock, J. M. (Eds.). (1977). *Syntax and semantics: grammatical relations* (Vol. 8). Academic Pr.
- Croft, W., & Cruse, D. A. (2004). *Cognitive linguistics*. Cambridge University Press.
- de Saussure, L. (2013). Background relevance. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 59, 178-189.
- Domaneschi, F. (2011). Towards a normative epistemic account of presuppositions. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(15), 3822-3831.
- Drave, N. (2001). Vaguely speaking: a corpus approach to vague language in intercultural conversations. *Language and Computers*, 36(1), 25-40.
- Kamoen, N., Holleman, B., Nouwen, R., Sanders, T., & van den Bergh, H. (2011). Absolutely relative or relatively absolute? The linguistic behavior of gradable adjectives and degree modifiers. *Journal of pragmatics*, 43(13), 3139-3151.
- Kennedy, C. (1999). *Projecting the adjective: The syntax and semantics of gradability and comparison*. Routledge.
- Kennedy, C. (2001). Polar opposition and the ontology of 'degrees'. *Linguistics and philosophy*, 24(1), 33-70.
- Kennedy, C. (2007). Vagueness and grammar: The semantics of relative and absolute gradable adjectives. *Linguistics and philosophy*, 30(1), 1-45.
- Kennedy, C., & McNally, L. (2005). Scale structure, degree modification, and the semantics of gradable predicates. *Language*, 345-381.
- Paradis, C. (2008). Configurations, construals and change: expressions of degree. *English Language and Linguistics*, 12(02), 317-343.
- Rotstein, C., & Winter, Y. (2004). Total adjectives vs. partial adjectives: Scale structure and higher-order modifiers. *Natural Language Semantics*, 12(3), 259-288.
- Schmid, H. J. (2001). 'Presupposition can be a bluff': How abstract nouns can be used as presupposition triggers. *Journal of pragmatics*, 33(10), 1529-1552.

- Syrett, K. L. (2007). *Learning about the structure of scales: Adverbial modification and the acquisition of the semantics of gradable adjectives* (Doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University).
- Tribushinina, E. (2008). *Cognitive reference points: Semantics beyond the prototypes in adjectives of space and colour*. Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics.
- Tribushinina, E. (2009). Reference points in linguistic construal: Scalar adjectives revisited. *Studia linguistica*, 63(2), 233-260.

THE ACQUISITION OF L2 PREPOSITIONS AND THE IMPACT OF CROSS-LINGUISTIC AND META-LINGUISTIC FEEDBACK: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF ALES AT THE HIGHER COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Dr. Anwar Mourssi

*Higher College of Technology, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education, University of the West of England, Bristol,
UK*

Ms. Taiba Al Hilali

Higher College of Technology, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

*Correspondence: Dr. Anwar Mohammed Abdou Mourssi, Higher College of Technology, Muscat,
P. O Box 546,
P. C. 115, the Sultanate of Oman.
E-mails: anwarmohd175@gmail.com anwar.mourssi@hct.edu.om
Anwar2.Abdoumourssi@live.uwe.ac.uk*

ABSTRACT

The acquisition of preposition can be one of the main problems face Second Language Learners. The researchers believe that to learn English Language as a second or a foreign language, one should realize that language is not an abstract construction of the learned, or of dictionary-makers, but is something arising out of the students' work. The authors believe that to predict or to analyze the learners' errors may provide the teachers, researchers and the learners with valuable information in the areas of difficulties that learners may encounter. An empirical study was conducted on 60 Arab Learners of English (ALEs) which lasted about three months. A detailed analysis was made of the errors/mistakes of using the prepositions in 120 written texts produced by ALEs. Written texts were collected from each subject at two stages in the experiment (after the first week, and after the final exam). Quantitative analyses show the impact of error analysis in forms of meta-linguistic feedback and cross linguistic influence on the acquisition of L2 prepositions in the context of ALEs at the Higher College of Technology.

KEYWORDS: Prepositions, SLA, Cross-linguistic influence, meta-linguistic feedback, face-to-face interaction, and overgeneralization

INTRODUCTION

Mourssi (2013d) believes that we can realize the areas of grammar complexity by identifying errors, and by analyzing these errors. The aim behind analyzing the L2 learners' errors/mistakes is to improve second/foreign language learners' writing as well as speaking. It could be

considered that when we want to improve speaking while teaching writing, instructors should follow the same stages in process writing. They can ask students to think, plan, form, think aloud individually, in pairs, or in groups, reform their speaking, and then produce their speaking about the task given. When learners fail to produce target-like form of the target preposition or forget about the usage of the L2 prepositions and used L1 preposition, here is the role of the teacher to interact and analyze the mistakes/errors and give feedback on the production of the learners. In this case, the instructor should know about how to use the preposition in L1. Since he/she has no idea about the usage of L1, this might create a gap between what the teachers teach and what the learners want to learn. Mourssi (2012b) thinks that the process of error analysis might determine how learners process and categorise the input data which they are exposed to. The current study focuses only on the acquisition of the prepositions and how to improve L2 learners' written accuracy, and try to find suitable teaching techniques to be followed with ALEs in the acquisition of L2 prepositions.

This paper is divided into six main sections: section one is the introduction, the literature review is presented in section two, section three describes the methods used in the current study, the analysis and the discussion are presented in section four, the conclusion is presented in section five, and finally, the references are in section six followed by the appendices. The following section presents the literature review.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First of all, it is worth mentioning that a preposition in English Language grammar is often defined as a word which describes the location of one object in relation to another one. Based on our personal experience in teaching English Language for ALEs, we can assume that learning English Language prepositions is confusing for most of them.

This section which deals with literature review is divided into four subsections: in section 2.1, what is generally meant by Error Analysis is presented; this is followed by The Role of Transfer in Interlanguage in section 2.2. Then in 2.3 we will present the Cross-linguistic Influence of Prepositions and Meta-linguistic feedback. Finally, in 2.4 Types of Prepositions in L2 will be presented.

The reader should be reminded that the term of meta-linguistic feedback refers to both Errors/contrastive analysis presented for the L2 learners after their spoken and first written draft based on the target task provided, without providing them with the target-like form, (Mourssi and Al Doori, 2014a). In other word, it refers to explain the nature of the L2 learners' mistakes. Gass and Selinker (2008) believe that although some linguists consider Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis are out of date, they are still current in the field of SLA.

Definition of Error Analysis

Mourssi (2013d) cited that Brown (1987, p. 17) gave a practical and clear definition of error analysis in which error analysis was defined as a process through which researchers observe, analyze, and classify learner errors in order to elicit some information about the system operating

within the learner. Unlike the contrastive analysis hypothesis which only examines errors attributed to negative transfer from the first language, error analysis investigates all possible sources of error and thus, outperforms contrastive analysis, Mourssi (2013c and 2012b).

Ellis et al. (2008, p. 52) provided a detailed account of, and exemplified a model for, error analysis offered by Corder (1977). Ellis (1997, p. 15-20) and Hubbard et al. (1996, p. 135-141) on the other hand, gave practical advice and provide clear examples of how to identify and analyze learners' errors. Gass and Selinker (2008) defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence about the knowledge of second language learners. According to Richards (1974), researchers are interested in discovering errors as they are believed to contain valuable information that could be used to develop strategies towards better language acquisition techniques.

It is worth mentioning that Corder (1985, p. 25) distinguished between errors of performance and errors of competence by referring to the former as *mistakes* and the latter as *errors*. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991, p. 59), James (1998, p. 78) and Ellis (2000, p. 17) described the term 'mistake' as a random slip of a tongue and provided a criterion that might clarify the distinction between errors and mistakes. According to these authors, *a mistake* is a performance fault that the learner is able to correct when his attention is drawn to it, whereas, *an error* is believed to be not self-correctible since a learner cannot correct it when his attention is drawn to it. Errors represent a lack of learner competence, are systematic, and might occur many times unrecognized by the learner, Mourssi (2013c and 2012b). In the current paper, errors and mistakes will be used alternatively.

The Role of Transfer in Interlanguage

Transfer is one of the most important elements which affect interlanguage forms. Investigating it can lead to a better understanding of the source/origin and the development of interlanguage. Researchers were doubtful about the issue of transfer, but some of them have said that it is related to language acquisition and should be discussed. Lado (1957) believed that people rely on their first language when they learn the target language. On the other hand, other researchers such as Dulay and Burt (1974:24) said that transfer has nothing to do with interlanguage. This view was rejected by Mourssi (2013c and 2012b) replying with evidence that most of the interlanguage stages the L2 learners pass through are influenced by cross-linguistic influence of L1 which was termed as Transfer in the 20th century.

In particular, Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008:4) argue that cross-linguistic influence refers to the influence of one language on another in an individual mind. They illuminated several areas of meaning and cross-linguistic influence which had not been carefully looked at before. They presented interesting findings and an analysis of the relationship between language transfer and SLA. Based on Odlin's (1989) claims, and Jarvis and Pavlenko's (2008) findings, the study will investigate the role of L1 in the acquisition of the L2 prepositions in the context of ALEs.

The Cross-linguistic Influence of Prepositions

A preposition is defined as an item which expresses a relationship between entities, it identifies a relationship in space (between one object and another), and/or a relationship in time (between events). It is a matter of fact that in English grammar generally prepositions are considered as very important linguistic items which should be learned efficiently. Pittman (1966) pointed out that learning prepositions earned a reputation for difficulty if not downright unpredictability. Similarly, Takahashi (1969) identified that the target-like form of prepositions can be seen as one of the greatest problem face English language learners.

Grubic (2004) classified prepositions according to their form, function and meaning. Regarding form, prepositions can be either simple (one-word preposition), or complex (also called two-word, three-word, or compound prepositions). Simple prepositions are known as closed class from which we cannot invent new single word prepositions. The second form is complex prepositions which are known as open class due to the new combinations which could be invented. Generally, there are about seventy simple prepositions in English grammar. Among these seventy, we can refer to the most frequently used ones which are: *at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to* and *with*.

Quirk et al. (1993) viewed a prepositional phrase is made of a preposition followed by a prepositional complement which is a noun phrase (e.g. *at the bus stop*) or a WH-clause (e.g. *from what he said*) or V-ing clause (e.g. *by signing a peace treaty*). However, several studies (e.g. Mourssi, 2013c) conducted a study in which explored cross-linguistic influence of L1 in acquiring L2 linguistic items in general. However, some studies investigated the transfer of English prepositions across different languages. Regarding Arabic language, Hamdallah and Tushyeh (1993) and also Hasan and Abdullah (2009) examined the cross-linguistic influence of prepositions across English and Arabic languages. Similarly, Asma (2010) investigated the reality of the phenomenon of simple prepositions transfer from Standard Arabic into English by Algerian EFL learners.

Hashim (1996) conducted a similar study in the Jordanian context in which it was found out that a lot of errors have been found and presented in seven syntactic categories. The first category was verbal preposition. In the same vein, Kharmah, and Hajjaj, (1997) reported that on Arab EFL learners' errors, that the majority of their errors are in English syntax, and in particular, prepositions which can be considered as the most troublesome aspect of syntax. Similar studies reached the same findings in the context of ALEs, such as: Zahid (2006), Mohammed (2005), and Muortaga (2004).

However, we can notice that very few studies investigate the cross-linguistic of L1 in acquiring L2 preposition in other languages e.g. Delshad (1980) conducted a contrastive study of English and Persian prepositions. It was found out that Iranian EFL/ESL learners face difficulty in the use of English prepositions.

Types of prepositions in L2

Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2007) categorized any language under five main different categories. The first category is *phonetics* which refers to the study of individual speech sounds, the second category is *phonology* which refers to the knowledge of how sounds fit together to make words, while the third category is *morphology* which refers to the study of the structure of words, then *syntax* which refers to the study of how words fit together to form phrases, and the last category is *semantics* which refers to the study of the meaning of individual words and how they relate to each other. They added that there are two subcategories for syntax which are: content words and function words. The content words are those words which have meaning or semantic value. The content words include: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The function words are those which are used to explain or create grammatical or structural relationships into which the content words may fit. It is worth mentioning that the function words might have little meaning of their own and they are much fewer in number than content words. Function words include pronouns, articles, and conjunctions. They also added that prepositions are categorized as function words.

Jie (2008) pointed out that the mistakes that students make in relation to prepositions can be varied according to their language backgrounds. Mourssi (2013d) mentioned that realizing the mistakes is useful for learners and teachers as well. The former will know that he/she produced non-target-like form and the later will know the gaps in his/her learner's internalized grammatical system.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) and Cook (2009) mentioned that in SLA, when L1 and L2 are similar, it will be easy for language learner to learn the L2. They added that when L1 and L2 are different, it will be difficult for language learner to learn L2. Mourssi (2012d, and 2013d) pointed out that Arabic Language is different from English Language which resulted in committing many mistake by ALEs whether young or adult learners.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current study seeks to answer the following questions:

To what extent do ALEs commit the prepositional mistakes in writing?

What is the evidence of L1 (Arabic) influence in the acquisition of L2 (English) linguistic items?

What the suitable teaching techniques should be used to help ALEs acquiring L2 prepositions?

This is to provide empirical evidence in relation to test hypotheses emerging from language transfer and thus contribute to the advancement of theory on Second Language Acquisition. In addition, to find a suitable teaching technique, this can be used successfully in the acquisition of L2 prepositions.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the subjects of the study, the research questions, the procedures and the methods used in the analysis of the written texts.

The subjects of the study

Two groups represent the subjects of the study. These groups were taught by one of the researchers (Ms. Al Hilali). The target location was at Higher College of Technology HCT in the

Sultanate of Oman. Each group consisted of 30 Arab Learners of English (ALEs), with ages ranging between 20 and 24, Intermediate to Upper-intermediate level in English. The subjects were all Arabic speakers and had been learning English as a foreign language for 12 years attending four to five sessions per week on average. They were all enrolled in a full year as foundation course in English language. The samples were taken from their writing classes during their second academic year. In other words, after they finished the foundation course for one year. The number of the samples is 120 written scripts.

The procedures

The procedure started by getting permission from the HoD. He kindly forwarded our request to the dean of the college. As soon as the HoD got the approval from the dean, he gave us the written permission to take off in the journey of completing the research. We started to assign the methods for the research questions.

Methods assigned to the research question

For the research question presented above, quantitative analyses were followed for all target-like forms and the non-target-like forms of prepositions produced by the samples in 120 written texts. Mourssi (2013c) pointed out that writing is one way to get evidence of the state of a student's internalised grammar system, and suggested that different written texts should be collected from the samples of the study in different timing. We decided that in order to explore interlanguage phenomena and the influence of L1 in acquiring L2 prepositions, a full two writing texts were collected from each sample in the two groups. In addition, worksheets were prepared for the experimental group to get a real chance for meta-linguistic feedback and the face-to-face interaction with ALEs inside the classroom, see Appendix (1).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the written texts produced by the ALEs in two groups of writing classes appears to indicate that Arabic Language (L1) has influence in the acquisition of L2 preposition. The analyses indicate that meta-linguistic feedback has its own impact on the acquisition of L2 prepositions. In the following are the details.

Pre-test Analysis

In fact there were many types of mistakes in the writing texts but our aim was to sort out the errors related to the L2 prepositions. The authors think about adding a backup group to the main two groups namely the experimental group and the control group. Sometimes it happens that some groups are cancelled for fewer number of students enrolled in that group. That is why we also analyzed the errors in the backup group but when we reached to the post test, it was taken out because we had already analyzed the target groups.

able (1) below shows that when we calculated the errors related to the prepositions, we found out that experimental group made 47 errors. In the same range, the control group made 49 errors. That is why we continued our research because the two groups were equal or nearly equal in the level of proficiency related to the usage of L2 prepositions. In addition the backup group from which we collected writing texts as well but were not included in the analyses, made 51 errors in the area of using L2 prepositions.

Table 1: Pre-analysis

Group	Number of Non-target-like preposition
Experimental Group	47
Control Group	49
Backup Group	51

The Experimental Group

It was noticed that the ALEs in the experimental group used the prepositions *on* and *in* alternatively in a wrong way. We can see from the table below that they used the preposition *in* instead of the preposition *on* in 21 examples. They used (*in first day*) instead of (*on first day*) 14 times. They also repeated the same error and used (*in a hanger*) instead of (*on a hanger*) 7 times. On the contrary, they used the preposition *in* instead of *on* e.g. (*on open air*) instead of (*on open air*) for 4 times. Sometimes the ALEs omit the preposition because they do not have similar one in their L1 as it shown in example 8 in table 2 below. Also from table 2 below, it is noticed the amount of errors that ALEs in the experimental group made in their pre-test writing.

Table 2: Pre-test Analysis Experimental Group

No	Non-target like form	Target like form	Number of non-target like forms
1	The packaging should help bananas stay fresh to a long time.	The packaging should help bananas stay fresh for a long time.	1
2	The banana on a paper bag...	The banana in a paper bag...	1
3	In first day	On first day	14
4	On open air	In open air	4
5	In a hanger	On a hanger	7
6	I heated each pan in 350 °C	I heated each pan at 350 °C	5
7	I fried the chips on 350 °C	I fried the chips at 350 °C	3
8	I fried the chips 20 min	I fried the chips for 20 min	5
9	I poured olive oil for the first pot.	I poured olive oil in the first pot.	2
10	The effect of the factor in the freshness of bananas.	The effect of the factor on the freshness of bananas.	3
11	I added chips for the third pan.	I added chips to the third pan.	1
12	In the other hand	on the other hand	1
			Total 47

The Control Group

Similar to the experimental group, the control group made nearly the same amount of errors in using the prepositions. Table 3 below shows the amount of errors made by the control group. They used the preposition *in* instead of the preposition *on* in 19 examples. They used (*in day1*)

instead of (*on day1*) 12 times. They also repeated the same error and used (*in a hanger*) instead of (*on a hanger*) 5 times. Besides they repeated the same error 3 times in example 13 in table 3 below. On the contrary, they used the preposition *in* instead of *on* e.g. (*on open air*) instead of (*in open air*) for 4 times in example 4 in table 3 below. It can be seen from the table that most of the errors might be related to L1 or overgeneralization of one preposition on the others. They used the preposition *at* instead of the preposition *for* 5 times in examples 11 and 12 in the table below. Similarly to the experimental group, the ALEs sometimes omit the preposition as it does not have any equaling in their L1 as it is shown in examples 5 and 10 in table 3 above.

Table 3: Pre-test Analysis Control Group

No	Non-target like form	Target like form	Number of non-target like forms
1	I observed the bananas in day 1.	I observed the bananas on day 1.	12
2	The effect of different types of oil in the freshness of potatoes.	The effect of different types of oil on the freshness of potatoes.	2
3	In a hanger.	On a hanger.	5
4	On open air.	In open air.	4
5	Keeping bananas fresh a long time.	Keeping bananas fresh for a long time.	3
6	I cooked the chips On 350 °C	I cooked the chips at 350 °C	5
7	In the other hand	On the other hand	3
8	Keeping bananas fresh of a long time.	Keeping bananas fresh for a long time.	3
9	I poured oil on the pan.	I poured oil into the pan.	1
10	I fried the potatoes 20 min.	I fried the potatoes for 20 min.	3
11	I fried the potatoes at 20 min.	I fried the potatoes for 20 min.	3
12	Olive oil kept the potatoes fresh at 1 hr.	Olive oil kept the potatoes fresh for 1 hr.	2
13	At the first day, the bananas were fresh.	On the first day, the bananas were fresh.	3
			Total 49

Post-test Analysis

Regarding research question number 3, the treatment started after analyzing the pre-test directly with the experimental group, while the control group followed the normal method of teaching followed in the college. The experimental group received meta-linguistic feedback and face-to-face interaction. The teacher followed Ex-implicit grammar teaching approach (Mourssi, 2013a). Nagata (1993); Carroll (2001), Rosa and Leow (2004), demonstrate that explicit feedback was more effective than implicit feedback. Similarly, Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam's (2006) study of the effects of recasts and meta-linguistic feedback on the acquisition of English past tense *-ed* also found that explicit feedback is more effective than implicit feedback. On the contrary, Leeman (2003) found out that implicit feedback is more effective than explicit feedback. From the point of view of pre-intermediate and intermediate ALEs, Mourssi (2013a) thinks that it is better to employ both types in the classroom context (Ex-implicit feedback), where explicit feedback can be more effective with low level language learners, while implicit feedback can be more effective with higher level language learners. However, the findings of the current study reveal that meta-linguistic feedback explaining the nature of the learners' errors without giving them the target-like forms seems to be the effective type of corrective feedback with both low and high level second language learners, Mourssi (2013a).

The Experimental Group

Table 4 below shows the errors made by the experimental group after the treatment. Analyzing the information in the table below reveals that the improvement that the ALEs achieved in the experimental group. The authors think that is due to the teaching techniques followed with the ALEs during the experiment.

Table 4: Post-analysis (Final Exam Data) Experimental Group			
No	Non-target -like forms	Number of mistakes	Target -like forms
1	I kept the glasses in 20 °C.	2	I kept the glasses at 20 °C.
2	The material of glasses can affect on ice melting.	5	The material of glasses can affect ice melting.
3	The material of glasses can affect in ice melting.	2	The material of glasses can affect ice melting.
4	Glass material has an effect in the ice melting.	1	Glass material has an effect on the ice melting.
5	I put 1 ice cube for each glass.	1	I put 1 ice cube in each glass.
Total (11)			

From table (4) above, it can be seen that the total amount of errors committed by ALEs in the experimental group is 11. We think that the amount should have been less than that percentage; however, it might be because of the short time of the experiment. It is to remind the reader that the experiment lasted for about three months only.

We think that errors mentioned in the table 4 above reveal that ALEs still think in L1 and write In L2. We mean the Crosslinguistic influence of L1 is very clear in the acquisition of L2 preposition. We think that the main problem is using the two prepositions (*in* and *on*). Mourssi (2012d, 2013c, and 2013d) and Mourssi and Al Doori (2014a) pointed out the issue of crosslinguistic and the importance role of meta-linguistic feedback. However, some ALEs show remarkable improvement by memorizing the usage of the most common preposition. This learning strategy of memorization might be effective and helpful in the process of meta-linguistic feedback and face-to-face interaction.

Using the preposition (*for*) instead of the preposition (*in*) in example 5 in table 4 above shows the literal translation. However, we can see the improvement in the experimental group compared with the control group. This will be presented in the following section.

The Control Group

Analyzing the data derived from table 5 below reveals that ALEs in the control group committed 23 errors compared with 11 errors in the experimental group. One reason might be the teaching techniques followed with the experimental group. Another reason might be the normal feedback that the control group received. It can be seen from the data provided in the table that ALEs used a mixture of (in, on, at, of, for, with, and to) compared with the non-target-like preposition used by ALEs in the experimental group. Similarly, the most common errors were committed by the

ALEs in the control group were the prepositions of (in and on). They used the preposition *in* for five times in a wrong way, and the preposition of *on* four times in a wrong way. We think that if they had received meta-linguistic feedback and there were face-to-face interactions, they would not have committed that number of errors.

It is to remind the reader that the subjects in both groups committed many other types of errors but our main aim is to investigate the errors related to the usage of L2 prepositions in the writing context.

Table 5: Post-analysis (Final Exam Data) Control Group

No	Non-target- like forms	Number of mistakes	Target -like forms
1	The material of the glass affects on the speed at which ice melts.	4	The material of the glass affects the speed at which ice melts.
2	The effect of glass material of ice melting.	1	The effect of glass material on ice melting.
3	I kept the glasses in room temperature.	2	I kept the glasses at room temperature.
4	The ice should be kept solid a long time.	2	The ice should be kept solid for a long time.
5	Effect of the material of glasses in the ice melting.	5	Effect of the material of glasses on the ice melting.
6	The glasses were kept in 20 °C.	2	The glasses were kept at 20 °C.
7	Leave the ice in the glass to 20 min.	2	Leave the ice in the glass for 20 min.
8	Ice was added in each glass.	2	Ice was added to each glass.
9	I kept the glasses with room temperature.	1	I kept the glasses at room temperature.
10	The customers were satisfied of the drinks. (2)	2	The customers were satisfied with the drinks.
		Total (23)	

Summarizing the information provided in tables 4 and 5 and table 6 below shows the post-test analysis for both the experimental group and the control group as well. It can be seen the amount of error in the control group is double the amount of errors committed by the ALEs in the experimental group.

Table 6: Post-analysis for both groups

Group	Number of Non-target-like mistakes
Experimental Group	11
Control Group	23

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that based on the different positions of English prepositions in the sentences as it happens in Arabic prepositions, where we can see the English prepositions can follow a nominal, a verbal or an adjectival as well. The ALEs committed this amount of errors. A common characteristic of English prepositions is that most of different prepositions can offer

many different meanings when they are used with the same word. Another issue is that the meaning of the verb itself can be changed totally when it is followed by different prepositions.

The main problem which resulted in negative transfer is that prepositions rarely have a one to one correspondence between English language and Arabic language. In other words, we can find out that an Arabic preposition might be translated into several English prepositions and vice versa we can find out that an English preposition might have several different Arabic translations.

To conclude, we think that there is a very clear impact of L1 on the acquisition of L2 prepositions. The technique of meta-linguistic feedback besides the face-to-face interaction and memorization of common prepositions usage might be the most efficient methods of teaching and learning L2 prepositions.

Limitations of the study

The ALES committed many types of mistakes/errors while writing the first and the second texts. We could not analyze all the types because our target was concentrating only on L2 prepositions. The second limitation was the amount of the samples which was 60 subjects only. We tried to cover all the groups in the study but it was difficult to achieve that due to organizing and administrative reasons.

REFERENCES

- Asma, T. (2010). *Transfer of simple prepositions from standard Arabic into English: The case of third year LMD students of English language at Mentouri University-Constantine*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Mentouri University-Constantine, Algeria.
- Brown, H. D. (1987). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs. N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL teacher's course*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Cook, V. J. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Corder, S. P. (1974). The significance of learners' errors. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *Error analysis: Perspectives on second language acquisition* (pp. 19-27). London: Longman.
- Corder, S. P. (1981). *Error analysis and interlanguage*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Delshad, S. (1980). Persian and English prepositions compared and contrasted from a pedagogical point of view. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Texas, USA.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2000). *Learning a Second Language through Interaction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Ellis, R., Loewen, S. Elder, S., Erlam, R., Philip, J., & Reinders, H. (2008). Implicit and Explicit Knowledge in Second Language Learning, Testing and Teaching, Library of Congress cataloging in Publication Data.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman R., & Hyams N. (2007). *An introduction to language* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Thomson Wadsworth
- Gass, S., & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Grubic, B. (2004). "Those problematic English prepositions!" *CFI- Baci Conference* Long Beach, California (PP. 1-34)
- Hamdallah, R., & Tushyeh, H. (1993). A contrastive analysis of selected English and Arabic prepositions with pedagogical implications. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics*, 28, 181-190.
- Hasan, A., & Abdullah. I. (2009). The conceptual mapping of the English preposition into Arabic. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(8), 604-613.
- Hashim, N (1996). English syntactic errors by Arabic speaking learners reviewed. *Eric. Doc* 423660 Full Text.
- Hubbard, P., Jones, H., Thornton, B., & Wheeler, R. (1996). *A Training Course for TEFL*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- James, S. D. (1980). *Contrastive analysis*. London: Longman
- Jarvis, S., & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Crosslinguistic Influence in Language and Cognition*. New York: Routledge
- Jie, X. (2008). Error theories and second language acquisition [Electronic version]. *USChina foreign language*, 6(1), 35-42.
- Kharmah, N., & Hajjaj, A. (1997). *Errors in English among Arabic speakers*. Beirut: Librairie du Liban.
- Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics Across Cultures*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M. H. (1991). *An Introduction to Second Language acquisition Research*. Harlow: Longman.
- Mohammed, A. M. (2005). Collocation errors made by Arab learners of English. *Asian EFL Journal. Teachers Articles*, 5(2), 117-126.
- Mourtaga, K. (2004). *Investigating writing problems among Palestinian students: Studying English as a foreign language*. Bloomington, Indiana, Author House.
- Mourssi, A. (2013a). The Efficacy of Ex-implicit in between Implicit and Explicit Grammar Teaching Approach on Second/Foreign Language Learners' Writing. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, Volume 2 (2), 43-53.
- Mourssi, A. (2013b). The Effectiveness of the Innovated Writing Process. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, Volume 2 (3), 66-84.
- Mourssi, A. (2013c). Crosslinguistic influence of L1 (Arabic) in acquiring linguistic items of L2 (English): an empirical study in the context of Arab Learners of English as undergraduate learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Volume 3 (3), 397- 403. Doi: 10.4304/tpls.3.3.397-403.
- Mourssi, A. (2013d). The Efficacy of Error Analysis on Second Language Learners' Written Accuracy: An Empirical Study in the Context of Arab Learners of English. *International Research Journal, Educational Research (ER)*, Volume 4 (3), 249-256
- Mourssi, A. (2013j). The Innovated Writing Process (IWP) Approach: A rebuttal to Truscott's (1996, 1999, and 2007) and Ellis's (2009) view. *Study in English Language Teaching*, Volume, 1(2), 283-297
- Mourssi, A. (2012b). The impact of Reflection and Metalinguistic Feedback in SLA: A Qualitative Research in the Context of Post Graduates. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, Volume 1 (1), 122-139.

Mourssi, A., & Al Doori, A. (2014a). Postgraduate Learners' and Crosslinguistic Influence of L1 (Arabic) in Acquiring Linguistic Items of L2 (English). *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, Volume 5 (1), 307-318.

Pittman, G. A. (1966). *Activating the use of prepositions*. London: Longman

Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer: Cross Linguistic Influence in Language Learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Quirk, R. et al. (1993). *A University Grammar of English*. London: Longman.

Takahashi, G. (1969). Perceptions of space and function of certain English prepositions. *Language Learning*, 19, 217-234.

Zahid Chebchoub. (2006). Righting writing errors. *The Seventh Annual UAE .University Research Conference UAE*. University, Al-Ain.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Different tasks given to the experimental group

Task One: Correct the following mistakes. (Group work) based on the non target-like forms

1. Smart phones affect for students badly.
2. Open the website for college.
3. Many students face problem in registration day.
4. They are aware about registration.
5. I poured some water on the glass.

Task Two: Correct the following mistakes.

6. In add and drop day.
7. You may think in creating a timetable.
8. Open the website for HCT.
9. The flowers should be fresh to a long time.
10. The flower on the first glass is fresh.

Task Three: Correct the following mistakes.

11. I added sugar for the first glass.
12. I heated the water for 50 °C.
13. In the other hand
14. In day 1, the flower was fresh.
15. Sugar has an effect for the freshness of flowers.

Task Four: Correct the following mistakes.

16. The effect of water temperature in the growth of plants.
17. How to keep flowers fresh at a long time.
18. The type of water in which flowers are kept affects in their freshness.
19. I poured oil for the first pan.
20. This spray should protect you of mosquitoes.

Task Five: Correct the following mistakes.

21. The growth of plants depend in water temperature.
22. She stopped the child of eating chocolate.
23. If you make so much noise I can't concentrate in my work.
24. Both came in the same time.
25. Customers should be satisfied of the quality of the phones.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS MEDIATE THE FACILITATIVE ROLE OF BILINGUALISM IN THIRD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Hiwa Weisi

Assistant Professor of TEFL, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Majid Saedi Dovaise

PhD Student of TEFL, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

ABSTRACT

Executive functioning refers to a regulatory system of general cognitive abilities that includes processes such as attention and inhibition. These capabilities are responsible for handling cognitive processes such as problem solving, switching between the tasks and ignoring misleading features in a task. The relationship between bilingualism or the use of two languages by an individual and these executive functions has been investigated from different perspectives in the literature on bilingualism. This article aims to review and report the findings on the effects of bilingualism on children's executive functioning and on learning a third language. After introducing executive functioning and bilingualism the literature on the relationship of these two phenomena are reviewed and classified along the categories of inhibitory control, task switching capacities, attention control and working memory. There is then a review of the facilitative role of bilingualism on third language acquisition and the significant role of executive functions in language learning to conclude that the facilitative role of bilingualism reported in the literature is due to its beneficial effects on executive functions. Executive functions mediate the facilitative role of bilingualism in third language acquisition. The results may also explain the observation that a difference in the type of bilingualism leads to a difference in this facilitative role. This may provide a better insight in interpreting the studies done on the relationship between bilingualism and third language acquisition.

KEYWORDS: executive functions, bilingualism, third language acquisition, inhibitory control,

INTRODUCTION

Executive function is an umbrella term that refers to higher cognitive mechanisms that account for the conscious control of thought and action (Zelazo & Muller, 2010). Executive functions, thus, refer to the management of cognitive processes like working memory, task switching, and inhibitory control, among other processes. There is a hypothesized executive system in the mind which is responsible for these cognitive processes. It is thought to be mainly responsible for handling novel situations outside the domain of automatic processes that could be explained by the reproduction of acquired schemas (Field, 2004). Tasks requiring planning, decision-making, error correction, and unrehearsed novel utterances are examples of these novel situations that call for executive functioning. Executive functions might be engaged to inhibit automatic responses

in such situations. Executive function abilities are in a state of change and development due to physical changes in the brain and life experiences. The earliest executive functions that appear are inhibitory control and working memory. These are the basic executive functions that make more complex functions like problem solving possible. Recent research has demonstrated that executive control is not a unitary construct, and can be decomposed into several functions. Miyake et al. (2000) identify three separate, but correlated, executive functions: updating of working memory, inhibition of distractors or responses, and shifting between mental sets. In other words inhibitory control, controlled attention, and task switching can be viewed as the basic components that form our executive functioning (Friedman, Miyake, Corley, Young, DeFries & Hewitt, 2006).

Bilingualism, roughly defined, refers to the ability to use more than one language (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). The definitions of bilingualism can be viewed as sliding along a continuum from 'maximal' definition of the concept that implies equal ability in the two languages to a 'minimal' definition which implies an unbalanced knowledge of the two. The relationship between bilingualism or the use of two languages by an individual and the development of cognitive abilities of children has always been an interesting topic of investigation in the literature (Bialystok, 2011; Hakuta, 1986). Bilingual children are reported to show advantages in executive functions, specifically in inhibitory control and task switching. Speaking two languages requires controlling one's attention and choosing the correct language to use and this may simply mean that bilingualism has advantageous effects on executive functioning. Indeed bilingual children have been reported to be more advantageous in cognitive functions like tests of creativity (Ricciardelli, 1992), spatial problems (Bialystok & Majumder, 1998), and ignoring misleading features (Bialystok & Codd, 1997). It seems that most studies support the advantageous role of bilingualism in a host of intellectual abilities: inhibitory control develops more rapidly in bilingual children and bilingual children are reported to outperform their monolingual peers in controlling their attention which is a key element in executive functioning. There is also a growing literature in the field of second language acquisition on the facilitative role of bilingualism in third language acquisition. The interest in the role of bilingualism in third language acquisition began in 1980s and a host of studies have investigated this relationship. The general conclusion is that, all other things being equal, bilinguals outperform monolinguals in learning an additional language (Cenoz, 2003).

This paper reviews the literature on the effects of bilingualism on children's executive functioning especially inhibitory control, controlled attention and task switching and also the effects of bilingualism on third language acquisition. There is then an argument on the role of executive functions in language learning. The aim is to conclude that the facilitative role of bilingualism in third language acquisition is mediated by executive functions. In other words, bilingualism does not directly facilitate third language acquisition. This facilitative role is due to the advantageous influence of bilingualism on executive functions. The results may also be an explanation for the observation that the kind of bilingualism affects this facilitative role in third language acquisition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are different definitions for the term bilingualism in the literature. The definitions can be viewed as sliding along a continuum from a 'maximal' to a 'minimal' degree of bilingualism. Lam (2001) defines bilingualism as 'the phenomenon of competence and communication in two languages'. Thus, a bilingual person is one who can communicate in two languages. Most bilingual children are those who brought up in families with bilingual parents. The two languages may be learned at the same time (simultaneous bilingualism) or the second language may be acquired after the first has been established (sequential bilingualism). From the 1920s on scholars were attracted by bilingualism and studies on this phenomenon started. The earlier studies reported negative effects for bilingualism and it was regarded as a disadvantage (Jespersen, 1922 cited in Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Since the counterclaims of Peal and Lambert (1962) that bilingualism actually is an advantage and bilinguals perform better in certain cognitive tasks studies on bilingualism expanded. They believed that the possibility of switching linguistic codes while performing cognitive tasks gave bilingual children an added flexibility that monolingual children did not enjoy. This hypothesis gave rise to a popular concept regarding bilinguals' cognitive advantages, namely, bilinguals' cognitive flexibility. The interest in the study of the effects of bilingualism on executive functions is a more recent trend in the studies on bilingualism. The main concern here is on the possible advantages of being bilingual on the performance of children on tasks requiring executive functions, that is tasks needing more than automatic routines (Bialystok, 2001). Starting in the 1960s and continuing into the 2000's, dozens of studies were conducted on the relationship between bilingualism and cognitive abilities. In a review by Palij and Homel (1987), they examined bilingualism and its relationship with cognitive development from three perspectives: historical, examination of issues related to methodologies, and the role theory has played in guiding research and what is expected to happen in the future. The authors argued that in the past, bilingualism was viewed as a worry for the parents. It was believed that it caused confusion in children and it impeded their first language learning abilities. However, since that time, a different picture has emerged, an optimistic and supportive view of bilingualism in childhood. The effects of bilingualism on children's executive functioning can be studied from different perspectives.

Bilingualism and inhibitory control

One of the main processes involved in the executive functioning of the cognitive system is the inhibitory control. It plays an important role in making different cognitive processes work together to successfully perform a task. Studies have shown that bilingual children excel in tasks requiring inhibitory control to ignore misleading features. Green (1998) and Bialystok (2001) believe that bilingual children have an advanced degree of inhibitory control. Bilinguals have at their disposal two languages and this means that they have to move or switch between their two languages at any given time and, thus, they need to inhibit or suppress one of their languages in favor of the other one. This constant practice of inhibitory control contribute to the bilingual's advanced ability to ignore distracting or irrelevant input, first in language tasks and then in other general cognitive processes. Investigators suggest that bilingualism promotes inhibitory control mechanisms, and that bilingualism leads to a greater use of inhibitory control, because it is invoked every time language is used (Bialystok et al., 2004). Kovács (2007) argues that there is an advantage for the bilinguals because they constantly engage in selecting and inhibiting

competing responses for language output/motor response. Similarly, Kroll et al. (2008) believe that bilinguals do not avoid cross-language interference but rather they learn to deal with the competition of the two systems and, thus, develop more advanced inhibitory control. Indeed, the first reports on positive effects of bilingualism on inhibitory control rooted from the assumption that the two languages of a bilingual have to be processed on a constant basis. This implies that the speaker faces cross-language interference and, hence, has to promote his/her inhibitory control so as to resist the unintended use of the non-intended language in each situation. This is in line with Bialystok's (2001; 2004) argument that the mere fact of bilingual experience leads to superior inhibitory control. Cross-language interference can only be avoided in normal language processing due to the inhibitory control mechanisms. This claims, however, presupposes the idea that both languages of a bilingual are activated while using one of the languages. This co-activation or parallel activation has well been documented in the literature on multilingualism. Bilingual picture-word is one of the paradigms that have been used in multilingual studies aiming to provide evidence for this co-activation (Costa & Garamazza, 1999; Hermans, 2004). This may be one of the reasons why bilinguals found to have a cognitive advantage over monolinguals; they have excessive practice in inhibitory control.

Bilingualism and controlled attention

We have an ability to tune in to certain inputs and exclude others. It seems that the mind has a hypothetical filter to allow certain pieces of information while blocking others. We are bombarded with auditory and visual information from the environment, but our perceptual system seems to filter out what is not relevant (Styles, 1997).

Attention requires mental effort, with some tasks requiring more than others. The ability to perform two or more tasks simultaneously depends on how much of the capacity of the working memory a task demands. Working memory, however, is said to have limited capacity. Apart from working memory some other factors are also influencing attention. They include issues like motivation, interest and emotional factors (Field, 2005). As well as influencing models of first-language reading and listening, the notion of attention plays a part in theories of second language acquisition. Like inhibitory control the bilinguals' experience of using two languages seems to lead to enhanced controlled-attention than monolinguals. Bilingualism seems to help individuals to pay close attention to relevant information due to the presence of interference (Bialystok & Majumder, 1998). One of the first studies on the relationship between bilingualism and controlled-attention was Ben-Zeev's (1977) study which employed certain metalinguistic tasks like Symbols Substitution accompanied by a context of competition between the usual and unusual semantic reference function. The bilinguals outperformed monolinguals in the tasks and this suggested that bilinguals might have developed certain strategies as a consequence of their dual language acquisition. Bialystok (1992 a) redefines these strategies as 'control of attentional processing', by which she means the child's ability of executive attention to tune to or focus on certain aspects of a stimulus in the presence of distraction or conflict. She proposed the idea that bilingual children show significant advantage compared to monolingual children in tasks calling for advanced controlled-attention. Bialystok (1998) tested this hypothesis by designing a task that required children to make grammaticality judgment ignoring the semantic meaning of the sentence. The bilinguals' higher levels of control processing were supported in a number of the

experiments and replications. It was, thus, concluded that bilingualism facilitates the direction of attention to relevant information in a distraction condition. Working memory, a component of memory responsible for holding short-term information for the purposes of performing the current tasks, is often mentioned in the studies on attention. In Baddeley and Hitch's (1974) model of working memory there is a 'central executive' component that is the same as the 'controlled-attention in Bialystok's (1992 b) words. Attention is responsible for controlling the limited cognitive resources in all forms of information processing. There is, thus, strong correlation between controlled attention and working memory capacity on the conflict resolution task (Kane et al, 2001). In fact bilinguals are reported to show significantly greater working memory capacity than monolinguals on attention-impaired tasks (Yang et al, 2005). Compared to monolinguals, bilinguals can direct their attention to task-relevant information and further maintain their attention in spite of adverse interference.

Bilingualism and task switching

The ability to shift attention between one task and another is an executive function which is referred to as task switching. This ability allows an individual to rapidly adapt to new or different situations. Task switching may cause a slower performance and a decrease in accuracy on a task. This difference in performance and accuracy between tasks in a task-switching situation is known as the switching cost. Task switching is often regarded as a manifestation of cognitive flexibility. Given that bilinguals tend to switch languages rather often, one could readily hypothesize that, to the extent that language switching shares some components with domain-general task-switching, bilingualism should impact task-switching performance. Bilinguals switch between languages so as to select the language that is appropriate in different contexts. This may create or contribute to potential benefits for bilinguals in task switching (Hernandez et al, 2013).

Prior and McWhinney's (2009) study on the effects of bilingualism on task switching is one of the earliest studies in this regard. They investigated the possibility that bilingualism may lead to enhanced efficiency in the ability to shift between mental sets. They compared the performance of monolingual and fluent bilinguals in a task-switching paradigm. Bilinguals proved to incur less switching costs than monolinguals. Based on the reported reduced switch-cost of bilinguals, Hernandez and colleagues explored the way bilingualism affects task-switching mechanisms. Their results qualified previous claims about the effect of bilingualism in reducing non-linguistic switch costs (Hernandez et al, 2013).

Bilingualism and third language acquisition

The interest in the influence of bilingualism on learning an additional language began in the late 1980s (Ringbom, 1987). Different aspects of this influence can be investigated. Bilinguals demonstrate more cognitive flexibility and more metalinguistic awareness in comparison to monolinguals (Cenoz, 2003). The studies show that bilinguals have more capabilities to control and use their linguistic resources (Bialystok, 2001). This privilege can exert positive effects on learning a third language. Moreover, skill transfer can happen much more easily (Cummins, 1991). De Angelis (2007) believes that bilinguals can transfer from both L1 and L2 and this is an advantage in itself.

Several studies have supported the advantages of bilingualism in the development of linguistic and cognitive capabilities (Ringbom, 1987; Bialyok, 1988). Kecskes and Papp (2000) believe that bilingualism facilitates the learning of another language. Other studies in the field have also confirmed that bilingualism assists learning an additional language (Cenoz and Valencia, 1994; Klein, 1995). McLaughlin and Nayak (1989) confirm the positive effect of bilingualism on learning a third language by referring to the fact that bilingual students are able to use a wider variety of learning strategies.

The general conclusion that bilingualism generally facilitates L3 acquisition rate has specially been documented in the area of morphosyntax. Thus, for example, Elaine Klein (1995) observed a general advantage for multilingualism when 15 high-school speakers of L3 English were asked to judge whether the separation of a preposition or a postposition from its noun phrase, or what is known as stranding, was grammatical. They did considerably better than another group of learners of L2 (as opposed to L3) English. This was despite that this phenomenon was absent in their L1s and L2s. The evidence suggests that 'knowledge of two or more languages can accelerate the learning of an additional language. Research on lexical transfer in L3 acquisition has found substantial vocabulary rate advantage for multilinguals' (Ortega, 2009, p.48).

Bialystok's studies (2001) show that bilingual children have higher levels of metalinguistic awareness comparing to monolingual children. Bialystok asserts that there is a positive correlation between the higher levels of bilingualism and the ability to think better about language. A source of evidence for metalinguistic awareness along with mother tongue is other previously learned languages. Cenoz (2011) suggests to the advantages that bilinguals have in learning an additional language. They have more linguistic experiences, more learning strategies, and richer linguistic and cross-cultural repertoire.

One of the earliest studies on the effects of bilingualism on learning a third language was conducted by Ringbom (1987). He compared the monolinguals and Finnish-Swedish bilinguals who were learning English in Finland. The results of these studies showed that the bilingual learners outperformed the monolinguals. The learners were all of the same level of proficiency in English and the same tests were used to measure their achievement. Thomas (1988) noticed that Spanish-English learners of French performed significantly better than their peer monolinguals in learning French in the classroom setting.

Cenoz (1992, cited in Cenoz & Genesee, 1998) compared the monolingual and bilingual learners of English and found that bilinguals outperformed their monolingual peers in language proficiency tests. Moreover, in a series of studies conducted in Spain (Sanz, 1997; Munoz, 2000; Sagasta, 2003) the bilingual children outperformed their monolingual peers in learning English. Gonzalez (1998) studied the Turkish and Moroccan immigrants regarding their progress in learning English. He noticed superiority for bilinguals. In the immersion programs in Canada the studies showed that bilingual students performed better in French tests compared to their monolingual peers (Hurd, 1993). Brohy (2001) showed that Romanian-German bilinguals were more successful in learning French in Switzerland.

Molnar (2010) investigated the differences between second language acquisition and third language acquisition and the effects of bilingualism on learning an additional language. The results were based on the assessment of lexical competence of the Hungarian monolinguals, Hungarian-Romanian bilinguals and Roman monolinguals that were all learners of English. The results demonstrated that the Hungarian-Romanian bilinguals performed better than the Hungarian monolingual group. The results of this study supported this general conclusion that bilingualism has a facilitative effect on learning a third language. Sanz (2000) compared 124 Catalan-Spanish bilinguals with 77 Spanish monolinguals learning English. Their level of proficiency was measured by general proficiency tests of vocabulary and grammar. In this study lots of extraneous variables were controlled. These included the learners' socio-cultural background, motivation, attitudes, and general intelligence. The bilinguals got much better scores than their peer monolinguals.

Cenoz (2003) investigated the effects of two previously known languages on the oral production of the third. The study focused on the cross-linguistic influence by comparing the same group of learners at two different times in their learning process: in grade four and grade six of elementary school. The participants were twenty learners of English as a third language who had received language instruction from the age of four. They were Basque-Spanish bilinguals. The same general conclusion on the facilitative effect of L2 knowledge on L3 acquisition was supported.

Keshavarz and Astaneh (2004) reported that female students at pre-university level in Iran who were speakers of either Armenian and Persian or Turkish and Persian outperformed a comparison group of L1 Persian-L2 English students on an English vocabulary test, even in the absence of any cognates that would be useful for learning English vocabulary. In this study the focus was on the effects of bilingualism on learning English vocabulary and potential variables that would affect the results were controlled. The results clearly show that bilingualism facilitates vocabulary learning in an additional language. Kassaian and Esmae'li (2011) compared the monolingual and bilingual EFL students for their vocabulary acquisition. Thirty Armenian-Persian bilinguals and thirty Persian monolinguals participated in the study. They were all females. Nationality, age, and level of instruction were also controlled. The subjects were all Iranian, aged 17 to 18, and they were all at the lower intermediate level. Nation Vocabulary Test was used to measure their vocabulary knowledge breadth and Burt Word Reading test was used to measure the participants' word reading skills. The results showed that bilingualism displays a high correlation with vocabulary knowledge breadth and reading skill. The bilingual subjects had greater size of vocabulary knowledge breadth and reading skill.

Executive functions and language learning

Executive functions play an important role in language development and use. Most language processing models take into account executive functions such as attention, working memory, task switching, and inhibition in language processing, though it may be under the rubric of the general term of cognitive factors. This means that language processing is not mere a linguistic task (Gomes, Wolfson, and Lalperin, 2007). Executive functions are thought to influence language performance. They 'allow us to organize our behavior over time and override immediate demands in favor of longer-term goals' as Dawson and Guare (2004:1) put it. In other words, in

addition to their general cognitive contributions, the executive functions are vital in language development and language processing. Working memory, for example, has been mentioned as the most important cognitive skill needed for online language processing in both auditory and visual modes (Archibald & Gathercole, 2006). Hungerford and Gonyo (2007) even go further and suggest that language disorders happen because of executive dysfunction. The contribution of working memory, inhibitory control, and shifting abilities to English proficiency has been reported in the studies aimed to investigate the relationship between executive functions and language proficiency. In a study designed by Kaushanskaya, Gross and Buac (2014) to investigate the bilingual advantages in learning further languages they concluded that the bilingual advantages on word-learning tasks may be rooted in bilinguals' ability to rely on domain-general executive function mechanisms in language learning. The role of attention as another component of executive functions in language development has also been investigated to account for the fact that one important mechanism of language is to direct attention to different semantic propositions in an utterance.

DISCUSSION

A comparison of the studies on the positive effects of bilingualism on the development of executive functions and also studies on the facilitative effects of bilingualism on learning a third language can lead to the generation of the idea that bilingualism may not affect L3 acquisition directly. The mere fact that executive functions play a crucial role in language learning in general can lead to the idea that the facilitative role of bilingualism in learning a third language is mediated by executive functions. From a descriptive and structural point of view previous languages seem to make further languages difficult to acquire and this is exactly the prevalent view mentioned earlier on the bilingualism as a disadvantage. Psycholinguistics brought about a totally different view and focused on the positive effects of the previously learnt languages on learning other languages. The review of the studies reveal a timeline from 1980s when the focus was on the facilitative role of bilingualism in third language learning to the 2000s when the focus shifted on the positive effects of bilingualism in better executive functioning. Interpreting these results by the insight provided from the strand of studies that focused on the crucial role of executive functions on language learning contribute to the conclusion that it is these positive effects of bilingualism on executive functions that pave the way for its facilitative role in third language acquisition.

A critical analysis of the studies which have investigated the relationship between bilingualism and third language acquisition can lead to the conclusion that it is not bilingualism per se that has provided the advantage in third language acquisition, but rather the underlying cognitive capabilities which have been reinforced by bilingualism. This may be the reason why Cenoz (2003) noticed that studies on the influences of bilingualism on L3 acquisition give mixed results. The advantage mentioned for bilingualism in these studies may be due to cognitive capability and flexibility that one gets because of learning another language. Further studies need to be done to investigate the role of bilingualism in developing any other skills that rely on executive functioning in order to come to the conclusion that in these studies it is the impact of bilingualism on executive functions that paves the way for a more efficient learning of a third language.

Intelligence may have played a role too. Bilinguals may have shown greater achievement not because they are bilingual, but because they are simply more intelligent. Intelligence is a multidimensional and dynamic predisposition that can be affected by learning experiences. Learning a second language on the part of the bilinguals has, thus, provided a kind of mental gymnastics for the mind and has made it more apt for learning an additional language. Thus the success observed for the bilinguals may be due to this mental aptness. Genesee (1978) found that intelligence can make a difference only for language skills, reading and structural expression, and not for communicative skills in conversation with other speakers. This may be the reason why Magiste (1984) reported a slower oral production rate for multilingual subjects in his study. In the literature on intelligence and aptitude high correlations have been reported between intelligence and vocabulary size (Skehan, 1989). This provides an additional support to claim that the subjects in these studies performed better because of intelligence, a factor which is more psychological than linguistic.

CONCLUSION

The general conclusion of this review is that executive functions mediate the facilitative role of bilingualism in third language learning. Bilingualism has advantageous effects on executive functions. These executive functions in turn are necessary in language learning. Thus, bilingualism contributes to third language learning through its positive impacts on executive functions. In other words, from a linguistic point of view bilingualism may not be beneficial in third language acquisition, but psycholinguistics has provided deeper insights in understanding the nature of language development specially the role of executive functions in this process and it is from this point of view that one can explain the reason of why bilingualism seem to be beneficial in third language acquisition. It should be mentioned here that the facilitative role of bilingualism on third language acquisition may not be merely due to its effects on executive functions but because of some other less observed factors. Bilinguals, for example, may have more motivation for learning another language or they may have more positive attitudes towards other languages due to their knowledge in two languages. In other words, bilingualism may facilitate third language learning not because of cognitive or linguistic reasons, but because of attitudinal factors.

REFERENCES

- Archibald, L.M., & Gathercole, S.E. (2006). Short-term and working memory in specific language impairment. *International Journal of Communication Disorders*, 41, 675–693.
- Baddeley, A. D., & Hitch, G. J. (1997). Working memory. In G. Bower. (Ed.), *Recent advances in learning and motivation* (pp 47-90). New York: Academic Press.
- Ben-Zeev, S. (1977). The influence of bilingualism on cognitive strategy and cognitive development. *Child Development*, 48, 1009-1018.
- Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 65, 229-235.

- Bialystok, E. (2004). Impact of bilingualism on language and literacy development. In T. K. Bhatia & W.C. Ritchie (Eds.), *Handbook of bilingualism* (pp. 577-601). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bialystok, E. (2001). Metalinguistic aspects of bilingual processing. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 169-181.
- Bialystok, E. (1998). What's in a process? explaining development in language acquisition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 1, 21-22.
- Bialystok, E. (1992 a). Selective attention in cognitive processing: the bilingual edge. In R. J. Harris (Ed.), *Cognitive processing in bilinguals*. Amsterdam: Elsevir Science Publishers.
- Bialystok, E. (1992 b). Attentional control in children's metalinguistic performance and measures of field independence. *Developmental Psychology*, 28, 654-664.
- Bialystok, E. (1988). Levels of bilingualism and levels of linguistic awareness. *Developmental Psychology*, 24, 560-567.
- Bialystok, E., & Codd, J. (1997). Cardinal limits: Evidence from language awareness and bilingualism for developing concepts of number. *Cognitive Development*, 12, 85-106.
- Bialystok, E., Craik, F.I.M., Klein, R., & Viswanathan, M. (2004). Bilingualism, aging, and cognitive control: Evidence from the Simon task. *Psychology and Aging*, 19, 290-303.
- Bialystok, E., & Majumder, S. (1998). The relationship between bilingualism and the development of cognitive processes in problem solving. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 69-85.
- Bialystok, E. & Martin, M. M. (2004). Attention and inhibition in bilingual children: evidence from the dimensional change card sort task. *Developmental Science*, 7/3, 325-339.
- Brohy, C. (2001). Generic and/or specific advantages of bilingualism in a dynamic purlingual situation: the case of French as official L3 in the school of Samedan (Switzerland). *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. 4, 38-49.
- Cenoz, J. (2003). The additive effect of bilingualism on third language acquisition: a review. *The International Journal of Bilingualism*. 7, 71-88.
- Cenoz, J., & Genesee, F. (Eds.). (2011). *Beyond bilingualism: Multilingualism and multilingual education*. UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Cenoz, J., & Jessner, U. (Eds.). (2000). *English in Europe: The acquisition of a third language*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cenoz, J., & Valencia, J. (1994). Additive trilingualism: evidence from the Basque Country. *Applied Psycholinguistics*. 15, 197-209.
- Costa, A., & Garamazza, A. (1999). Is lexical selection in bilingual speech production language specific? Further evidence from Spanish-English and English-Spanish bilinguals. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 3, 231-43.
- Cummins, J. (1991). Interdependence of first- and second-language proficiency in bilingual children. In E. Bialystok (Ed.), *Language processing in bilingual children*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dawson, P., & Guare, R. (2004). *Executive skills in children and adolescents: A practical guide to assessment and intervention*. New York: Guilford Press.
- De Angelis, G. (2007). *Third of additional language acquisition*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Field, J. (2005). *Language and the mind*. UK: Psychology Press.
- Field, J. (2004). *Psycholinguistics: the key concepts*. London: Routledge.

- Friedman, N. P., Miyake, A., Corley, R. P., Young, S. E., Defries, J. C., & Hewitt, J. K. (2006). Not all executive functions are related to intelligence. *Psychological Science*, 17, 172-179.
- Genesee, F. (1978). Is there an optimal age for starting second language instruction? *McGill Journal of Education*, 13, 145-154.
- Gomes, H. Wolfson, V., & Halperin, J. M. (2007). Is there a selective relationship between language functioning and auditory attention in children? *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology*, 29(6), 660- 668.
- Gonzalez, P. (1998). Learning a L2 in a third language environment. *TTA*, 59, 31-39.
- Green, D. W. (1998). Mental control of the bilingual lexico-semantic system. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 1, 67-81.
- Hakuta, K. (1986). *Mirror of language: the debate on bilingualism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Herdina, P. & Jessner, U. (2002). *A dynamic model of multilingualism: perspectives of change in psycholinguistics*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Hermans, D. (2004). Between-language identity effects in picture-word interference tasks: a challenge for language-nonspecific or language-specific models of lexical access? *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 8, 115-125.
- Hernandez, M., Martin, C. D., Barcelo, F., & Costa, A. (2013). Where is the bilingual advantage in task switching? *Journal of Memory and Language*, 69, 257-276.
- Hungerford, S. and Gonyo, K. (2007). Relationships Between Executive Functions and Language Variables. Paper presented at the American Speech Language Hearing Association Conference, 2007.
- Hurd, M. (1993). Minority language children and French immersion: additive multilingualism or subtractive semi-lingualism? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 49, 419-65.
- Kane, M. J., Bleckley, M. K., Conway, A. R. A., & Engle, R. W. (2001). A controlled-attention view of working-memory capacity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 130, 169-183.
- Kassaiian, Z. & Esmae'li, S. (2011). The effect of bilinguality on L3 breadth of vocabulary knowledge and word reading skill. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1, 8, 966-974.
- Kaushanskaya, M., Gross, M., & Buac, M. (2014). Effects of classroom bilingualism on task shifting, verbal memory, and word learning in children. *Developmental Science*, 17, 564-583.
- Kecske, I. & Papp, T. (2000). *Foreign language and mother tongue*. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Keshavarz, M. H. & Astaneh, H. (2004). The impact of bilinguality on the learning of the English vocabulary as a foreign language (L3). *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 7, 4. 295-30.
- Klein, E. (1995). Second vs. third language acquisition: is there a difference? *Language Learning*, 45, 3, 419-465.
- Kovacs, A. M. (2007). Beyond language: childhood bilingualism enhances high-level cognitive functions. In I. Kecskes, & L. Albertazzi (Eds.), *Cognitive aspects of bilingualism* (pp. 301-323). Netherlands: Springer.
- Kroll, J. F., Bobb, S. C., Misra, M., & Guo, T. (2008). Language selection in bilingual speech: Evidence for inhibitory processes. *Acta Psychologica*, 128(3), 416-430.

- Lam, A. (2001). Bilingualism. In R. Carter and D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Magiste, E. (1984). Learning a third language. *Journal of Multilingualism and Multicultural Development*, 5, 415-421.
- McLaughlin, B., & Nayak, N. (1989). Processing a new language: Does knowing other language make a difference? In H. Dechert and M. Raupach (Eds.), *Interlingual Process* (pp. 5-14). Tübingen: Narr.
- Miyake, A., & Friedman, N. P., Emerson, M. J. Witzki, A. H., Howerter, A., & Wager, T. D. (2000). The unity and diversity of executive functions and their contributions to complex frontal lobe tasks: a latent variable analysis. *Cognitive Psychology*, 41, 1, 49-100.
- Munoz, C. (2000). Bilingualism and trilingualism in school students in Catalonia. In J. Cenoz and U. Jessner (Eds.), *English in Europe: The acquisition of a third language* (pp. 157-178). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding second language acquisition*. London: Hodder Education
- Palij, M., & Homel, P. (1987). The relationship of bilingualism to cognitive development: Historical, methodological, and theoretical considerations. In P. Homel, M. Palij, & D. Aaronson (Eds.), *Childhood bilingualism: Aspects of linguistic, cognitive, and social development* (pp. 131-148). NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Peal, E. and Lambert, W. (1962). The relation of bilingualism to intelligence. *Psychological Monographs*, 76, 1-23.
- Prior, A., & MacWhinney, B. (2009). A bilingual advantage in task switching. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 13, 2, 253-262.
- Ricciardelli, L. A. (1992). Creativity and bilingualism. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 26, 4, 242-254.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd edn). UK: Longman.
- Ringbom, H. (1987). *The role of the first language in foreign language learning*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Sagasta, M. (2003). Acquiring writing skills in a third language: the positive effects of bilingualism. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 7, 1, 27-42.
- Sanz, C. (2000). Bilingual education enhances third language acquisition: evidence from Catalonia. *Applied psycholinguistics*, 21, 23-44.
- Sanz, C. (1997). L3 acquisition and the cognitive advantages of bilingualism: Catalan learning English. In L. Diaz & C. Perez (Eds.), *Views on the acquisition and use of a L2* (pp. 449-456). Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra.
- Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Styles, E. A. (1997). *The psychology of attention*. UK: Psychology Press.
- Timea, M. (2010). Second language versus third language vocabulary acquisition: A comparison of the English lexical competence of monolingual and bilingual students. *Toronto Working Papers in Linguistics*, 33.
- Thomas, J. (1988). The role played by metalinguistic awareness in second and third language learning. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 9, 235-246.

- Yang, H., Yang, S., Ceci, S. J., & Wang, Q. (2005). Effects of bilinguals' controlled-attention on working memory and recognition. In J. Cohen (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 4th international symposium on bilingualism* (pp. 2401-2404). Cascadia Press.
- Zelazo, P. D., & Muller, V. (2010). Executive function in typical and atypical development. In U. Goswami (Ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of childhood cognitive development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

DE-MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF SPEAKING ENGLISH: A CASE OF IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Aghar Heidari (“Corresponding author” MA in ELT)
Department of ELT, College of Humanities, Ahar Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
heidari.asghar430@gmail.com

Hossein Sadegh Oghli (PhD. In ELT)
Azad University of Tabriz
HSadegh_133@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The effect of de-motivation in second or foreign language learning and its relevant causes cannot be underestimated. The present study was an attempt to examine the factors of de-motivation affecting English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' performance in speaking English. A questionnaire consisting of teacher-related, student-related and classroom-related de-motivating factors was administered to 100 first grade high school students in one of the institutions of Iran. Tabriz who had been studying English for three years. The data analysis revealed that although all three factors of de-motivation negatively affected the students' performance in speaking English but the classroom related factor was the most effective one among all three factors of de-motivation. The most significant reasons of students in de-motivation were (a) little or no access to the Internet (b) computer equipment shortage, (c) no real-life situation for using English outside the classroom, and (d) no sufficient time for teaching English in classroom by teachers. With respect to the results obtained Instructional materials developers and policymakers can choose the appropriate subject matters, allocate sufficient time amount according to the learner needs. By identifying de-motivating factors, EFL teachers make attempts to decrease or prevent the causes of de-motivation or at least minimize their effect on students' learning. They can use the advantage of de-motivation by identifying the real factors of them and will try to decrease or prevent the causes of de-motivation in order to stop or minimize their effect on students learning.

KEYWORDS: De-motivation, Motivation, De-motivating factors, Learner's attitudes and behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is one of the main factors in an individual success in developing a second or foreign language (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998). Dörnyei (2001a, p.6) puts it “the term motivation is a convenient way of talking about a concept which is generally seen as a very important human characteristic but immensely complex”. In sharp contrast to motivation and motivating factors is de-motivating factors which have been completely or at least partly neglected in language teaching and learning studies especially in EFL contexts. Flout and Maruyama (2004) believe

that if motivation pushes learning for life, de-motivation cuts learning short for some reasons. De-motivation is “another side of motivation” (Falout & Marayama, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009). Experiences are showing that learners of a language can't be motivated to learn while having strong reasons for de-motivation against learning and before motivating reluctant learners, the factors and perceptions which cause de-motivation and prevent engagement in learning or willingness must be recognized then removed. There are various factors affecting the language teaching and learning process of language learners. Among these factors motivation plays an important role in the learning process as it has been one of the main factors in an individual success in developing a second or foreign language (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998). There have been de-motivating factors that impede learners learning motivation and hence lead to unsuccessful mastery of English language proficiency. According to Gorham and Christophel (1992), Christophel and Gorham (1995), two thirds of de-motivating factors which diminish communication are related with teacher. Song (2005) also reported that all the factors effect motivated students become motivated but among these teachers related factor played an important role in that process. In language learning process there are a lot of studies which indicate the effect of the motivation on the outcome of learning and results shows that motivation is one of the main determining factors in an individual's success in developing a second (L2) or foreign language (FL). The darker side of motivation or de-motivation has almost been completely ignored in research on FL motivation. Reality shows that de-motivation is a frequent problem in schools, universities and language institutes and a bitter fact is that, the number of de-motivated students is increasing in regular. So in this study we want focus on this important matter in student's learning and try to distinguish the darker side of it and try to shed light on some motivational problems and ganger areas. Therefore, in this study we investigated the main and significant de-motivating factors among Iranian High schools students which impede the learning process and for the result Iranian high school students give up the learning English as foreign language or get cold feet at this process.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: Is there any difference in student-, teacher-, and classroom-related, de-motivating factors that discourage Iranian high school students to speak in English

H1: There is a significant difference among student-, teacher-, and classroom-related, de-motivating factors that discourage Iranian high school students to speak in English

RQ2: Is the teacher related factor is more effective than students related and classroom related factors in de-motivating Iranian high school students to speak in English?

H2: The teacher related factor is more effective than students related and classroom related factors in de-motivating Iranian high school students to speak in English.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants in this study were 100 students from Ashtab, and Emam Sadegh, two different high schools in Tabriz, Iran who were all males and about 14 years old at the first grade. All the

students had taken English classes at school for four years - three years at secondary school and one year at high school. Sampling of the data collecting was randomly done among two different first grade classes at each school.

Instruments

The instrument used to measure de-motivating factors is based on Kikuchi and Sakai (2007) de-motivation questionnaire consists of 43 items in a 5 point Likert-type questions about de-motivation. For the reliability and validity of the questionnaire among the pupils of the study, the de-motivation questionnaires were distributed among a sample group and then after collecting data 30 questions were elicited among those 43 questions which were in relation to de-motivational factors in the students learning to speak in English. The observations and data collection of research were quantitative and by collecting the data through papers given to the participants. In every question five choices were inducted which represent the students positive (True & To some extent true), negative (Not true & Mostly not true) and neutral (Not either true or untrue) for motivational components as suggested by Gardner (1985). For each item, the highest degree of de-motivation receives five points and the lowest one point. The students' scores can range from 30 to 150. Thus, the higher the score, the stronger the de-motivating factor. For the aim of omitting the language understanding problems by the participants, the Farsi version of the scale was given to the participants for data collection in this study so the original questionnaire was translated into the Farsi language. For this, the students could easily read the questions and answer them because of thinking only about the matters which were asked in questions not translating English to Farsi in order to be simple enough to understand.

The questions were classified into nine parts:

1. Teacher's behaviors
2. Inadequate English skills of teachers
3. Threats to self-worth
4. Punishment
5. Language anxiety
6. lack of self-determination
7. Poor classroom management
8. Inadequate facility
9. Test scores

Based on the reviewed studies on de-motivation, the de-motivating factors in language classes can be classified as: 1. Teacher - related factors 2. Student - related factors a)Experience of failure b)Lack of interest 3. Classroom - related factors a) Characteristics of the classroom b) Classroom environment c) Classroom materials

Data Analysis

The present section presents the results of the statistical tests which were used to test the research hypotheses. Before conducting inferential statistics, the normality of the score distributions was checked. As shown in Table 1, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check for normality of distribution of data on the questionnaire. It was found that the data was normally distributed ($p > .05$).

Table 1: Test of Normality of Questionnaire Scores

Variable	Factors	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.
Questionnaire Scores	Teacher	.06	100	.17*
	Student	.10	100	.07*
	Classroom	.05	100	.12*

* $p \leq .05$

As it was intended to assess whether EFL learners' scores obtained on the de-motivating factors questionnaire would be statistically different with respect to the three factors (the teacher-related factors, student-related factors, and classroom-related factors), pairwise comparisons were made through an inferential statistic called the Tukey Honestly Significant Difference test or Tukey HSD (Wilkinson & the Task Force, 1999).

The Tukey HSD is based on a variation of the *t distribution* that takes into account the number of means being compared. This distribution is called the *studentized range distribution*. Also, because of the fact that the more means that are compared, the more the Type I error rate is inflated, it was decided to set the significance level at 0.01. For this purpose of the study, the means and variances of each group (factor) were, first, computed. They are shown below in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of Mean and Variance Calculation for the Three Factors

Factor	Mean	Variance
Teacher-related	2.96	.80
Student-related	3.03	.63
Classroom-related	3.52	.49

MSE, which is the mean of the variances, was then calculated. It was equal to 0.64. Then, the studentized range statistic (*Q*) was computed through the following formula:

$$Q = \frac{M_i - M_j}{\sqrt{MSE/n}}$$

For each pair of means, where **M_i** is one mean, **M** is the other mean, and **n** is the number of scores in each group. Finally, for each comparison, *p*-value was determined. The degree of freedom was equal to the total number of items minus the number of means. For this study, *df* = 30 - 3 = 27. The tests for these data are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Three Pair wise Comparisons using Tuckey HSD

Comparison	$M_i - M_j$	Q	p^*
Teacher – Student	0.07	0.40	0.95
Teacher – Classroom	0.56	3.21	0.01
Student – Classroom	0.49	2.60	0.17

* $p \leq .01$

Results (Table 3) show that the mean score of the teacher-related factors was not significantly different ($p < .01$) from that of the student-related factors. In addition, the difference of the mean scores between the student-related factors and the classroom-related factors did not reach statistical significance. However, the only significant comparison was between the teacher-related factors and the classroom-related factors. Considering the results obtained it can be said that the first research hypothesis ($H1$: There is a significant difference among student-, teacher-, and classroom-related, de-motivating factors that discourage Iranian high school students to speak in English) is accepted whereas the second hypothesis ($H2$: The teacher related factor is more effective than students related and classroom related factors in de-motivating Iranian high school students to speak in English) is rejected. All this suggests that classroom-related factors play an important role in comparison with the other factors.

Discussion

The current study intended to investigate the sources of de-motivation among Iranian high school students which discourage them to speak in English. The researcher originally assumed that three de-motivating factors caused those students to lose their motivation to speak in English. The results and findings showed that although the teacher related factors and student related factors are effective on the students de-motivation, the most effective factor is the classroom related factor. Participants at this study strongly declared the shortcomings of schools such as lack of audio and video usage and internet equipment, the classroom crowdedness of students and the idea of having no situation to use English for communication and also its usage out of classroom in real situation were emphasized as de- motivational factors affecting their learning quality which are grouped among the classroom related de-motivational factors.

The findings of this study are in line with the Oxford (1998) study in which she carried out an investigation on 250 American students about their learning experiences. The findings revealed that many shortcomings such as the degree of closure or seriousness of the class and the amount of irrelevant and repetitive subjects in the classroom were the de-motivating factors for the participants of the study. Also this study is in contrast with Gorham and Christophel (1992) studies in which the teacher related factors have played much more important roles in de-motivating the learners of English in comparison with other different factors. Also this study's findings are in contrast with Lantolf and Genung (2002) studies in which they conducted a case study of graduate student learning Chinese as a foreign language in a summer intensive course. They found that the learner became de-motivated because of the teacher's authoritative use of power.

In addition, the research findings revealed the teacher related and student related factors were not dominant factors to de-motivate the Iranian first grade high schools student's learning to speak in English and mostly they suffer from the situation and also the equipments which are used at schools for the learning purposes. Furthermore, the findings pointed out student attitudes about teacher's behavior, student laziness and motives vary one from one student to another.

Student motivation is also affected by various other factors associated with learning English. One of these factors is prior learning experience and also their background English knowledge which seriously affect their current outlook for the learning purpose of that language. By the time students enter to the high school, they have studied English for at least for 3 years at the secondary school and most of them have learned it out at different English institutes. So it is obvious that those more knowledgeable students with vast number of English words and grammar will be more successful and top students at the same classroom in comparing with other less knowledgeable ones at the same class. Another reason which caused the students to lose their motivation and self-confidence was the attitude toward the compulsory nature of language learning at Iranian schools which are designed by policy makers and also taught by the teachers. The students have to take English for the means of passing their current classroom examinations and then trying to succeed university entrance exams which led them have no desire to learn it for communication.

CONCLUSION

It became evident in this study that the classroom related factors play a major role in de-motivating Iranian high school students in speaking English. It seems that classrooms with lack of suitable equipment and interests make the students boring in the classroom and consequently this leads them to lose their eager and willing toward learning English as a language to speak. In order to overcome to this phenomenon, the classrooms should be equipped and updated with the new learning materials like internet and video sets according to the student's needs. And also another possible way to enhance student's motivation is to make the classroom as a friendly environment for their interaction and this will help them to improve their social skills and exert great influence on student's spirit and willingness to work cooperatively. In summary, having a friendly atmosphere in class is worth the effort as it can undoubtedly help students overcome the factors which are de-motivating them from speaking freely in the classroom.

Limitations of the study

Eventually, it must be stated that like many other studies, this study is not without its limitations. The results of this study were based on a sample population of students from two different high schools in Tabriz, Iran. Therefore, the generalization of the findings may be limited to groups of students with similar characteristics only. It may not be applicable for other populations with different countries, educational system and cultural backgrounds.

Regarding the sample, the number of students participating in this study was small. So in order to have more reliable findings, larger groups of students across different cities are needed.

REFERENCES

- Bao, D., Abdilah, H., & Chowdhury, R. (2012). EFL learners moving to an ESL context: Motivating and demotivating factors in English language learning among Iraqis. *The New English Teacher*, 6 (1), 125-144
- Christophel, D. M., & Gorham, J. (1995). A test-retest analysis of student motivation, teacher immediacy and perceived sources of motivation and demotivation in college classes. *Communication Education*, 44, 292-306.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Otto, I. (1998). Motivation in action: A process model of L2 motivation. *Working Papers in Applied Linguistics*, 4, 43-69.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001a). New themes and approaches in second language motivation research. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 21, 43-59.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001b). *Teaching and researching motivation*. Harlow: Longman.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*, 9-42.
- Falout, J., Elwood, J., & Hood, M. (2009). Demotivation: Affective states and learning outcomes. *System*, 37(3), 403-417.
- Falout, J., & Falout, M. (2005). The other side of motivation: learner demotivation. In: Bradford-Watts, K., Ikeguchi, C., Swanson, M. (Eds.), JALT2004 Conference Proceedings. JALT, Tokyo, pp. 280-289.
- Falout, J., & Maruyama, M. (2004). A comparative study of proficiency and learner demotivation. *The Language Teacher*, 28 (8), 3-9.
- Gorham, J., & Christophel, D. M. (1992). Students' perceptions of teacher behaviors as motivating and de-motivating factors in college classes. *Communication Quarterly*, 40(3), 239-252.
- Ghadirzadeh, R., Pourabolfathe, F., & Shokri, O. (2012). Demotivating factors for English language learning among university students. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(2), 189-195.
- Hassaskhah, J., Mahdavi, Z. A., & Fazeli, M. (2014). Reasons for demotivation across years of study: voices from Iranian English major students, *Educational Psychology: An International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology*, DOI:10.1080/01443410.2014.893557
- Heidari, K., & Riahipour, P. (2012). Demotivating factors on English speaking skill: A study of EFL language learners and teachers' attitudes. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 17(3), 327-339.
- Kikuchi, K., & Sakai, H. (2007). *Japanese learners' demotivation to study English: A survey study*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Kikuchi, K. (2009) listening to our learners' voices: what de-motivates Japanese high school students? *Language Teaching Research*, 13 (4), 453-471.
- Kim, T. Y. (2010). Reductionism, activity theory, and L2 motivation research: Toward new concepts and definitions. *Second Language Research*, 11 (2), 87-118.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Genung, P. (2002). I'd rather switch than fight": An activity-theoretic study of power, success, and failure in a foreign language classroom. *Language acquisition and language socialization: Ecological perspectives*, 175-196.

- Ministry of Education Report (2013). Malkarde vezarate amouzesh va parvareh dar sale 1392. Misnistry of Education. <http://medu.ir/Portal>
- Oxford, R.L. (1998). The unraveling tapestry: teacher and course characteristics associated with de-motivation in the language classroom. De-motivation in Foreign Language Learning. In Proceedings of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Congress (TESOL '98), Language learning. Paper presented at the TESOL'98 Congress, Seattle, WA.
- Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2002). Overview of self-determination theory: an organismic dialectical perspective. In E.L Deci & R.M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of Self-Determination Research* (pp. 3–33). University of Rochester Press, Rochester, NY.
- Sahragard, R., & Alimorad, Z. (2013). Demotivating factors affecting Iranian high school students' english learning. In M. Cortazzi, & L. Jin (Eds.), *Cultures of learning* (pp. 245-260), New York: McMillan.
- Sahragard, R., & Ansaripour, E. (2014). Demotivating and Remotivating Factors among MA Students of TEFL: An Iranian Case. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 2(1), 88-105.
- Sakai, H., & Kikuchi, K. (2009). An analysis of demotivators in the EFL classroom. *System*, 37(1), 57-69.
- Seo, H. S. (2012). Elementary school students' foreign language learning demotivation: A mixed methods study of Korean EFL context. *The Asia Pacific Education Researcher*, 21(1), 160-171.
- Song, L. (2005). Adult learners' self-directed learning in online environments: Process, personal attribute, and context. Unpublished Dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.
- Suzuki, N., Arai, K., & Yanai, H. (1999). Survey on the decline in college student performance. *Daigaku Nyushi Forum*, 22, 50–56.
- Tabatabaei, O., & Molavi, A. (2012). Demotivating factors affecting EFL learning of Iranian seminary students. *International Education Studies*, 5, 181-190.
- You, C. J., & Dörnyei, Z. (2014). Language learning motivation in China: Results of a large-scale stratified survey. *Applied Linguistics*, amu 046. Retrieved from <http://applied.oxfordjournals.org/content/doi:10.1093/applin/amu046>
- Vallerand, R.J., & Ratelle, C.F. (2002). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: a hierarchical model. In E.L Deci & R.M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of Self-Determination Research* (pp. 37–63). University of Rochester Press, Rochester, NY.
- Zhang, Q. (2007) Teacher misbehaviors as learning demotivators in college classrooms: A cross-cultural investigation in China, Germany, Japan, and the United States, *Communication Education*, 56 (2), 209-227, DOI: 10.1080/03634520601110104

ON THE ROLE OF REFLECTIVE THINKING IN COOPERATIVE LEARNING: AN INQUIRY-BASED STUDY OF IRANIAN TEACHERS

Sajjad Farokhipour (M.A in TEFL)

Department of English, Yasuj University, Yasuj, Iran

Hojjat Yosefali (M.A in TEFL)

Department of English, Sheikh Bahaei University, Isfahan, Iran

Ehsan Mostafapour (PhD student in sociology)

Department of Sociology, Islamic Azad University, Dehaghan Branch, Dehaghan, Iran

Mahdi Rezazadeh Ghazaan (PhD student in literature)

Department of literature, Islamic Azad University, Kashan Branch, Kashan, Iran

ABSTRACT

Reflection and reflective thinking has come on the scene in the field of language teaching in the recent years. The present study attempted to investigate the familiarity of Iranian EFL teachers with reflective thinking practices in language teaching situation and the main obstacles in way of doing it in the country. Besides, the study attempted to bring to light the effect of reflective thinking in collaborative learning in classroom. Therefore, three instruments including two questionnaires and one interview was put to use by the researchers. The findings of the study showed that Iranian language teachers are not familiar enough with reflective practice and its influence on language learning and teaching and teacher development. Also, the results of the study lit upon the main obstacles in the way of doing reflective teaching in the country. Finally the results of the research brought to light the practical effects of using reflection in fostering collaborative learning in the classroom setting. This study has many implications for EFL teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum developers and sociolinguists.

KEYWORDS: Cooperative Learning, Reflective Thinking, Teacher Development, Teacher Training

INTRODUCTION

It was about one hundred years ago that Dewey (1933) in his classic works gave birth to the term reflective practice in the field of teaching. According to Liston (1987), reflection is a cognitive inquiry and a thoughtful examination of action considering educational knowledge, practices and values in which experiences are analyzed in the context of prior knowledge for the endeavors of finding meaning that will lead to the creation of a new knowledge and to the development of new alternative ways. Dewey, in his classic works, added flesh on teacher education and introduced a reflective approach as an alternative to the existing models of teacher education (1910; 1933). In

his writings, Dewey made a criticism that teacher education is dominated by technical orientation, in which candidate teachers were guided to acquire and master technical skills, and where utmost importance was given on how to teach, without considering principles or philosophy in their practice. It was for the same reason that the term "reflective thinking" became popularized in the literature on teacher education in both pre-service and in-service programs. Reflective thinking skills and its application in teaching plays a vital role in the preparation of many new teachers on one hand and improving the practice of experienced teachers on the other. According to Johnson (2006), entering into constant professional development activities, which is a hallmark of reflective thinking practice, is a key for change to happen because it gives rise to self-directed, collaborative, inquiry based learning that is closely associated with teachers' classroom lives. In addition, reflective thinking provides enough resources for teachers to analyse, and evaluate their own practices, schools, classroom relationships and context of learning based on which teachers can make decisions and plan for future actions in the classroom and this could lead school, students and teacher to improve (Mrglova, 2008). On top of that, according to research findings (Glazer, Abbott & Haris, 2004; Kraft, 2002), reflective practices play a role in collaboration and communication in classroom which is an integral part of any language classroom especially in EFL contexts that is largely dependent on classroom interaction. Also, according to Erginel (2006) reflective practices that involve active self-evaluation, effective communication with equal peers and with colleagues, create a supportive interaction for professional growth which in turn let the teachers know how to bring to use the implications of their reflective practice during tutorial courses in real classroom context. He has also asserted that a reflective practice in classroom entails cooperation and teamwork along with autonomy. In spite of the fact that reflective practices can play a crucial role in, pre-service and in-service teacher education in many countries around the world and its importance as an approach to teaching in general and language teaching in particular, it is not known to what extent Iranian EFL teachers are familiar with reflective thinking concepts, strategies and, on top of that, the way they think of reflective thinking in teaching practice. Furthermore, little is done to explore the ways through which reflective practices can help interaction and cooperation in classroom in EFL context, if at all.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study is an attempt to delve into Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward reflective teaching and shed light on hindrances in the way of putting it into practice. Furthermore, the role of these practices in cooperative learning in classroom is studied. This part of the study, therefore, presents a report on the theoretical background of reflective teaching and offer the account of empirical studies carried out on this issue.

As it is also touched above, Dewey (1933) expanded an ethical scheme he named reflective morality in which he argued that every act, even an apparently minor action, is potentially of moral significance because it is joined to other actions. For the same reason, the separate actions of a teacher link together to shape behaviours and then habits, which consequently leave a lasting impression on the personality of the teacher, thus moral development becomes a critical element of teacher development and growth. In the past decades, the terms "reflection" and "reflective

reflection" or in general "reflective thinking" has been present in the educational circles and programs on teacher education. Not unlike other fields of study, in the field of language education this idea that teachers must reshape and reconstruct and renew their knowledge of teaching and learning has become in vogue (Farrel, 2007). This knowledge initially came on the scene in teacher education programs for pre-service teachers, then through reflective teaching practices became a permanent part of teacher education (Tedick, 2005). According to Grant and Zeichner (1984) "reflective practice" is in contrast with "routine action". While "routine practice" was considered as a behaviour which is directed by impulse, tradition and authority, reflective practice is considered as a "behaviour" which involves active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or practice in light of grounds that supports it and further consequences to which it leads. Also, reflective thinking has a deep root in Cartesian Philosophy and some social movements such as Feminism which are far beyond the scope of the present research. So, what that comes later are among those practical researches done in the field of reflective thinking and its application in language teaching and learning. Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2010) carried out a quantitative study and described the responses of 90 final year ELT- student teachers and eight of their trainers at Sultan Qaboos University in the Sultanate of Oman to study the roles, approaches and strategies used to help the student teachers to reflect on their teaching. A 25-item questionnaire was administered on line to collect the data from the student- teachers and trainers' responses for this aim. The results showed that while trainers have helped the development of student teachers as reflective practitioners, there were specific practices done by the trainers that impede the student teachers to be reflective practitioners and they have negative implications for the preparation of the teachers. Similar to this research was one carried out by Armutcu and Yamen (2010) to explore any change in teacher reflection artistry of 4th grade pre-service teachers in English Language Teaching Department (ELT) an on-going practicum was considering sex and type of instruction as independent variables from quantitative point of view. The study aimed to illustrate their thoughts, feelings and experiences qualitatively. Participants in the study were thirty-seven ELT pre-service teachers chosen non-randomly from both day and night. Twenty-nine of them were females while only eight of them were males. In this study, "Teacher Reflection Scale" (Kayapinar & Erkus, 2009) and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The results of the study showed that pre-service teachers in ELT department had higher teacher reflection both at the beginnings and through the ends of practicum and no change was observed between these two measures. Also, in one more study, Enisa (2010) investigated the effects of collaborative reflection professional development on EFL teachers. This study was conducted at a preparatory school of an English Medium Turkish University in Istanbul. There were 26 teachers in this school but due to their loaded schedules only three (two female, one male) were able to participate in the study. The data was collected through three qualitative research methods: a) observers' field notes, b) electronic journals and c) notes from the teachers' dialogues. The results of this study showed that collaborative reflection might have positive effects on EFL teachers' teaching and foster teacher dialogue.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Taking into account the issues mentioned above, the current study is an attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1- Are Iranian EFL teachers with knowledge of different dimensions of reflective thinking?
- 2- What are main obstacles in the way of doing reflective teaching in Iranian setting?
- 3- Does reflective teaching help cooperative language learning?

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to investigate the knowledge of Iranian EFL teachers about reflective teaching. The second aim was to explore whether any hindrances exist in the way of Iranian EFL teachers to know about the concept of reflective teaching and its practice as a reflective practitioner. Thirdly, the effect of reflective practices in cooperative teaching and learning is investigated. Research designs in studies are vitally important because they, in large part, dictate the type of research design used, the sample size and sampling scheme employed, and the type of instruments administered as well as the data analysis techniques (i.e., statistical or qualitative) used (Mackey and Gass, 2006). Therefore, the design of the study is an inquiry-based qualitative one in which all questions of the research are looked into three different qualitative open ended questionnaire.

Participants

The participants were 100 EFL teachers selected through convenient sampling since the participants were available to the researcher. The teachers were from both Language Colleges and universities in the city of Tehran, Iran. 86 of them had M.A in TEFL and 14 of them had PhD in TEFL or English language and literature. With regard to gender, they were 91 male and 9 female teachers whose age ranged from 28 to 63 years old. Additionally, concerning their teaching experience, they had 5 to 32 years of service. For bringing to light different dimensions of the third question we selected 3 teachers performing reflective techniques and 3 teachers unpractised with reflective techniques in classes of whom we selected 20 students respectively. These teachers were selected purposively based on the results of the first and the second questions. To achieve the homogenous data all these 6 teachers were teaching at intermediate level in different language colleges.

Instrumentation

Three different instruments were used in this study. For the first question, an open-ended questionnaire consisting of 29 items and 5 dimensions was adapted and adopted from Akbari, et al (2010) the validity and reliability of which was considered through a pilot study. The questionnaire brings to light the different dimensions of reflective teaching practice. The first dimension of the questionnaire, 'practical element', includes items that deal with the tools and the actual practices of reflection such as journal writing, lesson reports, audio and video recordings, observations, etc. Second dimension of the questionnaire, 'cognitive element', is concerned with teacher's efforts aimed at professional development such as performing small-scale classroom research project (action research), attending conferences and workshops and reading the professional literatures are among the behaviours are included in this dimension. 'Learner dimension' or 'affective dimension' is the third in the questionnaire. It encompasses the reflection of the teacher on his/her students, the learning of the students, and their emotions. It also deals with the teachers' reflection on cultural linguistic backgrounds of the students, interests and

developmental readiness for lessons. 'Meta-cognitive dimension which is the fourth one which touches teachers and their reflections on their own beliefs and personality, their emotional and affective character and teacher's reflections on the effects of their personalities on teaching practices. The last dimension, the critical one, consists of items referring to the socio-political aspects of teaching and teacher's reflections upon teaching issues. The items of this dimension deal with teacher's reflections on political aspects of teaching practice and teaching topics related to race, gender and social class in the classroom context. The second instrument used in the research was an open ended interview aiming at uncovering the most prominent challenges and obstacles in the way of doing reflective practices in Iran. The third instrument was a questionnaire adopted from Mrglova (2008) to compare the cooperative learning in classes with reflective teachers and those with teachers unfamiliar with reflective practices.

Procedure

The first questionnaire was distributed among the participants through face to face methods. The data collected through interview - the second instrument- were also transcribed, coded and categorized. All interviews were audiotaped. For the sake of the third question we distributed our third instrument among 20 students with their teachers conversant with reflective practices and 20 students with their teachers unfamiliar with reflective practices to compare the amount of cooperative learning and teaching in respective classes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the First Questionnaire

As mentioned above, in order to explore Iranian language teachers' familiarity with reflective teaching practices, qualitative data are collected and analysed, the results of which are mentioned below:

Familiarity with Practical Dimension of Reflective Thinking

Practical dimension is concerned with the instruments teachers put to use for reflection practice. Several instruments such as 'portfolios', 'journals', 'audio and video recording', 'observation' can be employed for reflective practices. The results of this section brought to light the fact that only 19 percent of Iranian EFL teachers have a file where they keep their accounts of teaching for reviewing purposes. Besides, only 23 percent of teachers talk about their classroom experiences with their colleagues and seek their advice/feedback. In addition, 22 percent of these teachers write about the accomplishments/failures of the lesson or talk about the lesson to a colleague, after each lesson. Too, only 10 percent of teachers discuss practical/theoretical issues with their colleagues. Furthermore, 25 percent of teachers observe other teacher's classrooms to learn about their efficient practices. And finally, 9 percent of teachers like their colleagues to observe their teaching and comment on their performance.

Familiarity with Cognitive Dimension of Reflective Thinking

Cognitive dimension of reflective teaching is concerned with teachers' attempts aimed at professional developments. Conducting small-scale classroom research projects (i.e. action research), attending conferences and workshops related to teachers' field of study, and reading the

professional literature are among the behaviours included in this dimension of reflective teaching. The results of the study showed that 38 percent of Iranian EFL teachers read books/articles related to effective teaching to improve their classroom performance. 23 percent of teachers participate in workshops/conferences related to teaching/learning issues, 12 percent think of writing articles based on their own classroom experiences, 24 percent look at journal articles or search the Internet to see what the recent developments in their profession, 8 percent carry out small-scale research activities in classes to become better informed of learning/teaching processes and finally 13 percent of them think of classroom events as potential research topics and think of finding a method for investigating them.

Familiarity with Affective Dimension of Reflective Thinking

Affective dimension includes items dealing with teachers' reflection on his/her students; the way they learn, emotional behaviours of the students and the way they react emotionally in their classes. Learner dimension also includes reflection on linguistic and cultural background of the students and their interests. The results of the study showed that 17 percent of Iranian teachers talk to their students to learn about their learning styles and preferences. Also, 29 percent of teachers talk to their students to learn about their family backgrounds, hobbies, interests and abilities. Also, only 17 percent of them ask their students whether they like a teaching task or not.

Familiarity with Meta-Cognitive Dimension of Reflective Thinking

Meta-cognitive dimension deals with teachers and their reflections on their own beliefs, attitudes, and personalities. Moreover, it considers emotional character of teachers and the way they define themselves as a teacher. The results of this section showed that only 22 percent of Iranian EFL teachers think about their teaching philosophy and the way it affects their teaching. Also, 17 percent of them think of the ways their biography or their background affects the way they define themselves as a teacher. Too, 49 percent of them think of the meaning or significance of their job as a teacher and 29 percent try to find out which aspects of teaching provide them with a sense of satisfaction. Besides, 69 percent of them think about their strengths and weaknesses as a teacher. Finally, 28 percent of them think of their consistencies and contradictions that occur in their classroom practices

Familiarity with Critical Dimension of Reflective Thinking

Critical dimension refers to socio-political aspects of education and reflection upon them. It takes the broader aspects of society into consideration when defining reflective practice. Critical dimension of reflective teaching associates teaching with its broader social and cultural context. Teachers reflect on political facets of their teaching and issues such as race, gender, social class and how they can empower students for their social live. The results of the study showed that only 9 percent of teachers think about instances of social injustice in their own surroundings and try to discuss them in their classes, 6 percent of them think of ways to enable students to change their social lives in fighting poverty, discrimination, and gender bias, 11 percent of them include less-discussed topics, such as old age, AIDS, discrimination against women and minorities, and poverty in their teaching sessions, 9 percent of them think about the political aspects of their teaching and the way they may affect their students' political views, 9 percent of them think of ways they can promote tolerance and democracy in the class and in the society in general and

finally 14 percent of them think of outside social events that may influence their teaching inside the class.

Results of the interview

The second instrument used in the research was an open ended interview aiming at uncovering the most prominent challenges and obstacles in the way of doing reflective practices in Iran. The Results of this section were audiotaped, transcribed, analyzed and then categorized in the following table, the results of which brings to light the main obstacles in the way of doing reflective teaching in Iranian setting.

Main Obstacles	Main Codes of Obstacles
Personal Obstacles	Lack of time for reflection Past experiences (unfamiliarity with reflection in high school, teacher training centers or universities and both pre-service and in-service courses Unawareness of worth and importance of reflection Negative attitude towards students roles Lack of writing skills
Affective obstacles	Fear of criticism in collective discussion Lack of self- critical mind Low tolerance for being criticized by others Lack of self-confidence for being observed
Structural obstacles	Teachers workload Weak in-service courses (lack of in-service programs) Outdated views about teaching Physical environment of schools Low budgeting and non-facile research condotion

Results of the Second Questionnaire

For the sake of the third question, we selected 20 students in a class with reflective teachers and 20 students in a class with non-reflective teachers. To select the classes with reflective and non-reflective teachers, purposive sampling was done but to select the students in each class, simple random sampling was exercised. A questionnaire adopted form Mrglova (2008) was distributed among students and the following result were obtained. The aim of this section was to shed light on the role of reflective teaching practices on cooperative language learning in class.

Class with Reflective Teacher	Class with Non-Reflective Teacher
90% of Ss enjoy attending the class	80 % of students enjoy attending the class
95% of Ss view most of their classmates as friend	55% of Ss view most of their classmates as friend
95% of Ss can cooperate with anybody in class	45% of Ss can cooperate with anybody in class
5% of Ss think of their mates as rude to them	30% of Ss think of their mates as rude to them
10% of Ss do not like some of their classmates	35% of Ss do not like some of their classmates
50% of Ss can do their homework independently	50% of Ss can do their homework independently
20% of Ss feel bad when they do not know the answer	65% of Ss feel bad when they do not know the answer
75% of Ss want to be the first in the class	80% of Ss want to be the first in the class
95% of Ss believe that relationships in the class are very good	45% of Ss believe that relationships in the class are very good
100% of Ss believe that they have a good relation with their teacher	65% of Ss believe that they have a good relation with their teacher
95% of Ss like to participate in all discussions	55% of Ss like to participate in all discussions
30% of Ss like explanation of grammar, individual work and un-grouped class activity	55% of Ss like explanation of grammar, individual work and un-grouped class activity

Discussion

Concerning the first question which investigated the extent to which Iranian EFL teachers are familiar with concepts and practices of reflective thinking in teaching language, the results of the study showed that almost all of them are not versed enough with the concepts touched in the questionnaire. In the case of the first factor in the questionnaire, namely the practical dimension of reflective practice, the findings are not in line with Farrell (2007) who suggests language teachers come together in teacher development groups to reflect and this reflection helps them complement each other's strengths and compensate for each other's limitations and weaknesses. He also stated that teachers participating in these discussions stimulate each other to articulate their thoughts about their career and this in turn helps them to grow professionally together.

Besides, the findings of the first questionnaire are not in congruence with McDonough (1994) that maintains teachers who write regularly about their teaching experiences and events can become aware of their behaviours and underlying attitudes. With regard with second factor of the first questionnaire aimed at investigating teachers attempt for professional development, we see that these teachers are not at home with concepts such as action research and workshops and etc. These findings are not in line with Rock and Levin (2000) and Chant et, al (2004) who studied the intersection of reflection and action research in pre-service teaching and they stated that involving pre-service teachers in action research makes them more aware of students' learning, classroom complexity, and their own agency as teachers. They also suggested that teachers are more likely to become reflective, critical and analytical when engaging in research actions projects. On top of that, Harmer (2003) discussed conferences, meetings and workshops allow teachers to know about the latest developments in the field of teaching, participate in investigative workshops and discuss about current issues in theory and practice. Participants in such conferences converse with each other about teaching problems and seek some solutions. The third factor of the first questionnaire dealt with teachers' reflecting on his/her students, how they learn, and emotional behaviours of students and the way they react emotionally in their classes. The results of the teacher's responses to this factor indicated that they are not also well up in this factor while understanding individual student learning is crucial for every teacher and she/he should focus on students' needs, interests and abilities. Kagan (1992) discusses a "critical lack of knowledge about pupils" and calls on teacher educators to assist pre-service teachers focus on students' needs and interest. Reflection can be helpful for teachers to recognize and understand their students' styles and preferences emotional behaviours. The fourth dimension of the questionnaire was concerned with teachers and their reflections on their own beliefs, attitudes, and personality. It also dealt with emotional character of teachers and the way they define themselves as a teacher. In spite of the fact that teachers own image influences his career in a great extent, the results of this factor were also frustrating. In one study, for example, Johnson (1994) focused on pre-service English as second language teachers, and she found that images from formal language learning experiences influenced these teachers' images on themselves as teachers, teaching, and the way they perceive their instructional practices. These findings indicated that the pre-service teachers tended to project their role in teaching and their instruction based on their experiences as a language learner. Teachers tended to project their role in teaching and their instruction based on their experiences as a language learner. Results of teacher's responses to the latest questionnaire were also incongruent with literature in favour of reflective

practice. These teachers were little au courant with socio-political aspects of education and reflection upon them. Bartlett (1990) suggested that in order for teachers to become critical reflective practitioners they have to go beyond technicalities of teaching and think beyond the need to improve their instructional techniques. He believes that critical reflection can locate teaching in its broader social and cultural contexts. This reflection will able teachers connect the classroom world to the outside world and both students and teachers made aware of socio-political aspects of their teaching. In the same line, Webb (2001) raises attention to the necessity for guidance for practitioner to question his/her beliefs on ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic classes during reflection so that transformation towards equity and Multiculturalism could take place. Otherwise, he argues that the practitioner could be negatively affected by reflection, since s/he will focus on technical issues and his/her mainstream beliefs, and consequently, presumptions of individuals will remain unchanged. In fact, in his argument, Webb points out the necessity for reflection to move beyond technical level, and the importance of encouragement for critical reflection and its possible impacts on education for transformation.

Concerning the second question, the results of the interviews demonstrated that personal and structural obstacles are the main barriers of practicing reflection and reflective teaching. Personal obstacles include lack of time for reflection, teachers' past experiences, lack of awareness on importance or worth of reflection, teachers' attitude toward the role of students, lack of writing skills and teachers' affective obstacles. Lack of time was mentioned by most of the teachers as an obstacle. According to Day's (1999) research, time and opportunities are the main prerequisites needed to develop complex reflective skills for teachers. The teachers' past experiences was also mentioned by some interviewees. According to Freeman (1992), the character of the people in general and the teachers in particular is under the influence of past experiences. Teaching methods of their teachers and teachers' behaviour, character and the way of managing the class can influence prospect teachers. He also stated that these past experiences gleaned through teachers' observations as a student function as a guide for them in their teaching and determine the way they approach what they do in their classes. Affective barriers were mentioned by some participants in the interviews. These results are in line with Farrell (2004) suggesting that in order to practice reflective teaching teachers need a sense of security. Structural obstacles were also mentioned. Finding a solution these kinds of obstacles is outside the limits of this study and they remain for further study.

The results of the third question, as it is indicated in table 2, shows that reflective practices fosters collaborative teaching and learning in the classroom because it helps teachers and students both, to shape their values and their identities and this in turn brings about good cooperation and collaboration in class (Hall & Hall, 1988). Besides, reflective practices help students to distinguish between "their public display, their blind spots, their dreamer spots, their untapped reservoir and their unknown potential which all in all result in more collaboration and more interaction in class (Easen 1985). Also, reflective practice help teachers to change their perceptions of pupils and therefore student are given more roles and more autonomy in interaction and classroom activities (Pollard, et al, 2005). Everybody will definitely agree with Claxton (1999) and Katz (1995) "that the way that children think of themselves in school will directly influence their approach to learning. The review of the literature shows that reflective

teaching practices help students to develop positive self-concepts among students (Richards, 2008). Reflective teachers provide more opportunities where student's qualities can be appreciated, and these qualities are improved through group works and collaboration (Pollard, et al 2005). Besides, according to Mrglova (2008), reflective teaching techniques, exercised by a reflective practitioner can help the betterment of students' attitude towards family, school, peers at school and the whole community, which this in turn fosters a sense of collaboration and cooperation in social settings. Reflective practices also change students' perception of their teachers. Whenever positive classroom climate is to be established, children's attitudes towards teachers are changed positively.

CONCLUSION

The present study was an attempt to bring to light the amount of familiarity of Iranian EFL teachers with reflective thinking practices, the obstacles in the way of this practice and possible effects of reflective teaching in cooperative learning. The findings of the study showed that a great percent of participants are neither familiar with different dimensions of reflection nor they put it to use while teaching. Also, the results of the study brought to light principal obstacles in the way of doing reflective practice. Finally, the study showed that reflective practice fosters cooperative language learning in classroom context. The results of the study are then discussed from a variety of perspectives. Besides, these results can be discussed from the Piaget's theory of cognitive developments; it is further on than the limits of this study, however. They remain for further study, therefore. The current study has implication for EFL and ESL teachers, teacher-training centers and sociolinguists.

REFERENCES

- Akbari, R. (2007). Reflections on reflective teaching: A critical appraisal of reflective practices in L2 teacher education. *System*, 35(2), 192-207
- Al-Issa., & Al-Bulushi. (2010). Training English language student teachers to become reflective teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(4), 41-64.
- Armutcu., & Yaman. (2010). ELT pre-service teachers' teacher reflection through practicum. *Procedia social and behavior sciences*, 3, 28-35.
- Bartlett, L. (1990). Teacher development through reflective teaching. In J.C. Richards & Nunan (Eds.), *Second language teacher education* (pp. 202-214). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Day, C. (1999). Researching teaching through reflective practice. In Loughran J. (Eds.), *Researching Teaching; Methodologies and practices for Understanding Pedagogy* (pp. 215 –232). London: Falmer press.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A Restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Chicago: Henry Regnery
- Chant, R.H., Heafner, T., & Bennett, K. R. (2004). Connecting personal theorizing and action research in pre-service teacher development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 30(3), 25-40.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2007). *Reflective language teaching: From research to practice*. London: Continuum Press.

- Farrell, T.S.C. (2004). *Reflective practice in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Freeman, D.(1992). Language teacher education, emerging discourse, and change in classroom practice. In J. Flowerdew, M.Brock, & Hsia (Eds.), *Perspectives on language teacher education* (pp. 1-21). Hong Kong: City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.
- Grant, C., & Zeichner, K. (1984). On becoming a reflective teacher. In C. Grant (ed.,) *Preparing for reflective teaching* (pp. 1-8), Boston: Allyn& Bacon.
- Harmer, J. (2003). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*.. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Johnson, K. E. (1994). The emerging beliefs and instructional practices of preservice English as a second language teachers. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 10 (4), 439-452.
- Johnson, K. (2006). The sociocultural turn and its challenges for second language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly* 40 (1), 235-257.
- Kagan, D. M. (1992). Professional growth among pre-service and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 62 (2), 129-169.
- MacKey, A., & Gass, S. (2006). *Second language research: methodology and design*. Routledge.
- McDonough, J. (1994). A teacher looks at teachers' diaries. *ELT Journal*, 48, 1-9.
- Mrglova, S. (2008). *Reflective Teaching and its Influence on Classroom Climate*. Masaryk University. Brno.
- Pollard, A. (2005). *Reflective Teaching*, 2nd ed. London, New York: Continuum.
- Richards, Jack C. (2008). *Towards Reflective Teaching*. The Teacher Trainer.
<http://www.tttjournal.co.uk>
- Rock, T.C., & Levin, B.B. (2002). Collaborative action research projects: Enhancing pre-service teacher development in professional development schools. *Teacher Educational Quarterly*, 28(1), 7-21.
- Tedick, D. (2005). *Second language teacher education: International perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum
- Webb, P. T. (2001). Reflection and reflective teaching: Ways to improve pedagogy or ways to remain racist? *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 4 (3), 245-252.

DOES INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING ENHANCE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING: A CASE STUDY OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Farzaneh Fattahi (Corresponding author)

Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
E-Mail: Farzanehfattahi2004@yahoo.com

Hamid Reza Haghverdi

Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
E-Mail: H.haghverdi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between inquiry-based learning and critical thinking. Inquiry-based learning is an approach which starts with questioning and leads to investigating an issue or idea. A well-organized inquiry-based learning can promote information literacy. Popular discussions on education as well as recent findings have come to the same conclusion that in the present society, new methods of learning and engaging students are required. The aims of this study necessitated the analysis of data produced by 40 advanced Iranian EFL learners who were randomly selected from different universities in Isfahan. The participants were asked to fill out two questionnaires (to see the extent to which they think critically) in the first phase of the study. In the next phase, the participants were divided into two groups as control and experimental group. Inquiry-based learning was taught to the experimental group, whereas traditional method was employed for the control group. The results of this quantitative investigation showed a significant relationship between inquiry-based learning and critical thinking. Among the implications of the study, which could be used by teachers and practitioners, could be that one possible way of having critical thinkers could be exposing them to inquiry-based instruction.

KEYWORDS: Information literacy, EFL learners, Inquiry-Based learning, Critical thinking

INTRODUCTION

Inquiry-Based Learning

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) is an approach, in which students have control over their learning. It begins with questioning and leads to investigation into a reliable issue or idea. Followers of this constructivist approach begin with questioning, gathering and analyzing information, creating solutions, making decisions, justifying conclusions and taking action. In other words, students construct their own recognition about the world.

A well-organized inquiry-based learning can expand problem-solving abilities and develop skills for lifelong learning. Researches have shown this approach is a procedure to motivate students. Students work cooperatively to solve problems and the depth of understanding is greater than other teaching approaches. Students learn better when they are at the center of their own learning progress. Inquiry-based learning is a learning process through questions stemmed from the interests, curiosities, and experiences of the learner. When findings generate from our own questions, curiosities, and experiences, learning is an organic and motivating process that is enjoyable from inside.

IBL is a flexible approach which is open-ended to the students' feedback. Students are supposed to benefit from their own inquiry and build information accordingly. IBL should not necessarily be appeared in the context of assessment. Group activities and peer works can be good examples of IBL contexts. The challenge for IBL in opposition with the traditional methods is embedded in meaningful learning to facilitate deep understanding of the students. (McKinney, 2010)

IBL covers a number of other approaches to teaching and learning. Sub-branches of inquiry-based learning include: (a) problem-based learning: learning that starts with an ill-structured problem or it can be a case-study, (b) project-based learning: in which students make a project or presentation as an indication of their understanding, (c) design-based learning: learning through working for design of a solution to a problem, and (d) constructivism: learning through the physical construction of a concrete object in the real world.

Some studies have shown that inquiry-based learning (IBL) is very helpful and beneficial in promoting different learning outcomes such as deep thinking and the ability to apply knowledge and reasoning skills when compared to the traditional educational approach (Chinn, Duncan, & Hmelo-Silver, 2007).

It worth mentioning there are two models for IBL. The first one is the model in which the students are aware of the process of IBL and the second one is the type of IBL in which students are not aware of the process of IBL. They do what the instructor says without knowing the process of IBL. This study belongs to the second group in which students participate in the study, answer questionnaires, receive pretest and posttest, and participate in experimental and control group with having information about IBL and traditional method of learning.

Critical Thinking

The term critical thinking (CT) can be defined as the ability to think rationally and logically. Critical thinking is a process of actively involving, analyzing, studying, and surveying the problem to come up to a final conclusion. People with self-guided minds attempt to justify at the highest level in a fair-minded way. They want to decrease the power of society tendencies and use principles and logic to strengthen thinking.

Critical thinking is believed to be the cornerstone of higher education, but it is very difficult to measure it because critical thinking is not a stable outcome. It means that an individual is consistently questioning about different assumptions, creating more information, and exploring alternatives (Brookfield, 1987).

A professional critical thinker asks essential and critical questions to ferret out a possible solution, collects a variety of concrete and abstract ideas from different sources, infers reasonable and logical connection among different opinions, and solves the problem through systematic gathering of information. Some researchers have suggested different skills for the development and promotion of critical thinking. These skills can be mentioned as the following: analyzing, applying standards, discriminating, information seeking, logical reasoning, predicting, and transforming knowledge.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As contrasted with more traditional forms of teaching and learning, inquiry emphasizes the process of learning in order to develop deep understanding in students in addition to the intended acquisition of content knowledge and skills. Popular discussions on education as well as recent findings in the learning sciences came to the same conclusion. Instructors should apply various methods for different societies in different times. The model of education of 20th century classrooms was effective for that era of human history, but the society we now live in requires new methods of thinking about the way of learning and engaging teaching. Teachers are now faced with the challenge that former definitions of learning is no longer beneficial in our present world where what we know is less important than what we are able to do with knowledge for various usages.

According to the National Science Education Standards (NRC, 1996), inquiry is an important teaching method in science. It includes various classroom activities, such as creating questions, examining and observing text books and other sources of information, analyzing data, synthesizing different sources of information, and communicating the results. Audet and Jordan (2005) expressed that teachers play the role of facilitator who can guide students to ask questions, state their opinions, and make discoveries in search for new understanding of science. Cowan and Cipriani (2009) even introduced their first-graders into scientific inquiry through an arts-integrated, pattern-searching approach to build a deeper understanding of science content and processes. In fact, the scientific inquiry is congruent to the concept of information literacy, because they both emphasize the reasoning and critical thinking.

A good definition that can be understood more easily is that critical thinking is the correct assessing of statements (Ennis, 1962). This definition suffers from creative aspects of critical thinking. The following definition can be better to minimize confusion in communication. Critical thinking is a kind of reasonable thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. In other hand, for being reasonable and logical to know what to do, a person must be able to identify conclusions and reasons, judge the quality of argument and acceptability of its reasons and evidences, defend a position on an issue, ask questions to clarify the problem, be open-minded, draw conclusion with caution.

However, Chang and Mao (1998) investigated the effects of an inquiry-based teaching in science and received the meaningful higher achievement scores only at the comprehensive test, not at the factual level. National Research Council (2000) also claimed that inquiry-based teaching may not

be appropriate for the goal which made students to memorize information. In addition, an inquiry-based study conducted by Brickman, Gormally, Armstrong, and Hallar (2009) found that in inquiry students' literacy and research skills have improved, but these students gained less self-confidence in scientific abilities compared to the traditional students. Furthermore, the roots of both inquiry-based and problem-based approaches can be traced back to the progressive movement, especially to John Dewey's belief (Audet & Jordan, 2005; Delisle, 1997; Savery, 2006). Their common characteristics included learner-centered, active learning, as well as real and ill-structured problems. By the same token, research results of inquiry learning were also found in the problem-based learning studies (PBL). Reviewing problem-based learning research from the past 30 years, Hung, Jonassen, and Liu (2008) concluded that PBL curricula had better knowledge application and clinical reasoning skills, but performed less well in basic or factual knowledge acquisition than traditional curriculum. On the other hand, Strobel and Barneveld (2009) used a qualitative approach to find the effectiveness of PBL. They expressed that problem-based learning was more effective for long-term retention, skill development and satisfaction of students and teachers, while traditional approaches were more effective and useful for short-term retention.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The aim of the study was to find an answer to the following research question:
Does inquiry-based learning enhance EFL learners' critical thinking?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A sample of 40 advanced EFL learners was randomly selected from different universities in Isfahan, Iran. The participants were chosen from English majors who were advanced university students at Khorasgan, Najafabad, and Isfahan University. They aged between 25 and 35 and included both genders. These academic students were all native Persian speakers from different affiliations. They had normal economic status and were from different geographical locations in Iran. They were divided to two groups of experimental and control group. In this study there was an experimental group consisting of 20 participants and a control group with the same number of participants. The study became feasible due to existence of experimental and control group, inquiry-based learning treatment, critical thinking for pretest and posttest, and randomly selected participants.

Materials and Instruments

In order to explore the effect of IBL on CT, 40 participants from different universities filled in two different questionnaires regarding their way of learning and thinking. These two questionnaires were derived from the Internet and their reliability was found to be satisfactory (.81 and .93, respectively) by three EFL experts while they were checking their face and content validity. TOEFL test was used to measure the level of proficiency of the students. TOEFL test was used to neutralize the possible effect of background knowledge of the students. This test included 20 reading comprehension tests which were to be answered by two groups of the

students. There was another questionnaire to measure students' level of CT. It is a deductive test for critical thinking and each question belongs to two different categories. The first one is Delphi conceptualization and the second one is traditional categorization. The questionnaires were devised in Persian (learners' mother tongue) not English. This is because of the main format of these valid questionnaires and misunderstandings which may happen due to lack of the exact correspondence between expressions in two languages. The first questionnaire asked students to answer the questions according to the style of their learning. It asked about the expectations the students may have about themselves or the way they learn more easily. This questionnaire revealed the amount or level of inquiry-based learning in each student. The second questionnaire asked questions which led to the level of critical thinking. The questions were completely challenging in the way that they required concentration and critical thinking.

Procedure

The participants were divided into two equal groups. Each group had 20 members that belonged to experimental group and control group. Before applying the experiments, TOEFL tests were given to 40 members of two groups to ensure that the students were at the same level of proficiency. Then critical thinking questionnaires were given to the 40 members of two groups to ascertain that there were not meaningful differences between critical thinking levels of these students. Afterwards, the first group of student was taught reading comprehension by an ordinary traditional method and the second group was taught reading comprehension by inquiry-based models of learning for one semester, which was about 15 sessions. In this experimental group, most of the learning responsibility was put on the learners' shoulders. After three months, when the semester finished, critical thinking questionnaires were given to all of the students again to measure the effect of traditional method and inquiry-based method on the amount critical thinking development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher aimed to answer the question of whether IBL enhanced critical thinking or not. To answer this question, quantitative evaluation using *t* test was employed.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest for IBL Learners

Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM
IBL Pretest	20	9.30	2.886	.645
IBL Posttest	20	14.70	2.203	.493

As it is displayed, for inquiry-based learners the mean of pretest was 9.30, but the mean of posttest was 14.70. So the process of inquiry-based learning increased critical thinking during 15 sessions, as this is also shown in the figure below. This figure shows the mean of pretest and posttest of the experimental group.

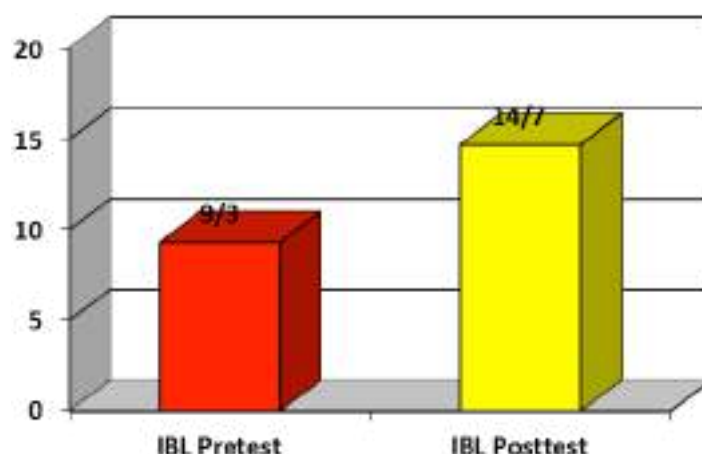


Figure 1: The Mean of CT Scores Before and After IBL Treatment

The dark box indicates the mean of the pretest and the light box indicates the mean of the posttest for experimental group.

Table 2: Quantitative Evaluation Using *t* Test for Pretest and Posttest of IBL Learners

<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
-6.652	38	.000	-5.40

Based on the results of the *t* test analysis presented in Table 2, there was a significant difference between the two tests ($t = -6.652$, $p = .000 < .05$).

Some studies were done regarding the implication of IBL. One of the studies discussed about the integration of PBL which is a kind of IBL and General Studies for primary schools. This research was done successfully due to having positive effects on information literacy, educational skills, and attitude towards the use of Internet among students.

Another research was done to explore the relationship between engagement in the classroom and active learning. The purpose of this research was to provide quantitative evidence for the effect of problem-based learning on academic performance and students' engagement. The results of the study showed that students in IBL groups were much motivated to take the responsibility of the process of learning.

One of the studies discussed about the integration of PBL which is a kind of IBL and General Studies for primary schools. This research was done successfully due to having positive effects on information literacy, educational skills, and attitude towards the use of Internet among students. Another study was conducted to use inquiry-based laboratory in promoting inquiry in undergraduate students in biotechnology. The results indicated that students gained the ability to measure cellulose activity after inquiry-based laboratory activities. The students found more willingness and enthusiastic in doing given activities than in traditional classes. Another

research was done to explore the relationship between engagement in the classroom and active learning. The purpose of this research was to provide quantitative evidence for the effect of problem-based learning on academic performance and students' engagement. The results of the study showed that students in IBL groups were much motivated to take the responsibility of the process of learning.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study was to explore whether IBL increased the amount of critical thinking in the participants. The researcher performed an experiment to find the answer to this question. The questionnaire of critical thinking acted as pretest before treatment and posttest after treatment. Total scores of pretest were compared to the total scores of posttests. The correlation formula of this comparison answered the second research question. Inquiry-based learning can enhance critical thinking.

To recap what was mentioned previously, it can be implied that upcoming methods of teaching and text books should consider student-centered ways of presenting lessons. It is a good idea to the teachers to use new methods which motivate students to become curious and ask about details of the context. Teachers can promote students' CT to guide them toward IBL. Text books are excellent devices to increase students' motivation to not to be dependent to the teachers. Text books can be promising sources to release students from teacher-centered approaches

Limitations of the Study

In every research, the researcher will be faced with some limitations. This study also had some problems that must be controlled in order to not to reach to deadlock. One of the limitations was the choice of the material that should be taught to the students in both control and experimental groups. Not every reading text was appropriate to be taught according to these two different methods. There are lots of educational books in the libraries but a few of them are challenging enough to be taught in IBL method. The subject of readings was really important in a way that it was to be interesting, attractive, and challenging enough to be taught to the students in IBL method.

It is true that IBL is very different from traditional methods, but teachers themselves are important factors who can have great influence on the amount of learning. Each teacher has an especial method for teaching. On the other hand, some of the teachers can convey the meaning of something in the best way. Some teachers are born with the intrinsic talent of teaching. These teachers are more successful in transferring the material to the students. This can be considered as another limitation for this study because the two teachers who were teaching experimental and control group might not be professional the same as each other. The educational level of the participants was another limitation that the researcher was faced with. IBL is not a method that can be presented freely in schools as a routine. Advanced students are more dependent and willing to use IBL, but lower level students tend to use teacher-centered methods because they direct the way of their own learning. With this point in mind, choosing appropriate participant was difficult. Not every student could take part in this study.

REFERENCES

- Bell, R. L., Smetana, L., & Binns, I. (2005). Simplifying inquiry instruction. *National Science Teachers Association*.
- Berg, E. C. (1999). The effects of trained peer response on ESL students' revision types and writing quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(3), 215-241.
- Bernard, H. R. (1995). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.
- Carmines, E., & Zeller, R. (1979). *Reliability and validity assessment*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Chaudron, C. (1988). *Second language classrooms: Research on teaching and learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Chaudron, C., Crookes, G., & Long, M. H. (1988). *Reliability and validity in second language classroom research*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Critical Thinking Community. (2006). Measuring critical thinking. *Toolkit*, 4(4), 1-7.
- Ennis, R. H. (1993). Critical Thinking Assessment. *Theory into Practice*, 32(3), 1-8.
- Fraenkel, J., & Wallen, N. (2003). *How to design and evaluate research in education* New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gokhale, A. A. (1995). Collaborative learning enhances critical thinking. *Journal of Technology Education*, 7(1), 2-9.
- Ketpichainarong, W., Panijpan, B., & Ruenwongsa, P. (2010). Enhanced learning of biotechnology students by an inquiry-based cellulase laboratory. *International Journal of Environmental & Science Education*, 5(2), 169-187.
- Kilpatrick, W. H. (1921). Dangers and difficulties of the project method and how to overcome them: Introductory statement: Definition of terms. *Teachers College Record*, 22 (4), 283-287.
- Fielding, M. (2012). Beyond student voice: Patterns of partnership and the demands of deep democracy. *Revista de Educación*, 359, 45–65.
- Gass, S., & Alvarez-Torres, M. (2005). Attention When: An investigation of the ordering effect of input and interaction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(1), 1-31.
- Hmelo-Silver, C. E. (2004). Problem-based learning: What and how do students learn? *Educational Psychology Review*, 16(3), 235-266.
- Jeffries, P. R., Rew, S., & Cramer, J. M. (2002). A comparison of student-centered versus traditional methods of teaching basic nursing skills in a learning laboratory. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 23(1), 14-19.
- Quigley, C. Marshall, J.C., Deaton, C.C.M., Cook, M.P., & Padilla, M. (2011). Challenges to inquiry teaching and suggestions for how to meet them. *Science Educator*, 20(1), 55–61.
- Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 54–67.
- Rooney, C. (2009). How am I using inquiry-based learning to improve my practice and to encourage higher order thinking among my students of mathematics. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 5(2), 99-127.
- Williams, S. M. (1992). Putting case-based instruction into context: Examples from legal and medical education. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 4(2), 367-427.

THE EFFECT OF MOTIVATION ON YOUNG KURDISH LEARNER ON THE LEARNING ENGLISH SPEAKING AS SECOND LANGUAGE IN IRAN

Shohreh Khosravi

MA. Student Gilan University
Shohreh.khosravi92@gmail.com

Dr.Mohammad Javad Rezaee

University of Yazd
Mjrezaee@gmail.com

Dr.Sayed Amir sheikh Ahmadi

Azad University of Kurdistan
Amir.sheikhahmadi@gmail.com

Dr.Mohammad Agajanzade

University of Gilan
teachinutopia@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Needless to say, for various well-known reasons, the ability to speak English is now an important desire for learners all over the world. Therefore, exploring the impact of different factors on learning this skill seems essential and worthwhile; one of these factors is motivation. This factor has been under the focus of lots of researches in the world, and many study have been conducted to investigate the effect of it on learning in general and the forth skills of language in particular. Similarly, In Iran, motivation and its effect on learning language has received a great deal of attention; nonetheless, the studies to focus on its effect on just speaking skill are very rare (if any). Furthermore, very few studies (if any) have addressed this issue with Kurdish students in Iran whose standard language is Persian. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to find out whether or not there is a statistically significant effect of motivation in Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability. To this end, an ex post facto research design has been employed. This research was conducted with a total number of 90 female senior high school students studying at Kosar high school in Kermansha, Iran. The instruments of this research are motivation questionnaire to measure the students' motivation in learning English and speaking test through prepared talk. The result of this research shows that there is a significant effect of students' motivation on speaking ability. Therefore, the writer suggests that English teacher should maintain students' motivation in order to improve students' speaking ability.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Speaking, EFL students

INTRODUCTION

Many factors such as attitudes, anxiety, age difference, personality factors, cognitive factors, educational program, the kind of textbooks, the way instructions are implemented, and many others are at work in how fast and how well learners learn a new language skill in a second or foreign language learning setting. One of these factors is undoubtedly motivation. This factor is one of the most complicated variables which account for individual differences in learning a language and has been dealt with from a variety of perspectives. It has been considered by Gardner (2001) as a key factor in following anything in our lives. For many other scholars, it is treated as the most contributing factor for explaining EFL learners' failure or success and their crucial performance predictors. It is also a tool to provide a source of energy that is responsible for why learners decide to make an effort to learn another language and how long they are going to continue it (Brewster & Fager, 2002; Mori, 2002). On the account given so far, motivation can play an essential role in learning all four language skills. The skill of our interest in this study is speaking.

Chaney (1998, p. 13) defines speaking as "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbol in a variety of contexts. Most of the time through speaking, we communicate, share our knowledge and information, and establish and maintain social relationships with others. Hence, the ability to communicate is the main aim of many foreign language teaching programs, and as a result, speaking has been given priority over other skills. The importance of this skill is conspicuously reflected in Nazara's (1996) idea, which considers the "speaker" of a language as the people who know that language, and the others as foreign language learners who are primarily interested in learning to speak.

Spoken English is very important for all levels of learners as we could judge a person's English competence and his English knowledge through his speaking competence. According to Bygate (1987), speaking needs more attention due to its usefulness in the learner's current and future lives. Therefore, it is very important for the learners to learn how to speak English.

Needless to say, for various well-known reasons, the ability to speak English is now an important desire for learners all over the world. They would like to be able to express their ideas through English in daily activities. However, most of them find speaking English so formidable and arduous that after spending different courses, they end up with the lack of ability to express their ideas orally. Hinkel (2005) argues that although speaking is most often used to communicate by people, it is the most complex and difficult skill to master.

I have personally witnessed many high school teachers claimed their students mostly have limited mastery of speaking. Teachers often observe in their classrooms that students prefer to be silent; they avoid asking and answering questions in English.

There are two main reasons why some students are not proficient in speaking English. Firstly, their native language is considered as the main medium of communication and also in the classroom. Learning English is not much emphasized and therefore, students tend to neglect the importance of learning English as they have limited exposure to this language. Secondly, the

development of speaking skills has not been greatly emphasized in the curriculum where more priority is given to the teaching of reading, writing and grammatical skills.

Some high school teachers believe that, in order for their students to improve their speaking skill, they need to make their students motivated and bring them into interesting class. But how much this claim is valid need to be investigated through research. Therefore, this study aims to find out whether or not there is a significant effect of motivation in learning English on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability.

As mentioned earlier, this study is done with Iranian Kurdish senior high school students. In Iran, English is one of the compulsory subjects for junior and senior high school students. However, after many years of learning the language students still could not achieve an acceptable level of ability in English. Depdiknas (2006) states that the objective of teaching English at senior high school is that the students are expected to be able to develop communicative competence both in written and in spoken form to achieve informational literacy level. It means that the students have to be able to master a productive skill, like speaking skill. Speaking is perceived as a measurement of people's language mastery. Senior high school students in Iran only have two or three learning hours of English per week in school to accomplish this objective.

In doing this study, I looked at one of the existing internal factors that could help educators improve learners' speaking ability. I believe that by having a clear picture of the effect of motivation on speaking ability, course designer, practitioners, and teachers will better allow themselves to diversify their methods of motivating and teaching L2 students.

In the literature of motivation, different classifications have been proposed, among which intrinsic/extrinsic and integrative/instrumental are very popular. Intrinsic motivation, which is important in promoting success, refers to the motivation inside a person with no reward except the activity itself, while extrinsic motivation refers to the motivation outside a person with an expectation of reward from outside (Chalak & kassaian, 2010; Zubairi & Sarudin, 2009). Gardner and Lambert (1972) argued that integrative motivation means the desire to find out about the culture of SL and learn it to communicate with its members to become a part of that society, this is different from instrumental motivation that refers to the motivation to acquire SL as a means of promoting a career or job or reading technical texts.

Statement of the problem

In spite of including English as an obligatory course by Ministry of Education in Iran, the traditional methods being currently used to teach English at high schools fail to enable students to improve their speaking and enhance their language. High school teachers often complain about the low level of their learners in speaking English language. This may be due to such internal factors as the motivation.

Dörnyei (2001) argues that motivation provides learners the primary stimuli for initiating second language learning, and later motivation become the driving force for learners to be persistent in tedious learning process, so that learners may be able to complete long-term goals if there is

sufficient motivation. The theory implies that motivation is one of the determining factors in developing a second language. In particular, motivation seems to be very important in the development of speaking skill. One who has strong motivation might take a part in speaking. It can be inferred that one might speak well in English as a result of motivation which pushes to speak. So, motivation is claimed to have a main role in developing speaking.

But with regards to Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking skill, what is the role of motivation? Teachers here teach their students hoping that at the end of the course, the students end up with basic skills and knowledge in English to enable them to communicate orally. To put it another way, after finishing the book, it is expected that the students based on their level of ability speak and understand simple spoken English and respond to it appropriately. However, not many teachers especially those in the high schools have a good understanding of how motivation can affect students' learning of speaking skill. Some of them may have a hunch that motivation is one of the factors that play a role in language learning among the students. For all these reasons, conducting a research in this regard seems necessary, and that is why the researcher intends to study the effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking skill.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study mostly revolves around the importance of speaking skill as an important medium to communicate with others. Mastering speaking is an essential need for any learner whose final goal is to use English. For Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), Speaking in a second language (L2) has been considered as the most challenging of the four skills because it involves a complex process of constructing meaning. This process according to Burns and Seidlhofer (2002), requires speakers to make decisions about why, how and when to communicate depending on the cultural and social context in which the speaking act occurs. Jordens (2006) believes that the primacy of speaking is obvious since it is assumed that language is primarily an oral phenomenon. Speaking is also considered as an effective medium for providing language input and facilitating memorization (Bygate 2001).

The significance of the study derives also from the importance of motivation. As mentioned above, motivation is one of the crucial predictors of FL performance and has a basic role in language acquisition (Mori, 2002). Teachers often observe in their classrooms that students prefer to be silent; they avoid asking and answering questions. This avoidance may be due to lack of students' motivation for speaking. Students' unwillingness to speak and communicate in FL classroom will often lead to unwillingness to communicate in real contexts. Identifying factors that influence student learning in the classroom continues to be an important objective for teachers and administrators at all levels. There is a great deal of interest today in the notions of motivation to learn a foreign/second language. However, unfortunately, few studies, if any, have been conducted to investigate learners' motivation in speaking English with Kurdish senior high school students in Iran. On the other hand, it would be helpful for high school teachers to have a clear picture of the effect of motivation on high school students in Iran so that they can formulate instructional methods to motivate students enhance their English speaking. Therefore, this study comes to investigate the effect of motivation on Kurdish high school students with the hope that

it would yield results and recommendations that can be used to inform educators and teachers in Iran on appreciating motivation of their students and, thus, to look for a suitable approach to teaching English speaking.

Purpose of the study

This study attempts to investigate the effect of motivation on English speaking skill among Kurdish high school students in Iran.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation

Brown (2007, p.117) defines motivation as “the anticipation of reward, whether internally or externally administered; choices made about goals to pursue and the effort exerted in their completion.”

Many scholars have considered motivation as an important factor that plays a considerable role in determining the success of language learning. Gu (2009) for example, believes that motivated learners are more enthusiastic. They are also eager to work hard and concentrate on the tasks given. Therefore, they do not need to be given constant encouragement. Dornyei (2011, p. 116) emphasized that “teacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness”. For Noels (2001), motivation to learn a second language is of equal importance as language aptitude.

The important role that motivation plays in learning a language is more pronounced in what Dornyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 1) say. They argue that “given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data”

Oxford and Shearin (1994) have identified six variables that influence motivation in language learning:

- Attitudes (i.e. sentiments towards the target language).
- Beliefs about self (i.e. expectations about one’s attitudes to succeed, self-efficiency, and anxiety).
- Goals (perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning).
- Involvement (i.e. extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the learning process).
- Environmental support (i.e. extent of teacher and peer support).
- Personnel attributes (i.e. aptitude, and language learning experience).

Motivation, as mentioned before, falls into two categories distinguished by Gardner (2010). It may be of an instrumental or an integrative orientation. Based on Brown (2001), an integrative orientation simply means the learner is pursuing a second language for social or cultural purposes, and within that purpose a learner could be driven by a high level of motivation or a low level. On

the other hand, in an instrumental orientation, learners are studying a language in order to further a career or academic goal (Brown, 2001). Gardner (2010) argues that an integrative orientation is more enduring and more directly related to success than an instrumental orientation. Likewise, Garcia (2007) believes that learners who are instrumentally motivated appear to be more driven by external aspects like incentives, which, as believed, are less stable.

There is another dichotomy for motivation apart from integrative and instrumental. Here motivation is of two kinds: intrinsic and extrinsic. According to Deci (1985) cited in Brown (2001, p. 76): “Intrinsically motivated activities are ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward; extrinsically motivated behaviors, on the other hand, are carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside or beyond the self” (p.77). Many scholars like Maslow and Bruner, according to Brown (2001), find intrinsic motivation more powerful than extrinsic one.

Another aspect contributing to motivation levels could be the manner in which students attribute reasons for their underachievement or success. The core argument of Attribution Theory states that individuals have a tendency to attribute their performance to the effort they give, the difficulty of the activity, or to their capability (Zhang, 2009). Learners more likely to attribute their performance to task difficulty or capability have a tendency to have poorer motivation, because these aspects are regarded to be unchangeable, or outside the learner’s control. In contrast, attributing failure or success to effort may result in higher levels of motivation, since it can be controlled by the learner (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011).

Since this study aims to investigate the role of motivation in speaking ability, in what follows, this skill is discussed.

Speaking

Speaking has been defined from a variety of perspectives. For Brown (2001, p. 68), “speaking is an action that involves producing, receiving and processing information in spoken language to conveying the information or expressing one’s thoughts and feeling”. Florez (1999) and Chaney (1998) both consider speaking as a process through which meaning is conveyed.

Hedge (2000, p. 261) focuses on the significance of this skill and defines it as a “skill by which people are judged while first impressions are being formed”.

Harmer (2001), on the other hand, distinguishes between two aspects of speaking. Namely, knowledge of ‘language features’, and the ability to process information on the spot, it means ‘mental/social processing’. The first aspect, language features, necessary for spoken production involves, according to Harmer, the following features: connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. In order to wage a successful language interaction, it is necessary to realize the use of the language features through mental/social processing – with the help of ‘the rapid processing skills’, as Harmer calls them (p.271). ‘Mental/social processing’

includes three features – language processing, interacting with others, and on-the-spot information processing.

Speaking is one of the main aspects of communication, and for many scholars and teachers, has been considered as the most important skill. Zaremba (2006), for instance, contends that of the four macro English skills, speaking seems to be the most important skill required for communication. Similarly, Richards (1990) believes that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many schools and second language learners; learners consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course in the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Brown (2001, p. 267) asserts that “when someone can speak a language it means that he can carry on a conversation reasonably competently”. In addition, he states that “the benchmark of successful acquisition of language is almost always the demonstration of an ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through an interactive discourse with other language speakers” (p.268). The goal of a speaking class should be to encourage the acquisition of communication skills and to foster real communication in and out of the classroom.

Despite the significance of speaking and the importance that many teachers and learners assign to this skill, the complexity of learning to speak in another language has also reported by many researchers and specialist. This complexity is reflected in the range and type of sub skills that are entailed in L2 oral production. Widdowson (1990) emphasizes this complexity and claims that learning just the language system is not the appropriate way for learning how to communicate in the FL because knowledge of the leaching code alone does not explain the demands of communication and interaction with others in the FL. Speaking is not a simple skill, its complete mastery requires some experience and practice. Luama (2004, p. 1) argues that “speaking takes a long time to develop”. Added to this problem is the scarce of opportunity to use the language, which was addressed by Zhang (2009) pointing out students’ limited opportunities to speak English and limited exposure to English speakers outside the classroom.

According to Noor Hashimah Abdul Aziz (2007), learners feel very nervous when speaking in English and face difficulty to express themselves in English. For these reasons, different methods and strategies have been proposed to help students enhance their speaking. Cotter (2007) proposed a method in his work and said that there should be three stages in any language classroom and they are: Preparation which allows the students to prepare for the tasks ahead with an effective warm-up. This gives everyone in the class ample opportunity to get their English wheels turning. Presentation: here the topic is presented for discussion, target grammar, or any vocabularies selected for the lesson are also introduced. Practice: after the presentation, ESL / EFL students need to practice the new material. It's unfair to expect them to make use of the new language without adequate practice. And Free Use: You should always work towards real use of the language. According to Ur (1996) an effective speaking activity has the following features:

1. Learners talk a lot. Classroom activities must be designed in such ways that provide opportunities for learners to talk a lot.

2. All get a chance to speak. A minority of talkative students should not dominate Classroom discussions, and contributions must be fairly distributed. Classroom activities must be designed in ways that help all the students to take risk.
3. Motivation is high. Learners are eager to speak because they are interested in the topic, and want to contribute to achieving a task objective.
4. Language is comprehensible. Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy. The teacher must also base the activity on easy language so that the students can use the language fluently without hesitation.
5. Students speak the target language. The teacher must keep students speaking the foreign language.

To sum up, speaking is regarded as one of the major skills to be developed along the process of language learning because it is necessary for displaying the language proficiency. Although the reasons behind learning the foreign language may vary from one learner to the other, the aim is one, and that is, getting to communicate fluently using the target language.

Previous Studies

The role of motivation in learning a second language has been investigated by many researchers, and in many cases a highly positive relationship has been. Lennon (1993) in a study with advanced German students of English studying at England's University of Reading, found motivation as the most important factor influencing oral proficiency. In much the same way, in 1997, Mason and Krashen reported that improvement in motivation the most important and influential finding which helped unwilling students of EFL to become earnest readers. In another study, Mahboobi and Kaur (2011) have investigated the role of motivation in intensive reading among Iranian EFL university students. Based on their results from the analysis of questionnaires, motivation plays a very important role in intensive reading.

Although a great deal of studies indicate the influence of motivation in language learning, it is worth mentioning that some studies did not find any relationship between motivation and different aspect of second language learning. No significant correlation between speaking achievement and motivational variables has been found in the study done by Lyczak et al. (1976). Similarly, in Abdel-Hafez's (1994) study in Jordan, no significant correlation between the students' motivation and their levels of achievement in the English courses was found.

A large number of studies target the comparison between the effect of integrative and instrument motivation in different aspects of language learning. In a study, the motivational variables (integrative and instrumental) towards learning English as a foreign language among senior students majoring in English at Shiraz State and Shiraz Islamic Azad University was conducted by Roohani (2001). The results of this study supported the advantage of integratively oriented motivation over instrumentally motivated motivation concerning proficiency level. Likewise, Abdul Samad et al. (2012) found a positive relationship between integrative motivation and students' language proficiency. By contrast, Johnson and Johnson (2010) reported that Japanese engineering students were more instrumentally motivated to learn English to a high extent.

In another study no difference has been realized between two kinds. This study conducted by Soozandehfar and Soozandehfar (2010) made attempt to compare integratively and instrumentally motivated students of English at Shiraz University in terms of their speaking achievement. In fact, they aimed to test the following directional hypothesis: the Students of English at Shiraz University are likely to be less successful in English language speaking if the underlying motivation orientation is instrumental rather than integrative. The hypothesis indicates that they have expected integrative motivation stronger than t instrumental motivation in relation to speaking achievement. Despite their biased hypothesis, the statistical analysis of their study, however, revealed no significant difference between the integratively oriented participants and their instrumentally oriented counterparts in terms of their speaking. At the end, based on the results of their study, they suggested that teachers in an EFL context use either instrumental or integrative motivation to develop students' L2 speaking ability. Besides the aforementioned studies, there is abundance of studies conducted in this regard which cannot be included here for the sake of scope. However, there are very few, if any, studies in the literature of motivation which aimed to investigate the impact of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability, and this study aims to bridge this gap.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the purpose of the study, the following research question can be proposed:

Is there any significant effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability?

The following null hypothesis can be proposed on the basis of the aforementioned question:

NH1. There is no significant effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative methodology to collect data. The design of this research is ex post facto research design by using comparative study. The reason for selecting ex post facto research design is because treatment is used to collect data. Rather, collecting the data is done by considering the cause and effect that will happen. Hatch and Farhady (1981, p. 26) states that ex post facto design was used when the researcher does not have control over the selection and manipulation of the independent variable (the researcher do not give treatment in the research).

Participants

What makes this study distinct from others in this respect is the specific participants of the study. As mentioned several times before, this study is going to examine the effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish students' speaking ability. To this end, a total number of 90 female senior high school students studying at Kosar high school in Kermansha, Iran, have been selected for the study. Persian is the standard native language of these participants while their native dialect is Kurdish. The reason for selecting this school was mainly because of the researcher's easier access

to it. Since in a normal class there are different students with different level of cognitive and language ability, the sample classes have been selected randomly.

Instruments

The independent variable of this study is the students' motivation. This variable is measured through Laine's (1987) Motivation Questionnaire following Soozandehfar and Soozandehfar(2010). The rationale behind using this questionnaire is that its reliability is highly established and assured (with the value of /81). The questionnaire consists of 25 items. The Likert Scale is applied for the questionnaire where each item has mainly four alternative answers. That is, A, B, C, and D. on the other hand, the dependant variable, which is students' speaking ability, is measured through prepared talk activities. The speaking test is scored using the oral ability scale proposed by Heaton (1991).

Procedures

To gather data about students' motivation, the motivation questionnaire will be first translated into Persian to make sure no problem arises understanding the content of the question and enhance validity as a result. Then the questionnaires will be given to the students to fill out them. The students will be asked to give real information and answer the questions honestly. Based on the result of motivation questionnaire, the students will be classified into two groups of high and low motivation. After collecting information about students' motivation, to gather data on their speaking ability, the speaking test will be administered. Here, the students will be asked to make a presentation on a topic of their own interest orally and directly in front of class one by one. What they will say will be recorded to be analyzed later. To do this, the students are required to talk as clear as they can. The measurement of their speaking will be done following Heaton (1991) as a model. After obtaining the results of the test, the reliability of the will also be calculated. If the reliability is fulfilled, then the author will precede to the analysis of the data using SPSS software. That is to say, to find answer to the question of the study, the researcher will analyze the data using SPSS by comparing both of high and low motivated students in One Way Anova computation. If the output of Anova computation displayed that the FValue is much higher than FCritical, then we can conclude that motivation has a significant effect on speaking ability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned before, the first instrument used in the study was a motivation questionnaire. The descriptive data obtained from this instrument were summarized in table1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for students' motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
motivation	90	31	90	47.54	13.413
	90				

As can be seen from table 1, it was obtained that the high score was90 and the lowest score was 31 and the average was 47.54. On the basis of the results, the participants were classified into two groups, namely 1. Low motivation group: those who got 2 standard deviation score below the mean, and 2. high motivation group: those who scored 2 standard deviations above the mean, and

the rest of the students have been excluded from the study. After the identification of low and high motivated students based on the questionnaire results, the speaking test has been administered with the selected students. The descriptive statistics of speaking test has been estimated and displayed in table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
speaking	52	10	72	34.04	19.004

Having calculated the descriptive statistics for motivation and speaking ability, in order to answer the research question, the author analyzed the data by using SPSS through comparing both of high and low motivated students in One Way Anova computation. The results are demonstrated below:

Table 3: One way ANOVA of high motivation and low motivation groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7534.185	12	627.849	8.487	.000
Within Groups	961.700	13	73.977		
Total	8495.885	25			

Significant at ($p < 0.05$)

As can be seen, the output of Anova computation shows that the FValue is higher than Ftable (FValue = 8.487, Ftable = 3.164993, FValue > Ftable). It can be seen that there is a significant effect of motivation on their speaking ability with the coefficient significant about 0.000 ($p = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the research null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

This study made attempt to find out whether or not motivation can affect Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability. Based on the purpose of the study, the following research question was proposed:

Is there any significant effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability?

Then, we hypothesized that there is no significant effect of motivation on Iranian Kurdish senior high school students' speaking ability.

The results of the study revealed that the students with higher motivation performed much better in speaking test as compared with low motivated students. Therefore, the answer to the research question is that motivation can influence students' speaking ability significantly. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study has been rejected. Further, what the results of this study suggests is that the more motivated the learners the better their speaking ability will be. Based on this idea, we can claim that when students have good motivation in learning English, they will do anything

that can improve their speaking achievement. They will try to finish speaking assignment. They also will try to practice their speaking with their friends without being afraid to make mistakes. The more practice in speaking, the better their English will be. It also supported Cook (1991, p. 96) who states that some L2 learners do better than others because they are better motivated. So, high motivation can cause high achievement in learning English, especially speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the data analysis and discussions, the researcher draws the conclusion as follows: There is a significant effect of motivation in learning English on students' speaking ability. The result shows that the students with very high motivation have better ability in speaking compared with the students with low motivation. It means that the higher their motivation in learning English, the better their ability in speaking will be.

Therefore, the writer suggests the English teacher to maintain students' motivation. The teacher should give interesting material. Besides that, they should also use appropriate teaching method based on students' ability to magnetize students to practice a lot in speaking English. For students, they must have good confidence in speaking English. Having good confidence will encourage themselves to produce spoken English easier without feeling shy.

Several limitations are associated with this study. Firstly, the findings of this study are only limited to the specific participants of the study in terms of age and level of education. Therefore, any generalization of the findings to younger or older and middle school, primary school and college students should be taken with caution. Another limitation concerns with the design of the study. Evidently, it is really difficult to control all other factors or variables except the variable in question in an ex post facto research design. Therefore, it is likely that other unmeasured variables and parameters be at work influencing the results of the study. Finally, although we have done our best to measure the students' motivation with a test of high reliability, on the whole, motivation is an internal construct and cannot be easily measured by tests.

REFERENCES

- Abdel-Hafez, H. (1994). The influence of motivation and attitudes on the language proficiency of English majors at Yarmouk University. *Journal of Faculty of Education*, 22, 1-17.
- Abdul Samad, A., Etemadzadeh, A., & Roohbakhsh Far, H. (2012). Motivation and language proficiency: Instrumental and integrative aspects. *Procerdia – social and Behaviora Sciences*, 66, 433 – 440.
- Aziz, N. H. A. (2007). *ESL students' perspectives on language anxiety* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis). University Putra Malaysia: Serdang.
- Brewster, C., & Fager, J. (2000). Increasing student engagement and motivation: From time on-task to homework. Retrieved from <http://www.nwrel.org/request/oct00/textonly.html>.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. 5th ed. NY: Longman, White Plains.

- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Bygate, M. (1991). *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, V. 1996. *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. New York : St. Martin Press
- Chalak, A. & Kassaian, Z. (2010). Motivation and attitude of Iranian undergraduate EFL students towards learning English. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 10(2), 37-56.
- Chaney, A.L., & Burk, T.L. (1998). *Teaching Oral Communication in Grades K-8*. Boston
- Cotter, Ch. (2007). Speaking well - four steps to improve your ESL EFL students speaking ability. Retrieved from <http://ezinearticles.com>
- Deci, E. (1985). *Intrinsic Motivation and Human Behavior*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Dornyei, Z. (1990). Conceptualizing motivation in foreign language learning. *Language Learning*, 40, 45-78.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and Researching Motivation*. Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Limited.
- Garcia, M. (2007). *Motivation, language learning beliefs, self-efficacy, and acculturation patterns among two groups of English learners*. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest
- Gardner, R. C. (2001). *Language learning motivation: The student, the teacher, and the researcher*. Proceedings of the Texas.
- Gardner, R. (2010). *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition: The Socio-Educational Model*. UK: Peter Lang.
- Gardner, R.C., & Lambert, W.E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- Hatch, E., & Farhadi, H. (1981). *Research design and statistics for applied linguistics*. Tehran: Rahnama
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. Longman.
- Hedge, T. 2000. *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hinkel, E. (2005). *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. New Jersey : Lawrence Elbaum Associates, Inc.
- Jordian, A. Caroline, O., & Stack, A. (2008). *Approaches to learning: A guide for teachers*. Open University Press.
- Laine, J. E. (1987). *Affective Factors in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching Cross Language Studies* (No. 13). Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä University, Department of English.
- Lennon, P. (1993). The advanced learner: Affective, social and motivational factors. *Language Learning Journal*, 8, 39-43.
- Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MacCarthy, P. (1972). *Talking of speaking*. London: Oxford University press.
- MacIntyre, P.D. (2007). Willingness to communicate in the second language: understanding the decision to speak as a volitional process. *Modern Language Journal*, 91, 64-576.
- Mahboobi, M., & Kaur, S. (2011). A Survey of Iranian EFL University Students' Motivation and Interest in Intensive Reading. *The Iranian EFL Journal*, 7(6), 30-46.
- Mason, B., & Krashen, S. D. (1997). Extensive reading in English as a foreign language. *System*, 25, 91-102.

- Mori, S. (2002). Redefining motivation to read in a foreign language. *Reading in Foreign Language*, 14(2), 91-110.
- Nazara, S. (2011). *Students' perception on English foreign language speaking skill development*. Jakarta : Universitas Kristen Indonesia.
- Noels, K. A. (2001). *New orientations in language learning motivation: Towards a model of intrinsic, extrinsic and integrative orientations*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i.
- Roohani, A. (2001). *An investigation into EFL students' motivation in Shiraz State and Islamic Azad University*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran.
- Soozandehfar, M.A., & Soozandehfar, M. (2010). Which learner speaks better? integratively motivated or instrumentally motivated. *The Iranian EFL Journal*, 6(4), 101-117
- Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Widdowson, H.G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: O.U. P.
- Zaremba, A. J. (2006). *Speaking professionally*. Canada: Thompson South-Western.
- Zhang, J. (2009). *Improving English language learners' oral and written language through collaborative discussions*. Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest.
- Zubairi, A. M., & Sarudin, I. H. (2009). Motivation to learn a foreign language in Malaysia. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 9(2).

THE EFFECT OF STANDARD DICTATION ON GRAMMAR LEARNING ABILITY OF YOUNG IRANIAN BEGINNER EFL LEARNERS

Javad GH. Domskey

University of Tehran, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures

ABSTRACT

This study intends to investigate the effect of standard dictation on grammar learning ability of young Iranian beginner English as foreign language (EFL) learners. The purpose of the study is to find dictation something beyond a traditional technique in langue teaching and testing, the backwash effect of dictation can help both the students and teachers overcome significantly the grammatical problems and internalizing structures. First, two homogenous classes of twenty subjects from NODET (National Organization of Developing Exceptional Talents), Iran were chosen randomly as control and experimental groups. Both were taught grammatical points simultaneously by the researcher in the same way and the samples were not really aware of the study. The subjects in both groups received a post test. The data obtained from the results of the subjects' performance on the test were analyzed and interpreted by conducting a T.test. The findings confirmed the fact that standard dictation can significantly affect grammar learning ability of young Iranian beginner EFL learners. The results of the current study can be of use in all educational centers. They have direct or indirect implications for and applications to teaching, learning, test development, syllabus design and material development. This study, according to the achieved results, may have some hints for English teachers who might, for sure, pay some attention to teaching grammar or any other four major skills; listening, speaking, reading, writing, because standard dictation can not be limited to any skills or subjects in isolation. As I found out the whole aspects of ELT can be reshaped by this new trend.

KEYWORDS: standard Dictation, Grammar, Learning Ability, Beginner EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION

An experience of twelve years teaching English and practicing different approaches of dictation and spelling, I have found the aim of dictation something beyond some teachers' and students point of view. Dictation is not just spelling practice. The backwash effect of dictation can help both the students and teachers overcome significantly the grammatical problems mostly along side the problems of the other areas of the language.

In fact, students could find a few opportunities in Iran to have a kind of speaking and listening practice. The type of rehearsal on dictation is traditionally limited to long columns of isolated words writing for the sake of spelling. But standard dictation could help them to have a kind of deep reading, vocalizing the sentences and words (speaking), listening to normal pace of speaking, paying attention to important grammatical structures, correct pronunciation, standard

type of stress and intonation, and at last, spelling practice. This is language learning and not learning about the language (Rivers, 1981).

Statement of the problem

Grammar learning is emphasized in language teaching whether the language is first, second or foreign. Although grammar has not always been as a priority in LT, interest in its role has grown rapidly. Teaching grammar and internalizing it through standard dictation would help teachers teach the language in a more communicative way. This study is an attempt to explore the effect of standard dictation on the reinforcement of grammar in LT.

Purpose of the study

The findings of this study would be of great help to those teachers who wish to have more effective language classes. Needless to say, with the widespread institution of standards and high-stakes tests, students are expected to recognize, internalize and use correct grammar. Educators can no longer afford that students acquire an accurate understanding of formal language structures through different skills. Therefore, grammar instruction should be in a way to meet the needs of learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

What is dictation?

Dictation is a valuable language learning device that has been used for centuries. Although linguists have not completely understood how it facilitates language acquisition--it would be extremely difficult to isolate the language competencies that are employed--many have attested to its pedagogical value. One of the 20th century's most influential linguists, Leonard Bloomfield (1942), strongly endorsed the use of dictation as a learning device. Today, many methodologists are at least inclined to agree with Finocchiaro's (1969) summary of its value: "[Dictation] ensures attentive listening; it trains pupils to distinguish sounds; it helps fix concepts of punctuation; it enables pupils to learn to transfer oral sounds to written symbols; it helps to develop aural comprehension; and it assists in self-evaluation" (Alkire, 2007).

Standard dictation is the most frequently-used type of dictation. It is usually defined as a passage of appropriate length (usually set somewhere between 100-150 words) and difficulty with a specified administration procedure. Dictation is usually read and the examinees are required to write down what they hear. Two points are important regarding this procedure. First the consistency of the reader and the manner of reading. Second, the dictation passage should be read 3 times. The first reading gives the examinees a chance to obtain the general idea of the passage. The second reading is the most important part because during this, the examinees should write down what they hear. Finally the third reading is performed in a manner similar to that of the first one. Its purpose is to allow students to check their performance (Farhady, Jafarpur & Birjandi, 1999).

Cullen (2007) states that dictation has always been a useful technique for language teachers. Modern listening exercises usually focus on helping students to extract the overall meaning of a

listening passage, but most language teachers will agree that an occasional dictation with a focus on individual words can be very useful in developing listening comprehension.

Cullen (2007) continues: “As with all teaching techniques, it is best to experiment to find out the ways of song dictation that work best for you and your students. Of course, song dictations do not have to be carried out in class. You can assign a song as homework, preferably one which the student enjoys and chooses himself. If the student already has the lyrics sheet, then you can ask them to only check it after the dictation has been done.”

Rivers (1981) writes that dictation is not just spelling practice. The backwash effect of dictation can help both the students and teachers overcome significantly the grammatical problems mostly along side the problems of the other areas of the language. The dictation will then serve as a form of review, the possibility of error will be reduced and the students will be encouraged by their progress. Segments dictated should consist of meaningful groups.

The importance of dictation

Madsen (1983) claims that dictation is another guided-writing test most teachers know about this technique, but few handle it properly. Actually, he believes it is one of the easiest tests to use, and it gives very good information on the student's language ability. But this is true only if you prepare it right, present it right, and score it right.

Benefits of Dictation

Alkire (2007) in his article states the following benefits for dictation.

- Dictation shows students the kinds of spelling errors they are prone to make.
- Dictation can help develop all four language skills in an integrative way.
- Dictation helps to develop short-term memory. Students practice retaining meaningful phrases or whole sentences before writing them down.
- Dictation can serve as an excellent review exercise.
- Dictation is psychologically powerful and challenging.
- Dictation fosters unconscious thinking in the new language.
- If the students do well, dictation is motivating.
- Dictation involves the whole class, no matter how large it is.
- During and after the dictation, all students are active.
- Correction can be done by the students
- Dictation can be prepared for any level.

Standard dictation could help the students to have a kind of deep reading, vocalizing the sentences and words (speaking), listening to normal pace of speaking, paying attention to important grammatical structures, correct pronunciation, standard type of stress and intonation, and at last, spelling practice. This is language learning and not learning about the language (Rivers, 1981).

The potential problems of dictation

Dictation has been a feature of language classrooms for hundreds of years. However, for many teachers these days, the word '*dictation*' is synonymous with '*old-fashioned*', '*boring*', and '*teacher-centered*'. In fact, it hardly seems to merit a mention in most of the introductory texts for ELT trainees. Is it really as outdated and uncommunicative as it first appears? (Lightfoot, 2007).

The importance of grammar

Based on the importance of grammar Richards and Renandyo (2002) argue people now agree that grammar is too important to be ignored, and that without a good knowledge of grammar, learners' language development will be severely constrained. There is now a general consensus that the issue is not whether or not we should teach grammar. The issues now center on questions such as, which grammar items do learners need most? How do we go about teaching grammar items in the most effective way? Are they best taught inductively or deductively? Swan suggests that the teaching of grammar should be determined by the needs of the students. Thus, the selection of grammar items to be taught must depend on learners' aims in learning English. Furthermore, the teaching of grammar should be based on the principles of comprehensibility and acceptability. Grammar is important, but most of the time, in most parts of the world, people probably teach too much of it. They mention some significant reasons for the importance of grammar:

1. *Because Its THERE*
2. *Its TIDY*
3. *Its TESTABLE*
4. *COMPREHENSIBILITY*
5. *ACCEPTABILITY*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To begin with, the following question is posed for the researcher to answer:

Does standard dictation have any effect on the grammar learning ability of young Iranian beginner EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

This study intended to investigate the influence of standard dictation on the grammar learning ability of Iranian beginner EFL learners. This research was conducted at NODET (National Organization of Developing Exceptional Talents) School where students are talented and really homogeneous. The researcher is their regular teacher and they are not absolutely aware of the study. Simultaneously, both groups received the same instruction but the experimental group had the frequent standard dictation.

Participants

Subjects who participated in the present study were all students from Shahid Beheshti NODET School in Torbat-Heydarieh. They were 40 beginner male students in grade three in junior high school. The subjects took part in the experiment unconsciously.

After being accepted in a national standardized entrance examination of NODET schools, the cases were randomly categorized into two identical groups. The subjects had participated in the same classes for two years and at the end of each year they should have passed standard exams with specific norms of NODET schools. Moreover, they had been taught the English courses of national curriculum textbooks accompanying with their own supplementary materials specific to NODET schools by the same instructor, the researcher. So the process of homogenization was really well organized and there was no doubt that the subjects were homogeneous.

Instrumentation

To achieve the main concern of this study which is to evaluate the effectiveness of standard dictation on grammar learning ability two testing instruments were needed.

The first one which was just for the experimental group was a pack of frequent standard dictations compiled of grammatical patterns (Tajik, 2007). Dictations carried out in this study all focused on grammar learning of the tenses.

The second needed test was a valid and a reliable test of grammar so as to function as the post-test instrument in this study. As a consequence, the formerly standard constructed test from (Tajik, 2007) included sixty items in multiple choice form were chosen.

The next thing to do was to validate the post-test. The test of grammar was administered to another group of twenty eight male learners, sharing almost the same level of language proficiency in Mahdi School in Torbat-Heydarieh. As a result, some ten items which couldn't meet the requirements of item facility (Farhady, et al.1998, p. 101) and item discriminations (Farhady, et al.1998, p 104) were discarded. It led to a final form of a grammar test including fifty items of multiple choices. Due to the nature of items included in the test, it was supposed to take thirty minutes for the students to attempt all the items. Then based on the advantages of KR-21 Method over the other ones, the reliability of the test of grammar was computed as well. Of course, the scores of the items which were to be discarded in the final form of the test were not into account. To put it another way, the test had got a total score of fifty. The reliability index of 0.64 which is obtained for the post-test is moderately high. Hence this test can be trusted in terms of reliability.

Procedure

The subjects were taught the specific lessons of the textbook. They were not aware of the direct study so the situation was really natural. Both groups received the same materials by the same teacher (the researcher). However, one group received standard dictation during the course; the other group received another type of dictation. Finally, they were given the post-test and the results were compared and contrasted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The scores derived from the experiments, were computerized. To analyze the data, the researcher made use of the most commonly used package program which is statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and EXCEL.

The following tables and figures show the descriptive statistics concerning these scores.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Experimental group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Plural s	20	7	10	8.45	.945
Third person s	20	6	10	8.25	1.070
Possessive s	20	12	15	13.90	.912
ed ending	20	12	15	13.75	.910
Experimental	20	42	50	44.35	2.059
Valid N (list wise)	20				

The descriptive statistics is related to the experimental group. On the second column, we could see the number of samples who participated in the test. On the next two columns, there are the minimum and the maximum mark that they have got in the test. On the last two ones, the mean and the standard deviation related to each specific variable have been shown. For instance, in the experimented group, the minimum score of the students in plurals is 7 and the minimum score is 10. In this part, their mean score is 8.45 with the standard deviation.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Control Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
plural s	20	2	9	6.25	2.023
third person s	20	2	9	6.10	1.917
possessive s	20	5	14	8.85	2.661
ed ending	20	4	15	9.35	2.700
control	20	21	40	30.55	5.826
Valid N (list wise)	20				

In table 2 the descriptive statistics related to control group has been shown. The columns show the number of samples, the minimum and the maximum score, the mean value and the standard deviation of a specific variable in the control group. For example in this case, the minimum score in the third person singular which has been taken by a taste is 2 and the maximum score is 9. The mean value of the third person scores in control is 6.1.

Table 3: T-Test for comparing grammar score in general between control and experimental group

Group Statistics					
group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Grammer	exprimental	20	44.35	2.059	.460
	control	20	30.55	5.826	1.303

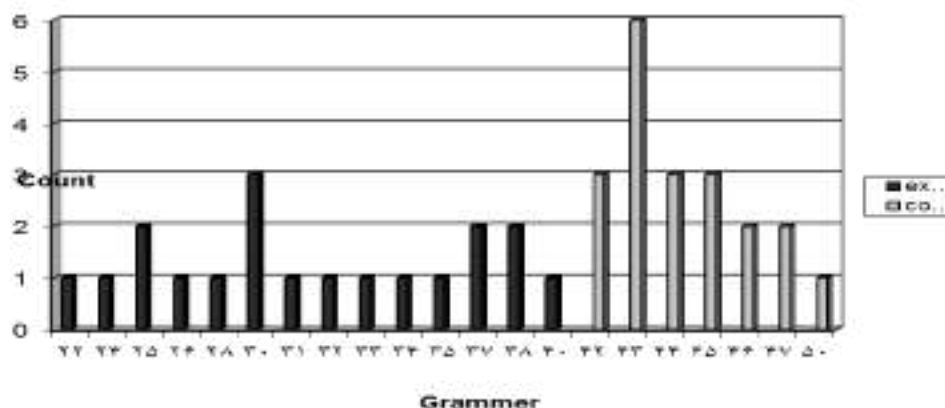
Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test for comparing grammar score in general between control and experimental group

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Grammer	Equal variances assumed	23.03	.000	9.987	38	.000	13.800	1.382	11.00	16.597
	Equal variances not assumed			9.987	23.673	.000	13.800	1.382	10.95	16.654

By considering this effect that the P-value of the test for equality of variances between two groups equals 0.00 and is less than 0.05, so the equal means assumed for the grammar test scores in two groups is rejected too. We observe that the means of the tests in experimental group minus the scores of control group equals 13.8 and it is a positive amount so we could conclude the standard dictation has had a positive effect on the performance of subjects.

Table4. Graph for comparing scores of Grammar in general between experimental and control group



The above graph compares grammar between two groups in general. We note that the scores of the experimental group is ranged from 42 to 50 but in the control group it is from 21 to 40. Most of the subjects have got 43 in the first group but 28 in the second one. Finally, it shows the significant better performance of experimental than the control group in grammar.

Summery

The basic concern of this study was to investigate the effect of standard dictation on the grammar learning ability of Iranian EFL junior high school learners. It was conducted at NODET School where students were talented and really homogeneous. The researcher was their regular teacher and they were not absolutely aware of the study. Simultaneously, both groups received the same instruction but the experimental group had the frequent standard dictations. Subjects were 40 beginner male students. The materials that were used in this study were the specific lessons from book three for junior high school students in Iran.

To achieve the main concern of this study which is to evaluate the effectiveness of standard dictation on grammar learning ability two testing instruments were needed. The first one which was just for the experimental group was a pack of frequent standard dictations compiled of grammatical patterns. Dictations carried out in this study all focused on grammar learning of the learners. The second needed test was a valid and a reliable test of grammar so as to function as the post-test instrument in this study.

The subjects were taught the specific lessons of the textbook. They were not aware of the direct study so the situation was really natural. Both groups received the same materials by the same teacher (the researcher). However, one group received standard dictation during the course; the other group received another type of dictation. Finally, they were given the post-test and the results were compared and contrasted.

CONCLUSION

As shown in previous chapter, utilizing standard dictation in the experimental group led to a better grammar performance of the students in post test. So it can be concluded that standard dictation can be used for not only assessing students' grammar but also for their learning. The results of the t-test revealed a significant difference between the performance of the students in the experimental and control groups. Based on the results, it was inferred that the experimental group performed better than the control group due to employing standard dictations as treatment. Therefore, the null hypothesis of this study was rejected;

Employing standard dictations improve Iranian EFL learners' grammar learning ability. In other words, employing standard dictation leads to a significantly better performance in grammar learning.

As this study showed, standard dictation can be a means of assessing students' grammar learning ability and helping them to improve their grammar, and more importantly, the motivation implementing such a tool creates in learners to learn the language eagerly and effectively.

Standard dictation helped learners to become aware of their own learning and monitor themselves. The students learned to be responsible for their own learning and become more independent learners.

The findings confirm the previous research on the effect of standard dictation on grammar learning ability of Iranian junior high school EFL learners. These findings have some implications and applications.

Pedagogical implications

The results of the current study can be of use in all educational centers. They have direct or indirect implications for and applications to teaching, learning, test development, syllabus design and material development. This study, according to the achieved results, may have some hints for English teachers who might, for sure, pay some attention to teaching grammar or any other four major skills; listening, speaking, reading, writing, because standard dictation can not be limited to any skills or subjects in isolation. As I found out whole aspects of ELT can be reshaped by this new trend.

The suggested point for teacher in schools, language centers and institutes is that they change the way they assess and instruct the students and move toward a more learner-oriented method. By the use of standard dictation, they can design an assessment system in which the students have to study during the whole term for the course and not just study for the test. This way they will be more motivated to learn and will use meta-cognitive strategies and think about their learning. They will try to document their learning and this way enhances their ability in language skills.

If we change the way we assess our learners, and move away from test-oriented procedures and seek help from alternative assessments like standard dictation, then it will indirectly affect teaching, learning, test development, syllabus design and material development. There's no doubt that implementing standard dictation is a continuous long-term assessment and it's more oriented to process than product. This way the students themselves are also involved in the process of evaluation and teachers can integrate assessment and instruction in order to obtain better results of their classes.

Limitations of the study

No research study can be conducted under ideal circumstances. Every research study has its own set of limitations and problems. This study, being no exception, meets the following limitations;

1. The small sample of students may cause some difficulties in generalizing the results.
2. The subjects are talented students.
3. The focus of study is just on some grammatical points.

Suggestions for further studies

This study can be replicated employing various methods, techniques, samples, levels of proficiency, and language skills:

The effect of standard dictation on all major language skills, speaking, reading, listening, and writing.

The effect of standard dictation on language components, vocabulary, pronunciation as well as grammar which was tried in this study.

The effect of standard dictation can be tested on different language proficiency levels, age, and sex variables (male, female, and coeducational groups). The effect of standard dictation on different subjects at schools and universities.

REFERENCES

- Alkire, S. (2007). *Dictation as a language learning device*. Retrieved December 11,2008, from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Alkire-Dictation.html>.
- Brown, H.D. (2001). *Teaching by principles, an interactive approach to language pedagogy*.nd ed.London: Longman
- Carter, R., & Nunan, D. (2001). *Teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge:cambridge University Press.
- Cele-Murcia, M.(2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (3rd) Heinle and Heinle Thomson Learning. USA.
- Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second- language skills from theory to practice*. 3rd ed. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, USA.
- Cullen, B. (2007). *Song dictation*. Retrieved December 11,2008, from <http://iteslj.org/techniques/Cullen-song dictation.html>.
- Farhady, H., & Jafarpour, A., & Birjandi. P. (1994). *Testing language skills from theory to practice*. Tehran, SAMT.
- Fromkin, V., & Rodman, R. (1988). *An introduction to language*. United States of America.
- Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers*, Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, K., & Johnson, H. (1998). *Encyclopedic dictionary of applied linguistics*. Blackwell publisher, Massachusetts, USA
- Johnson, K. (2001). *An introduction to foreign language learning and teaching*. Pearson Education Limited, England.
- Lightfoot, A. (2007). *Using dictation*. Retrieved December 11,2008, from <<http://www2.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/using-dictation.html>.British Counsel, India.
- Madsen, S. H. (1983). *Techniques in teaching*. Oxford:Oxford University Press.
- Montalvan, R. (1990). *Dictation updated: guidelines for teacher-training workshops*. In *English language programs*, U.S. Department of State. Retrieved December 11,2008, from <<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/dictn2.htm>.
- Nunan, D. (2001). *Second language teaching and learning*. Heinle and Heinle publishers, Massachusetts, USA
- Read, J. (2007). *Teaching grammar through grammar dictation*. University of New England. Retrieved December 11,2008, from File:// I:/Dictation/ Julia Read. Teaching grammar through grammar dictation. htm.
- Richards, J.C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (2nd ed.) London: Longman
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W.A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching, an anthology of current practice*. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press.

- Rivers, W.M. (1981). *Teaching foreign language skills*. 2nd ed. The University of Chicago Press, USA.
- Schmitt, N. (2002). *An introduction to applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- Tajik, P. (2007). *English sample tests, third grade of guidance school*. Nashr Tajik: Tehran, Iran.
- Takeuchi, O. (1997). *Dictation: Is it really effective for language teaching?* Retrieved December 11, 2008, from <<http://www2.ipcku.kansai-u.ac.jp/~taeuchi/papers/av20.html>>.
- Widdowson, H.G. (1990). *Aspect of language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H.G. (2003). *Defining Issues in English language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yule, G. (1985). *The study of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

INTERACTIONAL MODIFICATION VS. METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY TRAINING IN LISTENING INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Amir Mahdavi Zafarghandi

Associate Professor, English Language Department, University of Guilan, Guilan, Iran
E-mail: mahdavi1339@gmail.com & amahdavi@guilan.ac.ir

Maryam Dokoochaki (Corresponding Author)

M.A Student, English Language Department, University of Guilan, Guilan, Iran
E-mail: maryamdokoochaki@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Providing learners with comprehensible input, based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis is the key to ensure second language acquisition. Considering the significance of input, listening instructions aim at enhancing the learners' listening comprehension by focusing on the material and/or through listening strategy training. This study investigates the effect of the implementation of two listening approaches of IMI (Interactional Modification of Input) and MST (Metacognitive Strategy Training) on the listening comprehension of language learners. Furthermore, it compares the effectiveness of these two approaches as two separate options in teaching listening. For this purpose, a quantitative study was conducted on 3 groups of intermediate language learners at ILI (Iran Language Institute): MST (N=21), IMI (N=21), and Control (N=21). During the eight week treatment, all groups received listening instructions based on the ILI traditional listening techniques (pre-listening, listening, and follow-up). The IMI group had the additional chance to interact during the listening phase while the MST group received metacognitive strategy instructions in different phases of the listening tasks. ANOVA analysis for the comparison of means was carried out on the collected data from the pre/post-tests of the listening comprehension at .05 statistically significant level. The results from the Post-hoc analysis, Tukey test, showed a significant difference at $p \leq .05$ level between the post-test of all groups: IMI ($M=7.61$), MST ($M=8.80$), and Control ($M=6.33$). The results indicate that MST and IMI respectively had a greater impact on listening comprehension than the traditional listening instructions. The reasonable conclusion can be made from these results that the incorporation of interactive approaches as well as strategy instructions into traditional listening instructions can lead to enhanced listening comprehension.

KEYWORDS: Listening Comprehension, Input, Interactional Modification, Metacognitive Strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The significance of listening in language learning has been proved by different Language acquisition research in that listening can be considered an important source of input for learners (Rubin, 1995; Rost, 1991; Park, 2005; Krashen, 2004; Cheung, 2010). Having access to comprehensible input, undoubtedly, is assumed to play a crucial role in second language

acquisition (Krashen, 1981; Vanpatten, 2004; Mitchell, Myles, & Marsden, 2013). A noticeable growing interest in and concern for listening instructions has emerged over the last forty years (Goh, 2008). A retrospective examination into the recent trends in language teaching and learning unravels how the emphasis on teaching listening and the target of listening instruction has changed. The focus of the earlier listening comprehension materials was mainly on testing students' ability to listen to oral discourse and answer a couple of general and specific comprehension questions based on the incoming information (Birjandi & Rahimi, 2012). More recent views of research by Vandergrift (2004), and Vandergrift (2006) have shifted attention toward new evidence-based approaches in teaching listening instructions in the last two decades. The growing concern manifests a deeper understanding of listening as a communicative and cognitive skill within the realm of language learning (Goh, 2008).

There are different ways to help learners enhance their listening comprehension. According to Maleki (2012), warm up or raising relevant schemata is one way that teachers often utilize in order to enhance comprehension. Research based on listen-and-do tasks has been directed at investigating the claims of Input & Interaction hypotheses, in particular how properties of modified input affect learner comprehension and acquisition. Ellis (2003) claimed that the learners' comprehension will be enhanced when tasks provide opportunity for the negotiation of meaning. Providing the learner with comprehensible input through interaction has been the target of many investigations. Many researchers (e.g., Gass & Varonis, 1994; Ellis, 1999; Park, 2005) hold a similar view on the significance of input modifications which result from negotiation process in interaction. In all the foregoing studies, Interactionally Modified Input (IMI) has proved effective on the enhancement of listening comprehension.

A new awareness has developed of the extent to which L2 listening is a strategic activity. Field (1998) believed that, in real world encounters, listeners succeed in deducing much less information from speech stream than was assumed based on their performance with graded materials. A number of North American listening specialists (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1995; Chamot, 2004) have argued that listening strategies can and should be explicitly taught. Other research works (e.g., Vandergrift, 2004; Goh, 2008; Yang, 2009; Coskun, 2010; Birjandi & Rahimi, 2012; Bozorgian, 2015) have demonstrated the effectiveness of Metacognitive Strategy Training (MST) on listening comprehension. Moreover research has shown that awareness of metacognitive strategies, whether taught explicitly or not, will make for more proficient listeners. (Bozorgian, 2015; Vandergrift, 2006; Vandergrift, & Tafaghodtari, 2010)

As discussed above, all research works conducted on Interactionally Modified Input (IMI) and Metacognitive Strategy Training (MST) in listening focused on proving the effectiveness of these two approaches. Nevertheless, there hasn't been a comparison between the effectiveness of these two ways of facilitating listening comprehension as two separate options at the teachers' disposal. This is the aim of this study to make a comparison between the effectiveness of these two approaches on listening comprehension of EFL learners.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Among those various ways at the teachers' disposal as effective tools for enhancing listening comprehension, Interactionally Modified Input (IMI) & Metacognitive Strategy Training (MST) have gained immense popularity; hence, they have been the target of many research investigations.

Input Modification

Drawing on theories that emphasize the role of comprehensible input in second language acquisition, instructors might resort to tasks in which input is modified to facilitate listening comprehension. The origin of the emphasis on comprehensible input dates back to the Input Hypothesis. Krashen (2012) claimed that if learners receive comprehensible input, acquisition will consequently occur. In his view, acquisition can be defined as the outcome of the subconscious process of internalizing new linguistic forms and meaning. He argued that input is made comprehensible through simplifying the input and providing learners with textual support. In this regard, McDonough (2005) found a positive relationship between progress on the acquisition of question formation and the amount of modified input produced for the learners. Kim (2003) found the modification of input useful in enhancing language vocabulary acquisition through reading. Some researchers (Ellis, 2008; Gass & Veronis, 1994) have somehow supported the input hypothesis by proposing pre-modified input and interactionally modified input as the potential types of comprehensible input. Guided by this theoretical perspective, a lot of language research has been conducted to identify what makes input comprehensible. Anani Sarab and Karimi (2008) investigated the impact of simplified and interactionally modified input on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners, and concluded that the performance of the learners was by far much higher under the interactionally modified text conditions.

As the first type, pre-modified input is the simplified input by the speaker through adapting the baseline input in a non-reciprocal way. It is mostly done before the listener hears the text, and can be done, as Park (2005) stated, through repetition or paraphrase of words or sentences and reduction of the sentence length and complexity. The other type of modification as the target of this study is the interactionally modified input, i.e. when the task of listening becomes reciprocal and learners are given the chance to request any kind of clarification, repetition, pause, etc.

Long (1996) argued that input which is interactionally modified through the negotiation of meaning can especially be beneficial for comprehension. In fact, Long's Interaction Hypothesis is regarded as an extension of Krashen's Input Hypothesis. Long (1983) maintained that simplification and contextual clues not only lead to comprehensible input, but they also modify the interactional structure of the conversation. In this regard, an input-based task needs to involve students in responding to the input by requesting clarification when they cannot understand. In order to investigate the impact of different input types on L2 comprehension, several studies were carried out on the basis of listen-and-do tasks. It was claimed by Pica, Young, and Doughty (1987) that IMI resulted in better comprehension than pre-modified input. Other studies by Loschky (1994) and Ellis, Tanaka and Yamazaki (1994) confirmed these findings. Ellis et al. (1994) explored the impact of modified interaction on comprehension and the vocabulary learning, coming up with similar results as the previously mentioned research works. Fang (2010)

emphasized the great importance of interaction with respect to the conditions considered theoretically important in SLA, such as the learners' comprehension of input, access to feedback, and modified output.

In her investigation of word meaning acquisition, Boroghani (2002) examined the impact of modified aural input (pre-modified and interactionally modified). She found that interactional modification of input enhanced word meaning acquisition. Some more recent studies such as Bahrani's (2012) hold a similar view about the effectiveness of interactional modification on language acquisition. Interactional input modification has proved effective in teaching other skills such as reading as well. In a research done by Maxwell (2011), this type of modification has proved effective on teaching reading skills. In conclusion, there is consensus among researchers all around the world, including among those in Iran (e.g., Keshavarz & Mobarra, 2003; Shirinzari, 2011; Boroghani, 2002; Baleghizadeh & Borzabadi, 2007; Maleki, 2012; Bahrani, 2013) on the effectiveness of input modification, in particular IMI, in teaching different skills especially listening comprehension. Maleki (2013) asserted that non-interactive modification of input did not have a significant effect on students' listening comprehension while the interactional modification of input helped the learners to significantly enhance their listening comprehension level. In investigating the effect of input modification on aural comprehension of intermediate level learners, Vessoni De Lence (2010) came up with positive results, revealing that modification had facilitated the learners' listening comprehension of authentic texts.

Metacognitive Strategy Training

There has never been a ceiling for studies on the illusive concept of listening comprehension. Attempts toward facilitating it have always resulted in the introduction of new approaches to make for better listeners. Over the past two decades, there has been a shift in teaching listening from traditional methodology of focusing on the input to guided methodology through metacognitive strategy instructions (Bozorgian & Alamdari, 2013). Field (1998) considered listening as a 'strategic activity', calling for the incorporation of strategy training in listening instructions. Oxford (1990) defined learning strategies as specific actions which language learners take so that they can learn more easily and faster and enjoy the process of learning in a more effective and autonomous way which can be transferable to new situations. In their study, Wang and Xiaoyan (2008) found that more successful listeners were more meta-cognitively aware of the use of various strategies. Their findings verified the claims on the importance of strategy use and metacognitive awareness of those strategies. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), learning strategies fall into three major categories: metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies concern the use of knowledge about cognitive processes, consisting of efforts to take control of language learning in the light of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The actions or operations utilized in solving problems which necessitate direct analysis, synthesis or reconstruction of the incoming information are defined as cognitive strategies. Social affective strategies include a wider variety of strategies which deal with either interaction with others or ideational control of affection. Attention in listening comprehension has increasingly been directed, as Vandergrift (2006) put it, at learners self-report of their understanding and awareness of the processes involved in listening, or metacognitive awareness and strategies. It has been argued that awareness of these strategies and other variables

in learning can have a positive influence on language learners' listening development (Victori & lockchart, 1995; Bolitho et al., 2003; Wilson, 2003; cited in Vandergrift et al., 2006).

Metacognition

Today the conceptualization of metacognition is often attributed to Flavell (1979) who broke down metacognition into three elements of: metacognitive knowledge (what one knows), metacognitive skills (what one is currently doing), and metacognitive experience (thinking of what one's current cognitive or affective state is). Metacognitive knowledge is known as the learners' ability to engage in the regulation and management of their own learning, providing an individual view on one's learning abilities and styles (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

There is extensive evidence that learners' metacognition can directly affect the processes and outcome of their learning (Mokhtari and Reichard, 2002; Vandergrift, 2004; Vandergrift et al., 2006; Abdulmalik, 2011). Metacognitive instruction can potentially heighten learners' awareness of their listening processes and consequently enhance their development of their listening comprehension (Goh, 2008). Similar findings from previous studies were reported in O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Young (1997). Two other studies by Vandergrift (2007) and Zeng (2007) demonstrated a causal relationship between metacognitive instruction and statistically significant improvement in listening comprehension performance. Coskun (2010) tested the effectiveness of metacognitive strategy training (MST) on beginner students' listening comprehension and came up with positive results.

Models of strategy instruction

There are various models of listening strategy training: Brown's (1987) model has been successfully applied in L2 research for years. The model comprises three stages of planning, monitoring and evaluating.

Another instructional model for strategy training was developed by Jones et al. (1987). The sequence of instruction in this model assesses students' current strategy use, explaining the new strategy and modeling the strategy.

CALLA (cognitive academic language learning approach) is another model proposed by Chamot and O'Malley (1990). CALLA includes three components: topics from the major content subjects, development of academic language skills and direct instruction in learning strategies. A more recent model of strategy instruction was introduced by Vandergrift (2004) and Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010). It consists of three phases of pre-listening (planning and prediction), extensive listening (three times, during which hypothesis making, verification of hypothesis, corrections and strategies necessary for better comprehension, are pointed out), reflection stage (based on earlier discussions of strategies used to make up for what was not understood, learners write goals for next listening activities). This model was utilized for metacognitive strategy training in this study.

OBJECTIVES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to further investigate the effect of each of the approaches discussed above (Interactional Modification of Input & Metacognitive Strategy Training) on listening comprehension of EFL learners, and consequently finding the most effective way of listening instruction by considering the extent to which each of these approaches contributes to comprehension performance of the learners. A common method used in teaching listening, especially in Iran, is to ask students to listen to an oral text and tell what they have understood, or answer a number of comprehension questions. These methods are, in fact, more 'testing' than 'teaching' listening. In order to contribute to teaching of listening in a more fruitful way, this study intended to find some options for language institutes and teachers to rethink about their methodology and approaches.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study, therefore, sought answers to the following questions:

- 1- Does Interactionally Modified Input (IMI) have any effects on EFL learners' listening comprehension?
- 2- Does Metacognitive Strategy Training (MST) have any effects on EFL learners' listening comprehension?
- 3- What is the interaction effect of IMI and MST on EFL learners' listening comprehension?

METHODOLOGY

In order to find the answer to the research questions, a quantitative study was conducted on three randomly selected intact classes at ILI (Iran Language Institute). The classes were assigned to two experimental groups (IMI and MST) and one Control group. During the eight-week treatment, the groups received different listening instructions based on the purpose of the study (discussed at length in the preceding sections). Before and after the treatment, pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure the listening comprehension of the learners in all groups. The data collected from the pre-post-test were finally analyzed by means of ANOVA at .05 statistically significant level.

Participants

The targeted population consisted of 63 intermediate learners of ILI. The reason why these learners were chosen for the study was their fair mastery over different skills, a good time duration regarding the training system of ILI, and consequently, an in-depth understanding of the needs for strategies which could help them enhance their listening skills. The participants were all Iranian EFL learners, aging between 15 and 18. They all had the same amount of exposure to English through formal classes at ILI. To date, they had been studying English for about two years. Similarly, since they came from the same country it was reasonably assumed that they shared a homogeneous EFL background. Moreover, the treatment began at the beginning of the ILI Fall (2014) term when the students had just passed the ILI final examination, as a result of which all qualified to register for a higher class level (Intermediate 3). Their having just passed the qualification test heightened the chance of comprising a homogeneous group.

The population was assigned to the three groups. There were two experimental groups: MST (N=21) who received metacognitive strategy training, IMI (N=21) who received instruction through interactional modification of input, and one Control group (N=21) who received no additional instructions, but were taught listening according to the traditional ILI techniques of teaching listening.

At the beginning of the treatment, a listening pretest was administered to all groups to measure the listening comprehension proficiency of the learners. Another listening comprehension test with the same level of difficulty was administered in a post-test to measure any possible improvement in each of the groups.

Materials and Instruments

Eight listening texts tape recorded by native speakers with different topics such as radio programs, talks between friends, travelling, shopping, etc. were extracted from ILI listening instructions. The activities accompanying the texts were presented in the students' course book. Each task included three phases of pre-listening, listening, and post-listening activities by which treatment was given in different groups.

The ILI listening section of the ILI term qualification examination was utilized before and after the treatment as the pre-test and post-test in all three groups in order to assess any possible improvement in comprehension performance of the learners. The listening test comprised 10 tasks, five of which were short conversations between two native speakers, whereas the next 5 comprehension questions which had to be answered after listening to a short text (cf. Appendixes I to IV).

Procedure and Data Collection

All three groups received an eight-week listening training which took a whole term of 21 sessions (twice a week). Every week, a new task was dealt with in the classes following the traditional teaching techniques. The tasks comprised three phases of pre-listening activities, listening phase and follow up. In pre-listening activity, some new words and concepts which appear in the listening text were introduced. In the listening phase they listened to a tape recorded text three times, the first time was a non-stop playing followed by checking the answers and comprehension questions, the second time the teacher might pause the recording and paraphrase some chunks, or ask the student to repeat some of the chunks. In the follow up, the students interacted with each other based on the topic introduced in the listening text.

All three groups received instruction based on the foregoing steps.

The MST group received additional instructions on strategy use in different phases of listening task. Metacognitive strategies given were based on problem-solving, planning-evaluation, mental translation, personal knowledge or the beliefs about oneself as a learner, and directed attention. The instruction consisted of the following stages:

1. At first, the concept of learning strategies was clearly explained. The instructor briefly explained different types of strategies including cognitive, metacognitive and socio-

- affective strategies. To give further clarification, examples of different strategies were given.
2. Since the focus of attention would be on metacognitive listening strategies, some examples such as note-taking strategies were explained in order to familiarize students with the strategies. In this stage, the learners were informed of the strategies related to planning, monitoring and evaluation. They were also provided with further clarification that they needed to have a plan and/or a map of what they would be listening to, keep on track while listening, and ask themselves every now and then whether they were pleased with what they were doing.
 3. The students were informed of the topic of the oral text.
 4. They were asked to brainstorm whatever words, phrases, or information they might hear and write them on the paper according to their background knowledge. In this prediction phase, they were assigned to pairs or small groups and were told that all logical possibilities should be considered. In this phase, the metacognitive processes of planning and directed attention were involved.
 5. Once they had completed their prediction, they listened to the text for the first time. They were supposed to put a checkmark beside the information which was predicted. They would add anything new that they had heard as well. The metacognitive processes of selective attention, monitoring and evaluation were involved here.
 6. At this point, the learners were asked to work in pairs, comparing their predictions and comprehension of the listening material. They would also discuss the points of confusion and disagreement and decided the particular parts of the text and information that would require careful attention during the second time listening. The metacognitive processes involved here consisted of monitoring, evaluation, planning and selective attention.
 7. The learners listened to the text a second time, trying to make sense of the difficult points after the first time listening, making corrections, and jotting down new information on the paper. Selective attention, evaluation, problem solving and monitoring were the metacognitive processes involved.
 8. They participated in the class discussion to confirm the understanding of the text and how they came over the processes of comprehending: monitoring, problem solving and evaluation.
 9. The third time listening was done allowing the learners to mostly focus on the information gleaned from the class discussion that they might have missed during the previous phases of listening. The metacognitive processes involved here were monitoring, selective attention and problem solving.
 10. Ultimately, each learner individually wrote a reflection of the processes she had gone through, noting any possible strategies that would be used in the last listening.

The students in IMI followed all the same steps mentioned in the control group. The listening phase was, however, different in IMI. During the second time listening,, according to the traditional ILI technique, the students listened to the recording and passively repeated the chunks that the teacher had asked them to, without really knowing what they are doing. In IMI the learners were allowed to decide what they needed to repeat, pause, clarify and so on. In other words, in the second time listening, they were asked to listen carefully. They were also given the

chance to interact with the teacher to repeat a chunk, explain an expression or a word, or give a clarification in case they didn't comprehend something. To ensure the learners' participation the teacher had to be constantly monitoring the learners' listening. The spot checks randomly done further supported their pursuing whatever they were supposed to. In order to prevent the interruption of the flow of the listening they were requested to interact using a number of body signs which had already been defined. After the second time listening, the learners did the foregoing procedures. The ILI listening qualification test was used twice in a pre-test and post-test to assess the listening comprehension of the learners.

Data Analysis

ANOVA analysis for the comparison of means was carried out on the collected data through the pre-test and post-test at .05 statistically significant level. In order to make a comparison between the means of the three different groups and also to compare the pre-post-test in each group, a Tukey test was administered as a Post-hoc analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main aim of this study was to investigate whether an experimental application of IMI and MST could positively affect the listening comprehension and metacognitive awareness of intermediate English learners at ILI. In so doing, the pre-post-test scores of listening comprehension in the three groups were computed. The mean scores are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the achieved results in listening comprehension pre-post-tests for MST, IMI, and Control groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
IMI-pre	21	5.0476	1.43095	.31226
IMI-post	21	7.6190	.97346	.21243
MST-pre	21	5.1905	1.03049	.22487
MST-post	21	8.8095	.98077	.21402
Ctrl-pre	21	5.1429	1.19523	.26082
Ctrl-post	21	6.3333	1.06458	.23231
Total	126	6.3571	1.80428	.16074

As shown in Table 1, there is a difference between the mean scores of post-test in MST (M= 8.8), IMI (M=7.61), and Control (M=6.33). To determine whether the difference was statistically significant or not, a one-way ANOVA was utilized.

Table 2: Overview of the results from ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	255.310	5	51.062	40.413	.000
Within Groups	151.619	120	1.263		
Total	406.929	125			

The results in Table 2 indicate that there was a significant difference at the $p \leq .05$ level for different groups ($F=40.41$, $p \leq .05$). The results of the Post hoc analysis, Tukey test, are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of the results of Tukey test for pre-post-test of IMI, MST, and Control groups

Tukey HSD

Group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
IMI-pre	21	5.0476			
Ctrl-pre	21	5.1429			
MST-pre	21	5.1905			
Ctrl-post	21		6.3333		
IMI-post	21			7.6190	
MST-post	21				8.8095
Sig.		.998	1.000	1.000	1.000

As shown in Table 3, the difference existed between the post-test results of the three groups. No significant difference was detected between the pre-test means of the three groups.

Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean for MST ($M= 8.80$), was significantly higher than IMI ($M= 7.61$), and the mean score for IMI was higher than control ($M=6.33$). In other words, both MST and IMI had a positive effect on listening comprehension performance of the students compared to the Control group (who received the routine listening instruction of ILI), but the effect of MST was more significant than IMI on listening comprehension performance of the students.

Comparisons between the pre-test mean scores of the three groups in Tukey test reveal that the three pre-test means were in the same category, that is, there was not a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test in any of the groups at the $p \leq .05$ level: MST($M=5.19$), IMI($M=5.04$), and Control ($M=5.14$). It can be inferred from these results that the students were of the same level of proficiency before the treatment, and the difference of the means in their post-test merely attributed to the treatment they received during the investigation, not any other factors.

A further examination of Table 3 (the results from the Tukey test) reveals that, in all groups there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the same group. The greatest difference existed in MST with the pre-test ($M=5.19$) and post-test ($M=8.88$). The next approach, IMI, had a lower amount of difference between pre-test ($M=5.04$), and post-test ($M=7.61$). The least difference belonged to the Control group with the pre-test ($M=5.14$), and post-test ($M=6.33$).

The comparison between the means within and between groups indicates that the instructions that the learners received during the treatment led to a score rise of their listening comprehension performance in all three groups. Even the learners in the control group, who were taught

according to the traditional ILI listening techniques showed an improvement in their listening comprehension in the post-test. Nevertheless, the difference in the results of the post-test showed that among the different approaches at the teacher's disposal, MST proved the most effective method in enhancing listening comprehension. IMI came second in terms of effectiveness and the control group came last.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study were mainly in line with the foregoing research findings on the effectiveness of the two empirical approaches of Interactional Modification of Input and Metacognitive Strategy Training in listening instructions. Moreover, the further comparison between these two approaches, as two separate options, revealed that although both effective, equipping learners with listening strategies in an Iranian EFL context resulted in better comprehension performance. Whenever interaction takes place, the learners become consciously involved in the process of listening, which could result in better comprehension. Therefore, IMI can be considered a potential approach utilized by the teachers trying to raise their learners' listening comprehension. On the other hand, once the significant improvement in listening comprehension is brought about as a result of strategy training, it is reasonable to conclude that what the learners gained in class must have been more than just listening to a text for new information. Since there was no emphasis on developing the learners' phonological skills during the treatment, the out performance of the learners of MST in listening comprehension could be attributed to their being equipped with some sort of tools which had helped them do better in dealing with new contexts. In other words, this claim could be made that metacognitive strategies might have enabled the learners to transfer the skills they learned in class to new contexts.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of the present study provided support for the effectiveness of MST and IMI in listening instructions. Nevertheless, the results might not be generalizable to all other situations owing to the limitations which existed in the sample population, materials, and instruments used in this study.

The targeted population was limited to intermediate EFL learners with a fairly good mastery of English. The impact of these two approaches on beginner and advanced EFL learners needs further investigations. On the other hand, the materials used in this study were confined to tape recorded listening contents specifically provided for classroom instructions; real-life materials such as radio and TV news programs and films which could be used as the source of oral input were not used here. Since the focus of the present study was to investigate the learners' performance in listening comprehension skills at ILI (Iran language Institute), the listening section of the ILI term qualification examination was utilized as the pre/post-tests rather than other standard listening tests such as IELTS and TOEFL, so the results of the listening comprehension tests in this study are not necessarily generalizable to other types of tests.

REFERENCES

- Abdulmalik, F. (2011). *Effects of listening strategy training on listening comprehension and strategy use of ESL learners*. Unpublished doctoral thesis ,University Putra Malaysia.
- Anani Sarab, M., & Karimi, M. (2008). The impact of simplified and interactionally modified input on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. *Human Sciences*, 56, 29 – 42. Retrieved December, 14, 2014 from <http://www.SID.ir>
- Bahrani, T. (2012). Language input and second language acquisition. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(3), 39-43.
- Bahrani, T. (2013). Importance of language input in language learning. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 6 (10), 1376-1379.
- Baleghizadeh, S., & Borzabadi, D. (2007). The impact of two types of input modification on EFL reading comprehension: Linguistic versus interactional. *TELL*, 1(3), 71-94.
- Birjandi, P., & Rahimi, A. H. (2012). The effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on the listening performance of EFL students. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(2), 495-517. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v4i2.1707>
- Boroghani, T. (2002). Modified oral input and acquisition of word meanings. Masteral thesis, Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran. Retrieved December 15, 2014, from <http://idochp2.irandoc.ac.ir/fulltextmanager/fulltext15/TH/47/47706.pdf>
- Bozorgian, H. (2012). Metacognitive instruction does improve listening comprehension. *ISRN Education*, 2012(2012), 1-6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5402/2012/734085>
- Bozorgian, H. (2015). Less-skilled learners benefit more from metacognitive instruction to develop listening comprehension. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 4 (1), 3-12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5861/ijrsl.2014.748>
- Bozorgian, H., & Alamdari, E. F. (2013). Metacognitive instruction: Global and local shifts in considering listening input. *Education Research International*, 2013 (2013), 1-8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2013/457250>
- Brown, A. (1987). Metacognition, executive control, self-regulation, and other more mysterious mechanisms. In F. Weinert & R. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation, and understanding* (pp. 65-116). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Chamot, A. U. (2004). Issues in language learning strategy research and teaching. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 1(1), 14-26.
- Cheung, Y. K. (2010). The importance of teaching listening in the EFL classroom. *Online submission to the Institute of Education Sciences*, ref# 46. Retrieved September 11, 2014, from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED512082>
- Coskun, A. (2010). The effect of metacognitive strategy training on the listening performance of beginner students. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, 4(1), 35-50.
- Ellis, R. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins B.V.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (2nd ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., Tanaka ,Y., & Yamazaki, A.. (1994). Classroom interaction, comprehension and the acquisition of word meanings. *Language Learning*, 44(3), 449- 491. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-770.1994.tb01114.x>

- Field, J. (1998). Skills and strategies: Towards a new methodology for listening. *ELT Journal*, 52 (2), 110-118. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/52.2.110>
- Fang, X. (2010). The role of input and interaction in second language acquisition. *Cross Cultural Communication*, 6(1), 11-17.
- Gass, S., & Varonis, E. (1994). Input, interaction, and second language production. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 283-302.
- Goh, C., (2008). Metacognitive instruction for second language listening development: Theory, practice and research implications. *RELC Journal*, 39, 188-213. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0033688208092184>
- Keshavarz, M. & Mobarra, M. (2013). The effects of simplification and elaboration on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. *IJAL*, 6 (1), 101-117.
- Kim, Y. (2003). *Effects of input elaboration and enhancement on second language vocabulary acquisition through reading by Korean learners of English*. Doctoral thesis, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, USA. Retrieved December, 15, 2014, from <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu>
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. London: Longman.
- Krashen, S. (November 13, 2004). *Applying the comprehension hypothesis: Some suggestions*. Paper Presented at 13th International Symposium and Book Fair on Language Teaching (English Teachers Association of the Republic of China), Taipei, Taiwan.
- Krashen, S. (2012). The Comprehension Hypothesis Extended. In T. Piske and M. Young-Scholten (Eds.) *Input Matters in SLA* (pp. 81-94). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Native speaker/ non-native speaker conversation and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied linguistics*, 4, 126-141.
- Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413-468). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Loschky, L. (1994). Comprehensible input and second language acquisition: What is the relationship? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 303-323.
- Maleki, Z. (2012). The effects of pre modified input, interactionally modified input, and modified output on EFL learners' comprehension of new vocabularies. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v1n1p128>
- Maleki, H. (2013). Interactive and Non-Interactive Input Modifications to Input in Listening Comprehension. *ELT Voices-India*, 3(5), 49-57.
- Maxwell, S. (2011). *The effect of two types of text modification on English language learners' reading comprehension: Simplification vs. elaboration*. Unpublished masteral thesis, Hamline University, Saint Paul, Minnesota.
- McDonough, K. (2005) Identifying the impact of negative feedback and learners' responses on ESL question development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 27(1), 79-103.
- Mendelsohn, D. (1995). *Applying Learning Strategies in Second/Foreign Language Listening Comprehension lessons*. San Diego, CA: Dominies Press. (pp.58-72).
- Mitchell, R., Myles, F., & Marsden, E. (2013). *Second language learning theories*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Mokhtari, K., & Reichard, C. (2002). Assessing students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94, 249-59.

- <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.94.2.249>
- O'Malley, J. M. (1987). The effects of training in the use of learning strategies on learning English as a second language. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.). *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Prentice-Hall. (pp.133-43).
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Park, E. (2005). On three potential sources of comprehensible input for second language acquisition. Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics. Retrieved March, 7, 2014, from <http://www.journal.tc-library.org>
- Pica, T., Young, R., and Doughty, C. (1987). The impact of interaction on comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21 (4), 737-758. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3586992>
- Rahimi, M., & Katal, M. (2013). The impact of metacognitive instruction on EFL learners' listening comprehension and oral language proficiency. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)*, 5(2), 69-90.
- Rost, M. (1991). *Listening in action*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Rubin, J. (1994). A review of second language listening comprehension research. *Modern Language Journal*, 78, 199-221.
- Shirinzari, M. (2011). Two types of text modification and incidental vocabulary acquisition: Simplification vs. Elaboration. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 7(1), 51-66.
- Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 3-25. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000017>
- Vandergrift, L., Goh, C. M., Mareschal, C. J., & Tafaghodatari, M. H. (2006). The metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire (MALQ): Development and validation. *Language Learning*, 56, 431-62.
- Vandergrift, L. (2006). Second language listening: listening ability or language proficiency. *Modern Language Journal*, 90, 6-18. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2006.00381.x>
- Vandergrift, L., & Tafaghodtari, H. M. (2010). Teaching L2 learners how to listen does make a difference: An Empirical study. *Language Learning*, 60, 470-497. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2009.00559.x>
- Vanpatten, B. (2004). *Input processing in SLA. Processing instruction: Theory, research, and commentary*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (pp. 5-32).
- Vessoni De Lence, M. A. (2010). Assisting the intermediate-level language listeners through the use of elaborated texts. Graduate Theses and Dissertations, Paper 11484. Retrieved December 14, 2014, from <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd>
- Yang, Ch. (2009). A study of metacognitive strategies employed by English listeners in an EFL setting. *International Education Studies*, 2(4), 134-139. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v2n4p134>
- Young, M.Y.C. (1997). A serial ordering of listening comprehension strategies used by advanced ESL learners in Hong Kong. *Asian Journal of English language Teaching*, 7, 35-53.
- Zeng, Y. (2007). Metacognitive instruction in listening: A study of Chinese non-English major undergraduates. Unpublished MA thesis. National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

Appendix I

Listening comprehension pre-test

Short conversations

1. Man: Did Jack show you his photos from his last trip?
Woman: Looking at them, I could picture myself lying on the beach.
2. Woman: My name is Mary Jones. J-O-N-E-S. Can I get a class card for chemistry today?
Man: Oh, no. Registration for students whose last name begin with "J" doesn't start until tomorrow.
3. Man: What will you do after graduation?
Woman: I don't know whether to go out on my own or work for a large company.
4. Man: Your new dresses are beautiful. Where did you find them?
Woman: Well, I bought three of the white I was on vacation in Chicago, but I made the other one myself.
5. Woman: Is there anything I can help you with?
Man: Yes, please. I bought this iron here last month, and it's not working properly. Where is your repair department?

Passage

You learn in school through your ears as well as through your eyes. Scientists who have studied human communication thoroughly have come up with some interesting facts. They show that the average individual spends approximately 70% of his or her time communicating. Only about 9% of this time is devoted to writing, 16% to reading, 30% to talking, and 45% to listening. However, in spite of the large amount of time spent in listening, the average person does not do it well. Estimates of listening efficiency show that the average skill is only about 25% of what it should be.

Appendix II

Pre-test (Questions)

Short Conversations

1. What did the woman do?
 - a. She looked at Jack's pictures with the man.
 - b. She went to the beach on vacation.
 - c. She imagined herself lying on the beach.
 - d. She took some pictures of herself on the beach.
2. What has happened to the woman?
 - a. She forgot to bring her class card.
 - b. She missed registration.
 - c. The man could not spell her last name.
 - d. She went for registration too early.
3. What is one of the woman's choices?
 - a. To work for a small company.
 - b. To start her own business.
 - c. To graduate from college.
 - d. To stop attending college classes.
4. What can we conclude from the conversation?
 - a. The woman finds her dresses easily.
 - b. The woman purchased no dresses in Chicago.
 - c. The woman always wears beautiful dresses.
 - d. The woman can sew.
5. What is the man going to do?
 - a. Get his iron repaired.
 - b. Get his money back.
 - c. Buy an iron.
 - d. Make a complaint.

Passage

6. What is the passage mainly about?
 - a. Learning in school.
 - b. Learning through ears and eyes.
 - c. Some facts about human communication.
 - d. Need for more practice in language skills.
7. What percentage of their time do people spend communicating with each other?
 - a. 17%.
 - b. 70%.

- c. 75%.
d. 7%.
8. Which of the following receives the least time?
a. Writing.
b. Reading.
c. Speaking.
d. Listening.
9. What is the least developed languages skill, considering the time devoted to it?
a. Reading.
b. Writing.
c. Speaking.
d. Listening.
10. How much of the total time is devoted to rating?
a. 25%.
b. 16%.
c. 30%.
d. 45%.

Appendix III

Listening comprehension post-test

Short conversations

1. Man: the air conditioner in my room is broken, and I can't work.
Woman: why not go to the library?
2. Man: what do you think of the final exam?
Woman: I was expecting it to be easy, but at the end of the first hour; I was still on the first page. I barely had time to get to the last question.
3. Woman: is it exaggerating if we say that human beings will soon settle down on the other planets?
Man: no, nothing seems impossible, especially now that scientists are making so much progress in different fields of science.
4. Man: there are supposed to be 45 people registered for this course.
Woman: I know. But I think 13 have canceled their registrations, and others indicated they could not make the first class.
5. Woman: you know, Martha, I always have to write letters, reports, and even articles. I wish that my teachers had made me write more in college.
Man: That's funny. I think my teachers forced me to write too much, even in my science classes. That's why I hardly had enough time to master the subject matter.

Passage

I still don't believe in ghosts even after my experience at the Rose Inn. At least I have never seen one. But ghost stories have made me feel uncomfortable since then. I arrived at the inn late at night and asked the landlord for a room. "There is no room left," he said, "unless you'd like to sleep in number 7." "Why not?" "I said." "What's wrong with it?" "I was so tired that I would have left anywhere." "Nothing," he said slowly. "But something happened there a few months ago." Every old inn has its strange stories, so I thought the sooner he told me about it, the better. "MN came here late at night, like you," the landlord said. "I thought there was something strange about him because he kept looking over his shoulder widely he was signing his name in the book. He asked me which room he could have and I offered him number 7. "There was a man who has said he would kill me with a knife," he said suddenly. He looked so frightened that I thought I had better take him to his room. I locked the door and left him by himself. The next day we found him dead. Do you mind sleeping there now? "Well no one is following me. I wish you had told me this story in the morning. As it is, I will sleep here on the floor in the restaurant if you don't mind."

Appendix IV

Post-test (Questions)

Short Conversations

1. What does the woman mean?
a. The man can find work in the library.
b. She can't help the man because she is working.
c. She can work without air-conditioning.
d. The men can do his work somewhere else.
2. What can we conclude from the conversation?
a. The woman barely finished the first page.
b. It took her one hour to get to the last question.
c. The woman expected the exam to be harder.
d. They exam was too difficult for the woman.
3. What does the man think?
a. There is no way to live on other planets.
b. It is possible to live on other planets.
c. The woman is exaggerating about living on other planets.
d. Scientists are exaggerating about the progress.
4. According to the woman, how many people we attend the first class?
a. 23
b. 22

- c. 32
- d. d.35

5. What's the man sorry about?
- a. He didn't write much at college.
 - b. He wasn't able to master the subject matter.
 - c. He used to write a lot of things.
 - d. He has to write a lot of scientific reports.

Passage

6. After the experience at the Rose Inn, the narrator
- a. doesn't believe in ghosts anymore.
 - b. has always felt uncomfortable.
 - c. doesn't like to listen to ghost stories.
 - d. decided not to stay at haunted houses.
7. Why did the landlord offer room number 7 to the narrator?
- a. The other rooms were occupied.
 - b. He didn't have enough money.
 - c. The other rooms were not ready.
 - d. He looked very strange.
8. According to the landlord, the man who came to his inn some time ago
- a. looked horrible.
 - b. looked very suspicious.
 - c. had a knife with them.
 - d. wanted to stay there for 2 days.
9. According to the passage, which of the following is not true about the man killed?
- a. The landlord took him to his room.
 - b. The letter will lock the door for him.
 - c. He was left all alone in his room.
 - d. He went to the hotel late in the afternoon.
10. What did the narrator decide to sleep at last?
- a. In room number 7.
 - b. In the restaurant.
 - c. In another hotel.
 - d. On another floor.

THE STUDY OF INTERSEMIOTIC TRANSLATION OF “GONE WITH THE WIND” NOVEL IN TO FILM BASED ON SOJOODI’S MODEL

Dr. Sholeh Kolahi

Assistant Professor, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch
Sh-kolahi@iauctb.ac.ir

Solmaz Mahdavi

Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
s.mahdavi9096@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present research aimed at investigating the intersemiotic translation of the novel –Gone with the wind- (Mitchell,1939) as prototext in to its corresponding film as metatext to make a comparative study between the two semiotic systems of language and cinema in order to see how changes and differences of the prototext and metatext including two different sign systems, affect the process of adaptation. To fulfill this purpose, the researcher followed Sojoodi’s theory of stratificational semiotics (2008). Having seen the movie for numerous times and also reading the novel several times, the researcher extracted ten sequences of the movie and compared them with their corresponding texts. The author has attempted to make a comparative study between the two semiotic systems of language and cinema, taking an alternative view towards adaptation. According to Lhermitte (2005), film adaptation is an intersemiotic translation which involves the conversion of a particular system of signs in to a different configuration. Through investigating the intersemiotic translation and intertextual relations (addition, deletion and creation) between the novel and its corresponding film, it was found out that %77 of the prototext has been translated (repeated) in to the film. Moreover, data analysis revealed that only "deletion" and "creation" has been occurred in intersemiotic translation which have had a significant impact on the transferred concept . Twenty three percent of the prototext have been deleted and creation has been occurred three times. There were no added sections in the movie.

KEYWORDS: Semiotics, Intersemiotic Translation, Metatext, Prototext, Film Adaptation

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has witnessed a research shift in the focus of systemic functional approaches to multimodal discourse analysis (O’Halloran, 2007). Drawing on insights of Halliday’s social semiotic theory of language, the researchers in the 1990s were mainly interested in the extension of systemic – functional grammar to non-verbal semiotic resources and media including displayed art (O’Toole,1994), visual sign (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996) action (Martinec,1998)

and music (Van Leeuwen, 1999). By contrast, from the late 1990 onwards, meaning making across different modalities in multi-semiotic text becomes the focus of study. But what actually semiotics is and what semiotics involves?

Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In the semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects. Contemporary semioticians study sign not in isolation but as part of semiotic 'sign-system' (such as a medium or genre). They study how meaning is made and how reality is represented.

Theories of signs appear throughout the history of philosophy from the ancient times onwards (Todorov, 1982). However, the two primary tradition in contemporary semiotics stem respectively from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-191) and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914). Saussure referred to language as 'the most important' of all of the systems of signs (Saussure, 1983). Many other theorists have regarded language as fundamental. Roman Jakobson insisted that 'language is the central and most important among all human semiotic systems' (Jakobson, 1970).

Jakobson (2000) identifies that there are three kinds of translation, i.e. intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic. He believes that translation can take place within the same language (inter-translation), and even between two systems of signs (intersemiotic translation). She also states that intersemiotic translation, the third type of translation, involves the conversion of a particular system of signs in to a different configuration.

The key emphasis in Jakobson's formulation is on the term "interpretation" and understandably. By giving several examples he tries to exemplify the purpose of all translations, which is in some ways a transfer from the source text to the target text, involving the process of communication from the sender to the receiver. But how does one address the question of translation equivalence in the third category that Jakobson mentions? One problem relates to translation equivalence, in which there is a lack of exact correspondence between single units in the source system and those of the target one.

The most common form of intersemiotic translation is translation of a literary work in to film. In recent years a considerable degree of interest has been developed in the semiology of the cinema, in the question whether it is possible to dissolve cinema criticism and cinema aesthetics in to a special province of the general science of signs. All the yardsticks that is applied to interlingual translation are applicable here too -equivalence, translation strategy, faithfulness to the original, etc. The dimensions like the natural changes that would accompany the transformation of material from one medium to another are also added.

The appropriate parameter to assess an intersemiotic translation would be the carrying through of meaning from the source system to the new representation. They are not supposed to be compared, for one is what the other has become.

It seems better to compare how the meaning of a text is rendered into a movie and in this rendering of meaning what changes have been applied on the text?

To this end the present survey has attempted to make a comparative study between the two semiotic systems of language and cinema, taking an alternative view towards adaptation. The researcher has undertaken to survey the intersemiotic translation process of novel in to the movie by applying Sojoodi (2008) stratificational approach. The aim has been to compare the intersemiotic translation processes between the two different sign systems of literature and cinema. Regarding the aforementioned systems, the researcher has compared the adaptable sequences of the movie 'gone with the wind' with the novel. Literary text and the cinematic production of the present research are respectively taken as the proto-text and the meta-text.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q₁: What is the frequency of the cinematic codes used in the intersemiotic translation of the novel –Gone with the wind- in to film?

Q₂: What is the frequency of repetition or translation, addition, deletion or creation in the process of intersemiotic translation of the novel- Gone with the wind- in to film based on Sojoodi's model?

Q₃: what is the impact of deletions and additions?

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical framework

Jakobson (1959) introduced his own categorization of different types of translation as:

Intralingual translation (rewording): an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.

Interlingual translation (translation proper): an interpretation of verbal signs by means of [signs of] some other language.

Intersemiotic translation (transmutation): an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign system.

Jakobson introduced the concept of intersemiotic translation, which not only relates to Saussure's stratificational linguistic ideas to translation; but also amazingly widens the realms of translation to art, aesthetics, etc. The researcher decided to analyze two different sign systems – novel and film- according to the third part of Jakobson's intersemiotic translation as well as Farahzad's approach in translation as an inter-textual function (2009). Farahzad believes that translation is partly repetition, partly creation and partly deletion. The aim of the present research is to show the frequency of repetition, creation and deletion in the intersemiotic translation process of novel in to the film. Stratificational semiotics is based on the existing theories, continuing them, and criticizing some of the key concepts of semiotics. In his theory of stratificational semiotics, Sojoodi argues that text is an open network consisting of different layers which are objective textual representations of different code systems. In fact, textual layers interrelate, and are realized and interpreted as a text and as an object resulting from the signifying

codes. Also, the relationship between text and code is bilateral, and code does not precede text. On the one hand, different codes involve in the creation and perception of a text, in other words, every text is a product of an interactive operation of a network of codes, and on the other hand, texts transform codes.

Aside from the relationship with texts, codes also relate to other codes. He also believes that text is physical and objective, so it is inevitably perceived by five senses or media- audio, visual, tactile, gustatory and olfactory. In contemporary world, texts are often perceived by audio- visual media. Furthermore, any medium needs a tool to communicate with its addressee. So television, radio, newspaper, book, internet, etc, are the tools that mediate between the medium and the addressee (Sojoodi, 2008).

Corpus

In the present research the literary text –Gone with the wind- and its cinematic production –its movie – selected as the corpus of the study, are respectively taken as the proto-text and meta-text. Checking more than 20 critics of the novel, the researcher came up with the comments emphasizing that the novel is a brilliant, powerful epic (Berardinelli, 2014; Puccio, 2004). However, there are disagreements on the theme of story. Margaret Mitchel herself has said that if the novel has a theme, it is survival. The novel presents many characters, some who survive, and many who do not. It can be said that It's a story of peace and war, love and loss, hope and despair. More than that, it presents a chronological look at a time filled with uncertainty in America – the Civil War and Reconstruction – while also depicting the moral and psychological growth of its characters as they undergo dramatic changes to their way of life. Margaret Mitchell paints a vivid picture of life in the South, from belles and beaux to Yankees and Confederates and everything in between.

This epic melodrama, directed in 1939 by Victor Fleming, should be viewed less as a movie and more like an institution. Unlike any other piece of seventh art, it actually became the essential part of popular culture in this century. And this shouldn't surprise anyone, since GONE WITH THE WIND looks larger than all the other movies, almost in the same proportion in which an average movie looks larger than real life. Its epic 222-minute length is only partly responsible for such impression. The images of this film are the most recognisable, the scenes are the most memorable, the protagonists are the most iconic and the lines are the most quoted. More than 60 years after its premiere, there are still new generations of viewers ready to be enchanted by its mythical quality. Thus the popularity of GONE WITH THE WIND is perpetuated and it remains the most popular and the most beloved film of all times. (Antulov,2000; Schuartz,2004)

The characteristics of both the novel and the movie are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The characteristics of the corpus

	Name	Characteristics
Novel	Gone with the wind	Margaret , M (author),(1936)
Movie	Gone with the wind	O.selznick,D (producer) & Fleming, V (director). (1939)

Procedure

The main purpose of the present study was analyzing intersemiotic translation process between the two different code systems -text and cinema. The researcher has selected ten sequences of the movie “Gone with the wind” which is taken as the metatext, with the corresponding sections of the novel “Gone with the wind” which is taken as the prototext. The rationale behind choosing the sequences comes back to the precise reading of the whole story in detail and about twenty criticisms as well. The main theme of the novel is war and the main character's (Scarlett's) personality. The plot is consisted of three main sections: pre war, the war , and after war periods. Since the corresponding sections in the film are the shortest period as the prewar, and afterwar and the war as the longest one respectively; the researcher has selected the main sequences from the war period and the rest from the two others. Therefore, from the total ten selected sequences, one of them is selected from pre war, three sequences from after war, and the remaining six sequences from the war period. Each selected sequence is divided in to its shuts and each shut is divided in to codes by which the producer has converted the novel in to film. The researcher has compared the adapted film with the novel to see what parts of the prototext have been repeated in the metatext, what parts have been created and what parts have been deleted. To clarify the process of data collection, the details of the cinematic codes used as the basis of the analysis in this study, are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Cinematic codes

Number	Cinematic code	
1	Camera shots	1)An extreme shot 2)A long shot 3)A full shot 4)A mid shot 5)A close-up shot 6)An extreme close-up shot
2	Camera angle	1)A bird'sound eye angle 2)A high angle 3)An eye-level angle 4)Alow angle 5)A dutch angle
3	Camera movement	1)Acrane shot 2)A tracking shot 3)A dolly shot 4)Panning 5)Tilt 6)Crab 7)Hand-held camera 8)Process shot 9)An Evangelion shot
4	Lighting	
5	Fade	1)fade in 2)fade out
6	Dissolve	
7	Sound	1)diegetic (ambient sound,room tone, dialogue, sound motifs) 2)non-diegetic (music or voice over)
8	Sound effects(SFX)	
9	Silence	
10	Color	
11	Clothes	
12	Actor/actress(face appearance)	
13	Make up	

A sample of the details of the analysis procedure is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1: Comparing the selected texts of the novel with its corresponding sequences of the movie







[illegible]

Cinematic codes

[illegible]

Design

The present research is a descriptive – corpus based study. Selecting a descriptive approach, the researcher attempted to analyze the meta-text in relation to its corresponding proto-text within the framework generated through the study. The researcher attempted to describe and compare the intersemiotic translation between the novel –Gone with the wind- and its corresponding adapted film. So, the cinematic codes were defined. These cinematic codes (such as sounds, color, camera shots, etc) are used by the director (the intersemiotic translator) to demonstrate the frequency of deletion, addition or creation in the process of translating the novel in to film.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The intersemiotic translation of texts in to the movie sequences has been done using the cinematic codes. The codes were evaluated and then classified with regard to the Sojoodi's stratificational model. The tables of the cinematic codes are presented in Appendix 1. The results are demonstrated as follow: The proportions of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for each sequence are shown in figures 2 to 11:

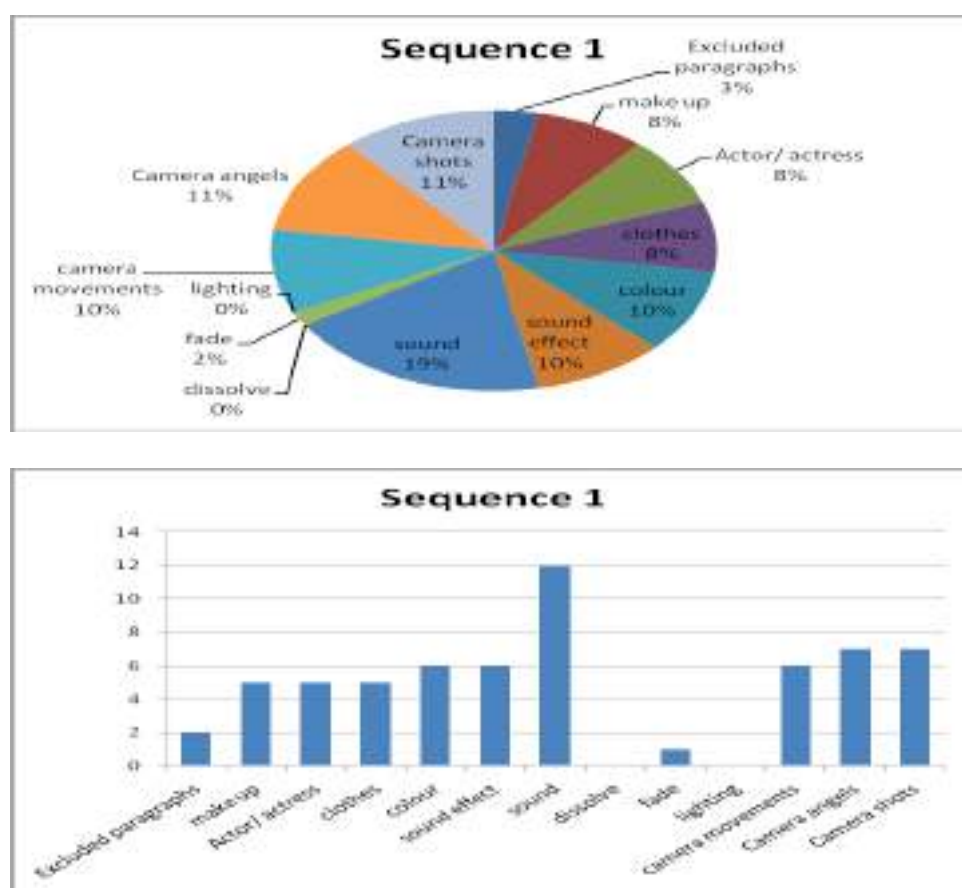


Figure 2: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 1

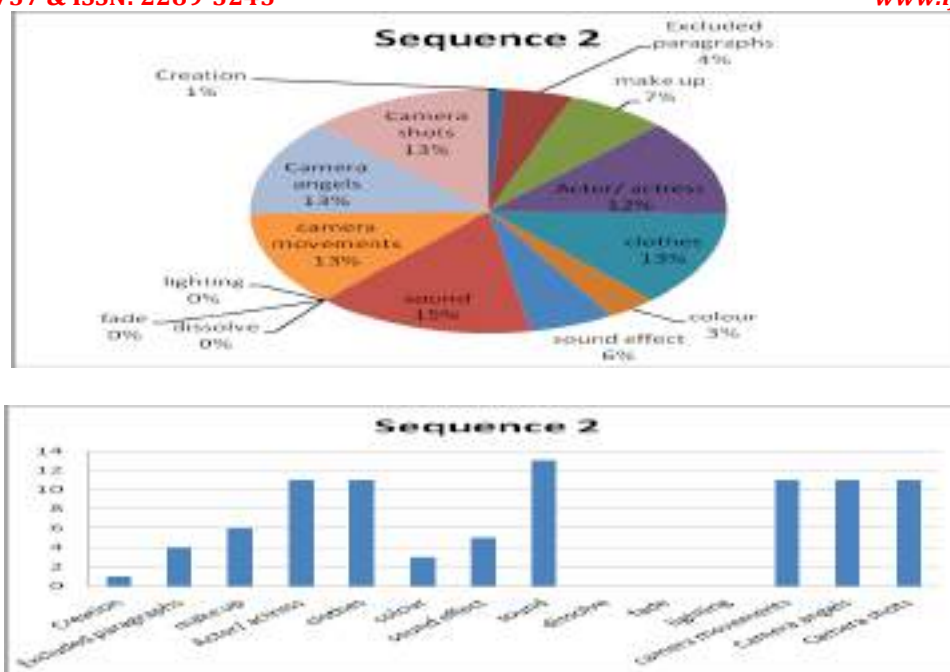


Figure 3: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 2

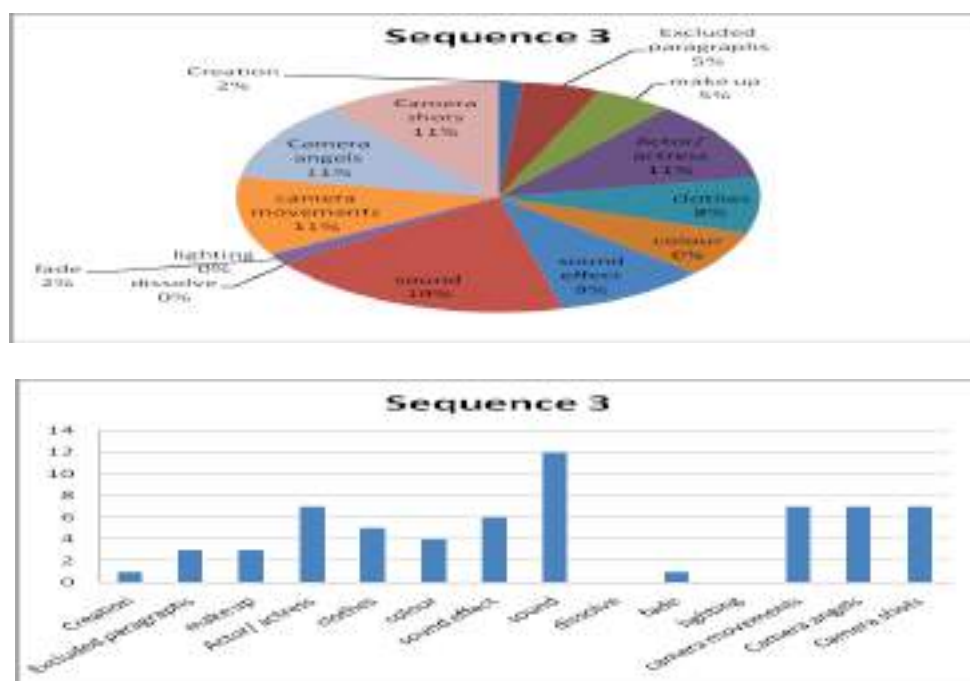


Figure 4: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 3

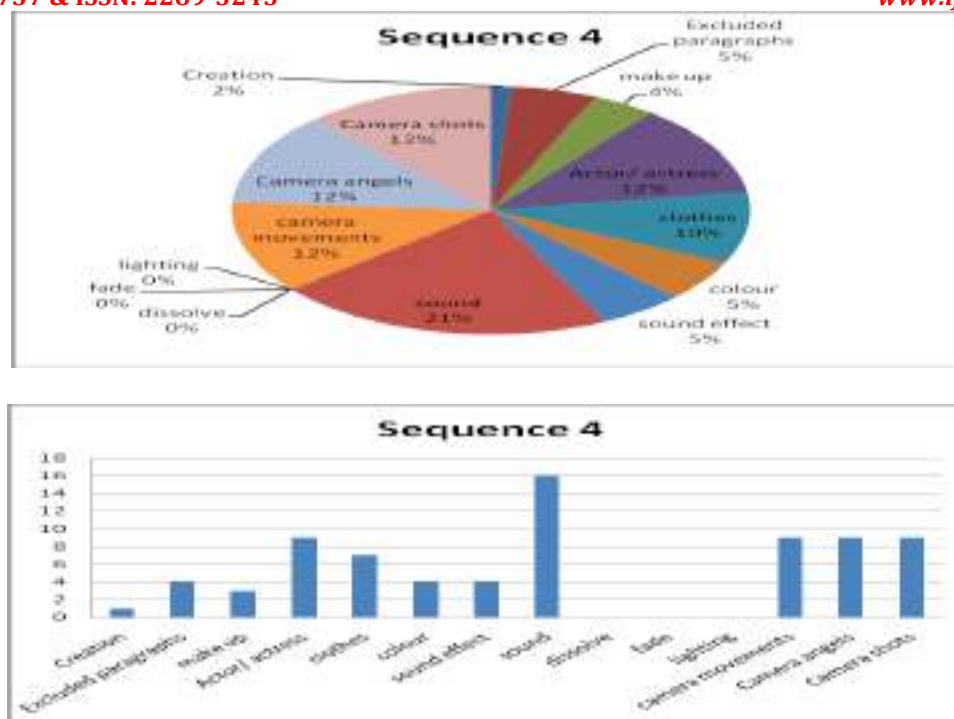


Figure 5: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 4

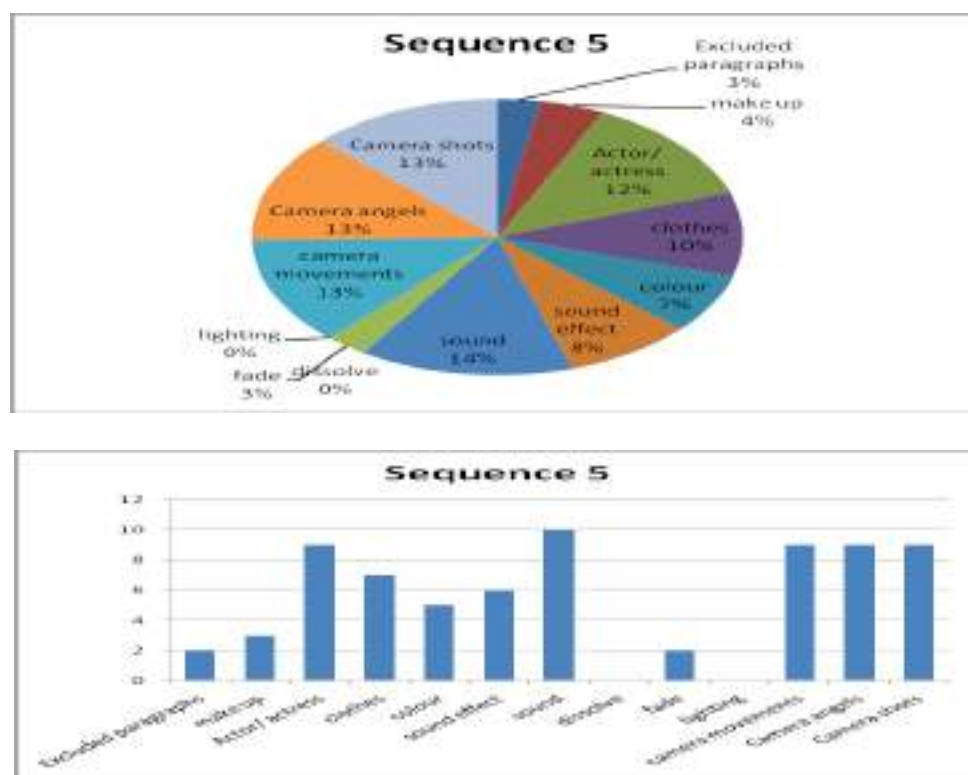


Figure 6: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 5

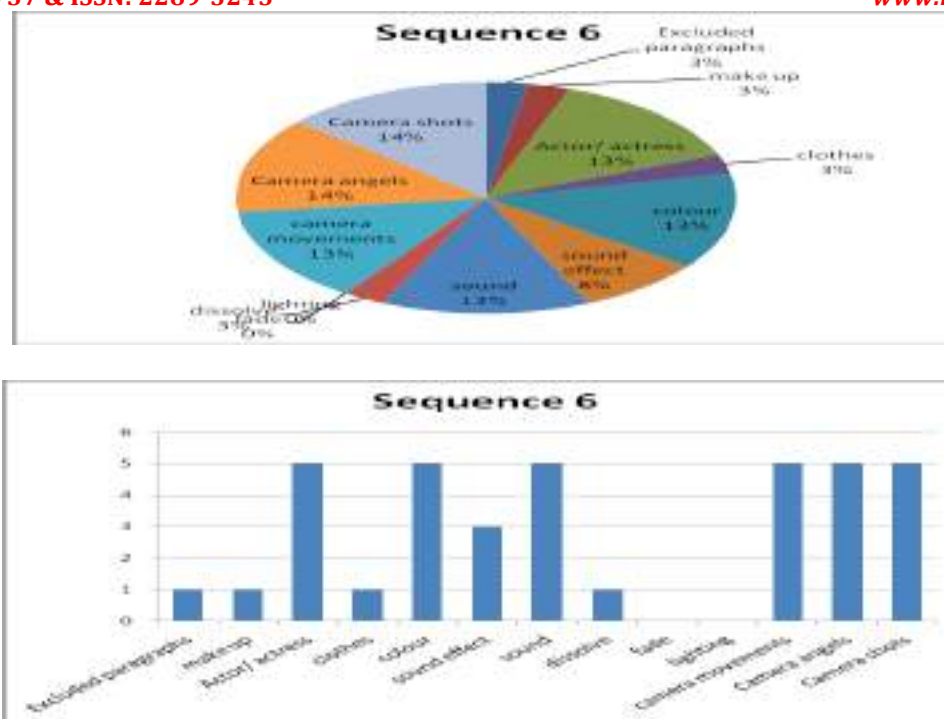


Figure 7: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 6

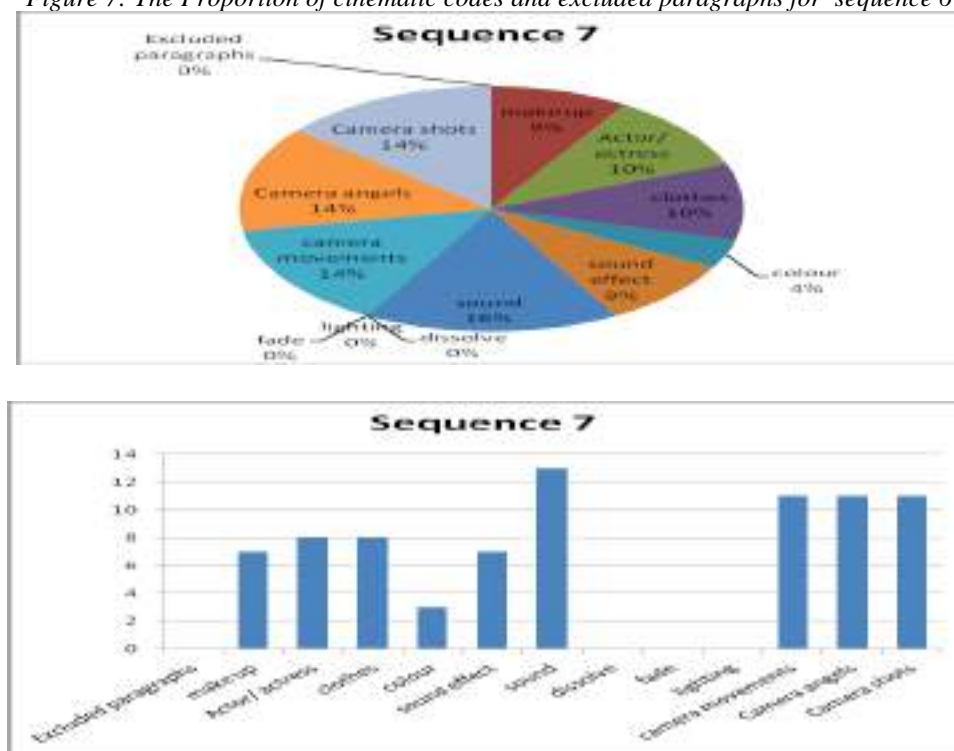


Figure 8: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 7

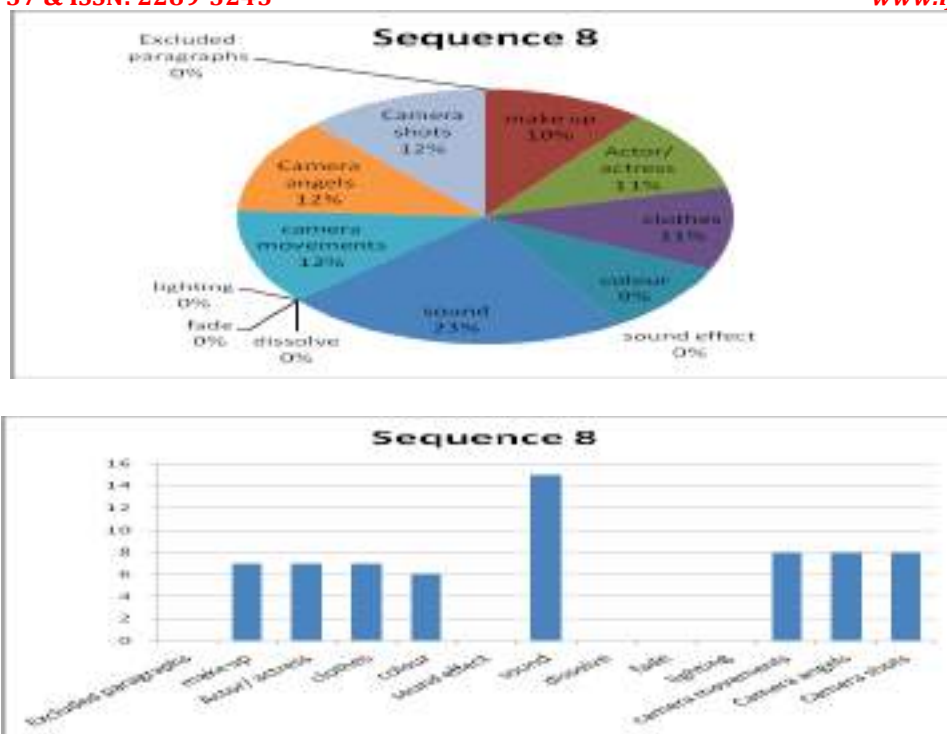


Figure 9: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 8

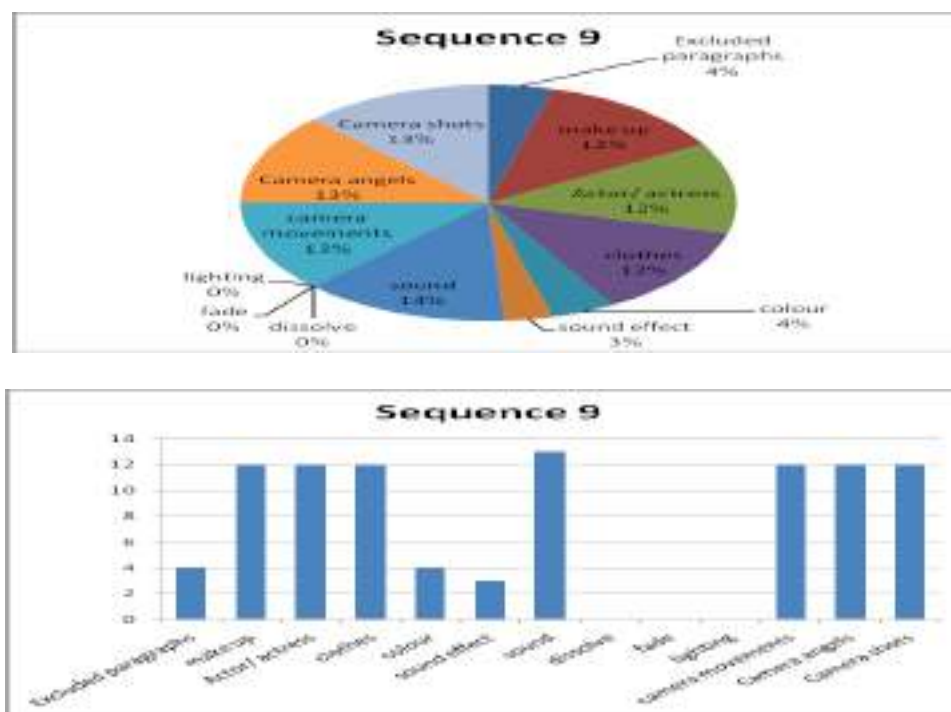


Figure 10: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 9

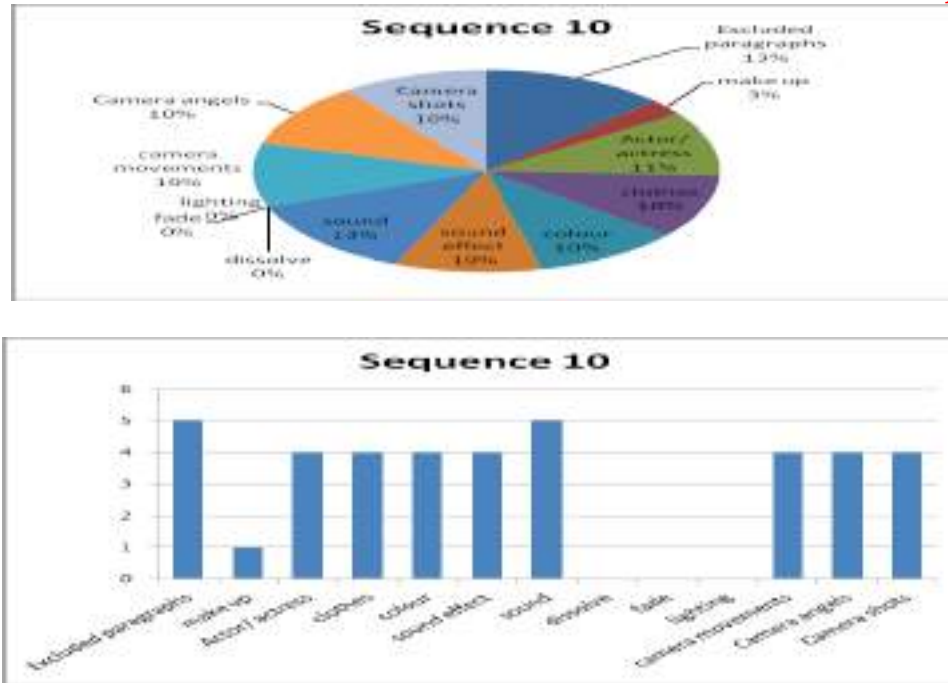


Figure 11: The Proportion of cinematic codes and excluded paragraphs for sequence 10

Figures 2 to 11 demonstrate the approximate use of each cinematic code in the sequences one to ten. It can be seen that generally most of the codes are used equally; only the cinematic code “dissolve” had been used once. So, it is deleted in statistical analysis of the findings of the present research. Moreover, one of the interesting findings of the study was the occurrence of “deletion” which has been occurred in most of the sequences and “creation” which has been occurred in some of the sequences.

Next, the mean of the main cinematic codes used for all 10 examined sequences was calculated. The results are shown in the table 4 and figures 12:

Table 4: Mean of the Main Cinematic Codes Used For All 10 Examined Sequences.

Cinematic codes	The no of sequences which have used the cinematic codes	The average of using cinematic codes in sequences
Cam. Shots	10	8.3000
Cam. Angels	10	8.3000
Cam mov.	10	8.2000
Lighting	10	5.5000
Fade	3	1.3333
Sound	10	11.4000
Sound effect	9	4.8889
Colour	10	4.4000
Clothes	10	6.7000
Actor/Actress	10	7.7000
Make up	10	4.8000
Total	102	6.8725

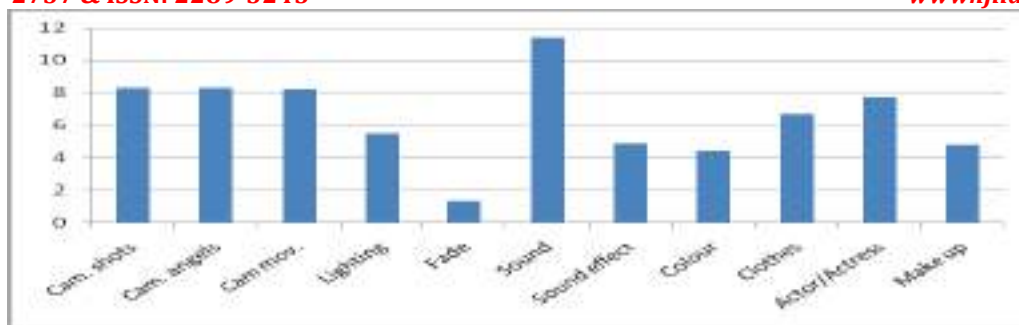


Figure 12: Mean of Different Cinematic Codes For All 10 Sequences.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance Test in 10 Examined Sequences

ANOVA

Number

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	520.888	10	52.089	7.424	.000
Within Groups	638.456	91	7.016		
Total	1159.343	101			

As table 5 indicates based on the analysis of variance of the 10 examined sequences ($\text{sig} < 0.05$) so, there is a significant difference in the use of cinematic codes.

So the answer for the first question is shown in table 6:

Table 6: The percentage of different cinematic codes used in each sequence

OVERALL PERCENTAGE	sum of all codes	Creation	Excluded paragraphs	make up	Actor/ actress	Clothes	colour	sound effect	sound	Dissolve	fade	Lighting	camera movements	Camera angels	Camera shots	No.	sequences
0.06	62.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	12.00		1.00		6.00	7.00	7.00	No.	1.00
		3.23%	8.06%	8.06%	8.06%	8.06%	9.68%	9.68%	19.55%		1.61%		9.68%	11.29%	11.29%	Percentage	
0.09	87.00	1.00	4.00	6.00	11.00	11.00	3.00	5.00	13.00				11.00	11.00	11.00	No.	2.00
		4.60%	6.90%	12.64%	12.64%	12.64%	3.45%	5.75%	14.94%		1.00		12.64%	12.64%	12.64%	Percentage	
0.08	63.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	7.00	5.00	4.00	6.00	12.00		1.59%		7.00	7.00	7.00	No.	3.00
		4.76%	4.76%	11.11%	7.94%	6.35%	9.52%	19.05%			1.59%		11.11%	11.11%	11.11%	Percentage	
0.09	75.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	9.00	7.00	4.00	4.00	16.00				9.00	9.00	9.00	No.	4.00
		5.33%	4.00%	12.00%	9.33%	5.33%	5.33%	21.33%			2.00		12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	Percentage	
0.09	71.00	2.00	3.00	9.00	7.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	10.00		2.82%		9.00	9.00	9.00	No.	5.00
		2.82%	4.23%	12.68%	9.86%	7.04%	8.45%	14.08%			2.82%		12.68%	12.68%	12.68%	Percentage	
0.09	37.00	1.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	1.00			5.00	5.00	5.00	No.	6.00
		2.70%	2.70%	13.51%	2.70%	13.51%	8.11%	13.51%	2.70%				13.51%	13.51%	13.51%	Percentage	
0.11	79.00		7.00	8.00	8.00	3.00	7.00	13.00					11.00	11.00	11.00	No.	7.00
		8.86%	10.13%	10.13%	3.80%	8.86%	16.46%						13.92%	13.92%	13.92%	Percentage	
0.11	66.00		7.00	7.00	6.00	15.00							8.00	8.00	8.00	No.	8.00
		10.61%	10.61%	10.61%	9.09%	22.73%							12.12%	12.12%	12.12%	Percentage	
0.10	96.00		4.00	12.00	12.00	4.00	3.00	13.00					12.00	12.00	12.00	No.	9.00
		4.17%	12.50%	12.50%	4.17%	3.13%	13.54%						12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	Percentage	
0.10	39.00		5.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00					4.00	4.00	4.00	No.	10.00
		12.82%	2.56%	10.26%	10.26%	10.26%	10.26%	12.82%					10.26%	10.26%	10.26%	Percentage	

Figure 12 displays the mean of different cinematic codes for all 10 sequences. According to the figure, it is concluded that in translating the text in to movie, the cinematic code “sound” has the highest frequency and the cinematic code “fade” has the lowest one.

Moreover, in order to answer the second research question, the sequences were analyzed to find out whether there is any “deletion” or “addition” or “creation” and the results are shown in table 7, figure 13 and figure 14 .

Table 7: The proportions of “deletion” and “creation” in the intersemiotic translation of novel –Gone with the wind- in to movie

Sequence	No. paragraphs	No. excluded paragraphs	No. creation	Proportion of excluded paragraphs	Proportion of creation
1	9	2	0	0.22	-
2	15	4	1	0.27	0.07
3	10	3	1	0.30	0.10
4	13	4	1	0.31	0.08
5	11	2	0	0.18	-
6	7	1	0	0.14	-
7	11	0	0	0	-
8	8	0	0	0	-
9	16	4	0	0.25	-
10	9	5	0	0.56	-
Total	109	25	3	0.23	0.03

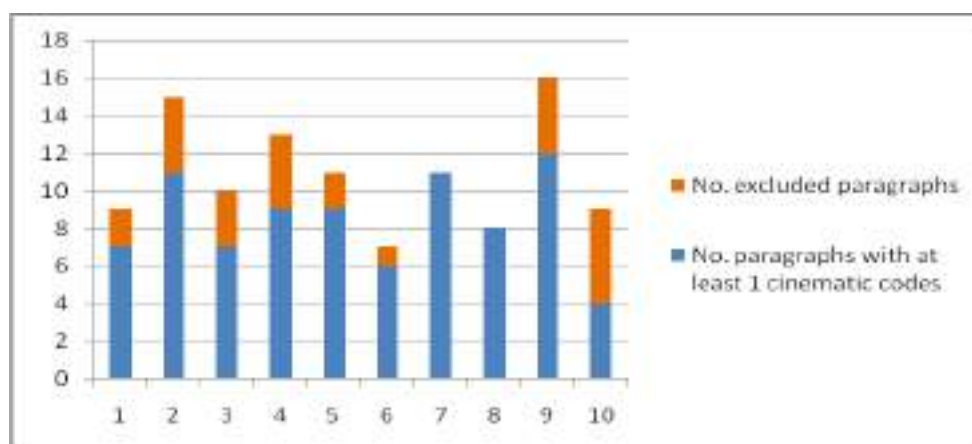


Figure 13: The Proportion of Excluded Paragraphs In Each Sequence

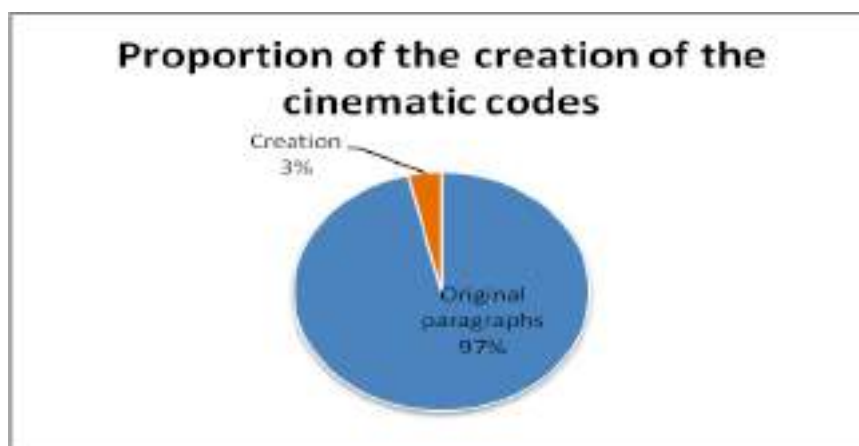


Figure 14: The proportion of the creation of the cinematic codes

According to table 7 and figure 13 and 14, it can be concluded that only “deletion” and “creation” has been occurred in the process of intersemiotic translation. There was no added section in the movie. However, in sequences 2, 3, 4 there are examples of “creation” and, “deletion” has been occurred in 8 out of the 10 sequences.

The high percentage of this occurrence is probably due to the high volume of the text which cannot be entirely converted to the movie.

As table 7 shows, the total number of the paragraphs are one hundred and nine (109). Twenty five paragraphs (23%) have been deleted and creation has been occurred three times (3%). So, it can be concluded that seventy seven percent (77%) of the source text has been translated in to the target text and out of the seventy seven percent (77%), in three percent (3%) “creation” can be seen.

The answer of the third question is actually based on the analysis which had been done by the researcher and is explained in the discussion part of the study.

Discussion

This research was conducted in order to find out whether there is any deletion or addition in translating the novel in to movie. The results indicate that there is no “addition” but “deletion” has been occurred in 8 sequences of the 10 sequences and this is a remarkable event. These deletions may have occurred due to the different reasons. The novel is of a considerable volume and the author has attempted to incorporate different issues in the story at the same time:

- 1) War and its destructive effects on people’s lives
- 2) Complicated characterization, the role of destiny, the character’s reaction to life events.

The text is a single sign system and the author could bring all the intended events and conditions by using the single sign system. But since the movie is a multi-sign system, converting the story with its details is a very demanding task and leads to excessive prolongation of the film. However, there are

some cases of deletion which can directly affect on the audience's interpretation of the characters' personality and behavior.

For example in the first sequence which is the beginning of the story, "buying darkee by the Scarlett's father" has been entirely deleted. Scarlett's father paid a high cost for the darkee. Darkee was a little daughter; his intention was in fact to take care of her. This shows Scarlett's father's kindness and amiability. The author intends to emphasize this characteristic at the beginning of the story and then let the reader judge on both the father and Scarlett's personalities. Deletion of the first scene deprives the audience of being allowed to have such a judgment.

Another example is the deletion of Melani's aunt. She is entirely deleted in the movie; so, her impact on the story is also deleted.

Another important issue implied is the occurrence of "creation". The director has changed the order of the events. For example, in the second sequence it can be seen that Melani first put her wedding ring in the gifts' basket and Scarlett did the same whereas it is quite vice versa in the novel. This "creation" shows the characteristics of Scarlett and Melani differently and makes a kind, sympathetic and devoted picture of Melani in the minds of the viewer's and on the other hand shows Scarlett as a selfish and jealous woman. A little "creation" caused a big change in the actress' characteristic.

So, it can be concluded that "deletion" and "creation" which had been occurred clearly in this story, have a significant effect on the transferred concept.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present research shows that the movie cannot be the entirely similar translation of the text and parts of concepts are changed in the process of intersemiotic translation. They may entirely be deleted or converted to another form. All these changes are affective factors in the intended impact of the movie.

Another issue which is implied of this research is the role of the director. According to the old perspective of translation, it means the replacement of an original text (known as the source text) with a substitute one (known as a target text). But it is a translator who does the act of translation and has a significant role in the process of translation.

In the intersemiotic translation, the director plays the role of a translator. In discussing the impact of translator in the proper translation, different factors are concerned such as the social level of the translator, his/her situation in the family, the financial, etc. All of these factors affects the act of a director in the process of filmmaking. This research shows the important role of a director because he/she is forced to choose among different cinematic codes and manage them so skilled and subtly to create the same impact of the novel.

There are obviously obstacles in the way of every research. Contrary to the great interest in the field of intersemiotics, the number of articles and books related to them and specially related to adaptation

strategy, are few. Another limitation posed to this study is in the line with the corpus which is a movie only available in the black market.

It is obvious that there are so many fields in interdisciplinary studies but in this study the researcher just focuses on the intersemiotic translation of novel to movie.

REFERENCES

- Farahzad, F.(2009). *Translation as an intertextual practice*. Iran: Allameh Tabataba' i University.
- Farahzad, F.(2009). *Translation Criticism:A CDA Approach*. Iran: Allameh Tabataba' i University.
- Jacobson, R. (1960): 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics'. In Sebeok (Ed.), *op.cit.*, pp. 350-77
- Jacobson, R. (1971): 'Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems'. In Roman Jakobson (Ed.): *Selected Writings*, Vol. 2. Mouton: The Hague, pp. 570-79
- Jacobson, R., & Morris, H. (1956): *Fundamentals of Language*. The Hague: Mouton
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996): *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Rutledge
- Peirce, C. (1931-58): *Collected Writings* (8 Vols.). (Ed. Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss & Arthur W Burks). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Saussure, F. ([1916] 1974): *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Wade Baskin). London: Fontana/ Collins
- Saussure, F. ([1916] 1983): *Course in General Linguistics* (trans. Roy Harris). London: Duckworth
- Sojoodi , F. (2005, November 9 and 10). *Intercultural Communication: A semiotic approach*. Paper presented at the international Seminar on Cultural Parallels, India and Iran, Allahabad Museum, Allahabad. Retrieved May 21,2010, from <http://www.farzansojoodi.com/upload /intercultural %20communication.pdf>
- Sojoodi, F. (2008). نشانه شناسی کاربردی [*practical semiotics*](2nd ed.). Tehran: Elm publication.
- Sojoodi, F. (2010f). [Intercultural communication: Translation and its role in inclusion and Exclusion processes]. In F. Sojoodi (Ed.), [semiotics: Theory and practice] (pp.143-166). Tehran: Elm publication)
- ارتباطات بین فرهنگی: ترجمه و نقش آن در فرایندهای جذب و طرد نشانه شناسی: نظریه و عمل)

HOW THE REPRESSIVE IDEOLOGIES OF THE COLONIZER WORK IN *HEART OF DARKNESS*

Samira Sasani

Assistant Prof. of English Literature, Shiraz University
E-mail: samira.sasani21@yahoo.com

Hossein Davari

M.A Student of English Literature, Shiraz University

ABSTRACT

With the beginning of the 20th century, England entered into a period much like the Victorian era with its strict hierarchy of social classes, master-servant relationship, and political, social and economic stabilities. Written in 1902, at the beginning of the Edwardian period, Heart of Darkness represents a subjective review of an area where many repressive ideologies established by the Victorian colonizers work latently in another underdeveloped country in order to achieve economic gain and perpetual subordination of the African society to the British Crown and government. These ideologies are so abstruse that they are not recognized by the docile native blacks who are incapable to discern them under the deceiving mask of benevolence and righteousness. Heart of Darkness is a personal record of what has happened in Congo from its first exploration in 1876 to Conrad's travel there in 1890 and the publication of his work in 1902. The unclassifiable and paradoxical Conrad who sets his novel against the imperialist colonizers is ambivalent in portraying the black natives. The ideological language which is employed by the narrator, Marlow, is coalesced with racism, and thus is not very kind and appropriate. In this novel, Conrad tries to clarify how these fake ideological programs of those in power are internalized and naturalized in the black subjects, and how they sustain, reinforce, commodify, and alienate the natives in order to ravage their country and the natural resources to make their history; the history which, by no means, can be treated as an authentic record, since it is written by a biased writer. Here, one can also recognize that even Conrad and his white characters such as Marlow and Kurtz are not spared from these ideological programs which have previously controlled their thoughts and attitudes.

KEYWORDS: *Heart of Darkness*, repressive ideologies, Joseph Conrad, imperialism, interpellation

INTRODUCTION

Marxists are condemned of having no belief in spirituality or any religion. They are criticized of not believing in God and it is because of their emphasis on materials, the real force creating the human experience and structuring human societies. In Marxist terminology, the economic condition referred to as material condition and the ideological atmosphere is generated from a material condition which is called a historical condition. All human events are the results of material/historical condition and have nothing to do with spirituality. These context-related

ideological programs differ in different times and different places, in other words, there is a strong relation between ideologies and the context consisting of these programs. Terry Eagleton (1976) defines ideologies as "the ideas, values and feelings by which men experience their societies at different times"(p.viii).

In his collaborated work with Angle, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx refers to the theological and political leaders such as, Luther and Cromwell:

They needed to deceive themselves by the use of representation, because they had to believe their cause was absolutely righteous and true. In fact, from a latter historical perspective, their struggles can be seen to have advanced the nascent capitalism, and thus to have served a particular class of people in the name of all humanity.”(qtd. in Hawks, 1996, p.93)

What Marx declares is the difference between the real existence and imaginary representation which is totally different from the truth found in real life. For Marx it is the representation that exerts its influence, deceives and reinforces the naïve people whose minds are predisposed to deception. He challenges these simulacra that make the good subjects—a reinforced individual by the ideologies—unable to distinguish between these two totally opposite realms of imaginary spiritualism and real materialism.

Marx believes that these leaders influence and handle the people by a very strong and secret medium called ideology. He notes "ideology consists of an inability to recognize the meditating function of representation, in assuming that it is an autonomous sphere, and thus mistaking the appearance for the thing-in-itself" (qtd. in Hawks, 1996, p.98). It is therefore the ideologically-based sign or representation which is mistaken for the material existence and reality.

The post Marxist critic, Louis Althusser, in his substantial essay, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" mentions: "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real condition of existence"(qtd. in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p.693). He divides ideologies into different categories and outlooks such as religious ideology, ethical ideology, legal ideology and political ideology. Althusser equals ideology to illusion; he declares:

While admitting that they do not correspond to reality, i.e. that they constitute an illusion, we admit that they do make allusion to reality, and that they need only be 'interpreted' to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of the world (ideology = *illusion/allusion*). (qtd. in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p.693)

Althusser's view is highly influenced by Antonio Gramsci's idea of hegemony. Hegemony is the concept of domination which is closely related to the notion of ideology. Gramsci believes that it results in spontaneous consent to the dominant values in the society, the society which is dominated by the capitalism. Hegemony makes the individuals unconsciously accept their subordination and become good and non-revolutionary subjects. Gramsci believes that the dominant class intellectuals exercise on the individuals the function of hegemony which comprises, "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general

direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group"(qtd. in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, p.673).

What all the Marxists accentuate is the imagery and contrary to fact nature of the ideologies. For them, these programs are exercised by the capitalists in order to persuade the good subjects obviate their infelicitous and defective necessities. They contend these illusions need to be interpreted so that the grievous and severe purpose beneath them become apparent and they can be challenged and disapproved by aware people who do not unconsciously accept these repressive programs as natural and incontrovertible.

DISCUSSION

Marxist critics see literature as a mirror reflecting society. They claim that no text can be understood in isolation and without its context; text is the product of a society which consists of different ideologies created by those in power. Therefore, these are the ideologies which handle the writer and his work and the writer's job is only to expound upon these manipulative programs. Marxists argue that, though the writer finds the ideologies oppressive and disapproves them; she/he is inevitably controlled by them because she/he is a subject of his/her society and literature is a superstructure of the government with definite ideological function. In *Heart of Darkness* which is set against the corruption caused by imperialism, Conrad is only a witness to what has been done in a colonized country and his passive hero, Marlow, who is like a cameraman recording what he sees without even a gesture against imperialism or becoming a revolutionary character confronting the ideologies of his own government. He is an ambivalent and powerless hero incapable of facing the capitalist government and its ideological programs because he is inevitably controlled by the ideologies as Conrad is. In his polemic essay, "An Image of Africa", which is set against Conrad, Achebe (1977) condemns Conrad of being predisposed and handled by Western thinking:

Conrad did not originate the image of Africa which we find in his book. It was and is the dominant image of Africa in the Western imagination and Conrad merely brought the peculiar gifts of his own mind to bear on it (p. 8).

There are ambivalent comments concerning Joseph Conrad and *Heart of Darkness*. This novel is assumed as an anti-colonialist novel by many critics such as Hawkins (1979), who finds Marlow as a "sympathetic character":

Although using the language of his time, he calls them 'niggers' and 'savages', he feels that, unlike the imperialists, 'they wanted no excuse for being there'... Marlow is sufficiently sensitive to their culture to realize that in Africa drums might have "as profound a meaning as the sounds of bells in a Christian country (p.296).

Quite different from what Hawkins (1979) has declared, the post-colonial critic, Edward Said (1994), shows the other side of the coin. In *Culture and Imperialism*, he puts forward:

Marlow's audience is English, and Marlow himself penetrates to Kurtz's private domain as an inquiring Western mind trying to make sense of an apocalyptic revelation. Most readings rightly call attention to Conrad's skepticism about the colonial enterprise, but they rarely remark that in telling the story of his African journey Marlow repeats and confirms Kurtz's action: restoring Africa to European hegemony by historicizing and narrating its strangeness (p.164).

For another post-colonial writer, Chinua Achebe (1977), the African people are dehumanized, decanonized and marginalized in this novel. They are portrayed as non-existent in their own country and Conrad has renounced even the ability of speech from them. In his critique of *Heart of Darkness*, Achebe (1977) mentions:

It is not Conrad's purpose to confer language on the 'rudimentary souls' of Africa. In place of speech they made 'a violent babble of uncouth sounds.' They 'exchanged short grunting phrases' even among themselves. But most of the times they were too busy with their frenzy (p. 3).

These contradictory views on Conrad are based on his paradoxical and ambivalent nature as Terry Eagleton (1978) remarks:

Conrad neither believes in the cultural superiority of the colonialist nations, nor rejects colonialism outright. The message of *Heart of Darkness* is that Western civilization is at base as barbarous as African society- a view point which disturbs imperialist assumptions to the precise degree that it reinforces them (p.135).

In *Marxism and Literary Criticism*, Eagleton (1976) states:

The pessimism of Conrad's world view is rather a unique transformation into art of an ideological pessimism rife in his period—a sense of history as futile and cyclical, of individuals as impenetrable and solitary, of human values as relativistic and irrational, which marks a drastic crisis in the ideology of the Western bourgeois class to which Conrad allied himself (p.7).

What is certain about him is that Conrad is highly pessimistic about the nature of human beings and the struggle for reform and improvement. Conrad's contempt for both idealism and materialism is shown in his letters to R.B. Cunninghame; he argues:

Reform is ultimately futile, because human nature is selfish and brutal (letters 5, 8, 17, 18, and 31); because there are no absolute moral criteria, so that one has at best a choice of illusion; and because humanity is at any case destined to perish of cold, amid a mechanistic and soulless universe (letters 4, 5, 7 and 18); so that even consciousness itself may be regarded as an evil, because its survey of our condition removes the illusion of freedom to improve our state (letters 4 and 9). (qtd. in Watts, 1969, p.24)

In letter five Conrad addresses Cunninghame:

You are a most hopeless idealist-your aspirations are irresistible. You want from men faith, honour, fidelity to truth in themselves and others. . . . what makes you dangerous is your

unwarrantable belief that your desire may be realized. This is the only point of difference between us. (qtd. in Watts, 1969, p.6)

Whether written from a racist point of view or not, *Heart of Darkness* shows both the superiority of the whites over the blacks and the evil of imperialism. Conrad who has witnessed the idealism and the materialism of the colonizers attacks the British colonialism though he does not defend the oppressed blacks anyway by showing them as voiceless, non-revolutionary, and docile subjects much like domestic animals. Conrad shows how the oppressive ideologies of the European colonizer, such as imperialism, rugged individualism, education, religion and classicism manipulate, commodify and finally alienate the docile and obedient black subjects who are made to believe, by the false and illusionary concepts, that they are inferior to the superior intelligent whites and for this reason they need their guidance, theological teachings and superintendence.

Congo was the last part of Africa to yield to European explorers. Its colonization refers to its first exploration in 1876 by the Welsh Journalist, Henry Morton Stanley till 1885 when it was affixed as a personal property of King Leopold II of Belgium. Conrad acknowledges that *Heart of Darkness* is based on his own experiences during his trips to Congo in 1890. Being a witness to the brutal treatment of the natives, hypocrisy, exploitation, and disparity between imperialism's rhetoric and harsh reality, Conrad attempts to show through Marlow the very unjust heart of imperialism to the readers. He shows how imperialism, aided by the other companion ideologies, leaves catastrophic consequences in a primitive society and devastates it from within. Conrad depicts a satiric and skeptical treatment of imperialism which not only destroys the colonized country but also ruins the capitalism's voracious agent, Kurtz. He shows how with a mien of benevolence this ideology is the first cause for the intruders to justify their terrible deeds without regarding the colonized country.

Imperialism is rooted from the Latin word "imperium" meaning to rule over large territories. As the definition signifies desiring much and even to extreme, the word is thus no different from avarice which is the connotation of this ideology.

The very famous sentence of *Heart of Darkness* is a key to the aim of imperialism. "The conquest of the earth . . . mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves" (Conrad, 1999, p.34). In this novel, imperialism is felt everywhere, it is interesting that there is no sense of God in this place; in other words, God is the ever absent agent because the imperialism is the ultimate power in this place. Here the idealism of the European countries and the material condition matters; imperialism is the ultimate and powerful god here which is embodied in the apparently godly creature, Kurtz. Marlow says, "All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz; and by and by I learned that, most appropriately, the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs had intrusted him with the making of a report, for its future guidance." (Conrad, 1999, p.77). Marlow is cognizant of the innate fake existence of imperialism and is highly skeptical about it. "I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! These were strong, lusty, red-eyed

devils, that swayed and drove men- men I tell you" (Conrad, 1999, p.44). What Marlow says about imperialism is the avarice which results in ravage and robbery along with violence.

Imperialism reinforces the second repressive ideology, rugged individualism. It focuses on the individual glory and encourages the individual deeds. Though devastating the other countries creates many devilish enemies, it makes these devils the national heroes of the colonizer's nation. Imperialism justifies the attack to another country and prepares its force by deceiving the individuals to reinforce it. The best example is Kurtz with his unspeakable lusts and desires. Marlow says: "Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts that was something wanting in him" (Conrad, 1999, p.86). Kurtz searches for glory; consequently, he is sent to a primitive place to find it. Although the natives are afraid of him, they worship this charismatic hero who has stepped even further and become a god for them. This individualism though made him the powerful god among these people, is the most important cause of his destruction because his desires are all united in the avarice for wealth and stability of power. Kurtz wants to be the perpetual and autonomous powerful god there, but he is only an agent of the more powerful and more voracious imperialist authorities who cannot exempt such transgression. His desire for wealth makes him first detached from his fiancée and then from his benefactors. He has chosen a native girl and established a private property; that is to say, he has betrayed both his fiancée and his benefactors. Kurtz is so much deceived by this fake individualism that he thinks he deserves all he has gained so far; no more he sends ivory to the station because he deems that he is an independent person and the ivories are his property but he is just an agent and nothing more. White (1993) argues: "imperialism is enabled by an idealism that is and must remain ignorant of what imperialism actually means in practice" (p.178). Much deceived by this imaginary relationship, Kurtz and his property must be confiscated and the authorities send Marlow for this mission to return the guilty, voracious, and idealist Kurtz who has gone so far and needs to be removed from that critical station.

The private property which Kurtz has established detaches him from his masters and makes him powerful enough to challenge those for whom he has been sent to this place; Kurtz has many faithful servants who serve him faithfully and thus they are the threat for the imperialist employers, as the attack to Marlow's ship attests to this. This property also demands slavery and makes a master-servant relationship between Kurtz and the natives. It is what the idealist Kurtz has considered before going there; indeed, Kurtz has gone there only for idealist and materialist motives. "Kurtz is an embodiment of all the evils created by free enterprise in a capitalist system. His inordinate passion for ivory in the Congo can attest to this." (qtd in Sardar, 2014, p.29)

Kurtz is at the heart of imperialism and the imaginary individualism caused by it. He is both the embodiment and the victim of imperialism. Conrad tries to show how imperialism and its agents are corrupt and greedy and how the covetous and corrupt government removes its agent when its profit is not ensured. Kurtz is highly voracious, materialist, idealist and morally corrupt; that is, he is all that Conrad detests. Beach believes:

Kurtz is a personal embodiment, a dramatization of all that Conrad felt of futility, degradation, and horror in what the Europeans in the Congo called 'progress,' which meant the exploitation of

the natives by every variety of cruelty and treachery known to greedy man. (qtd. in Alcorn, 1994, p.160)

The second repressive ideology is education. Marxist critics assume education as a superstructure offered by the capitalists to stay in power by reinforcing the subjectivity of the individuals through making the false consciousness that the educated are better therefore must be obeyed. Here the whites are better than the blacks because they are educated and the blacks are ignorant. The black subjects then need a guide for being directed and this ideology convinces the blacks to attest to the whites' superiority. Tyson (2006) says:

To colonize the consciousness of subordinate people means to convince them to see their situation the way the imperialist nation wants them to see, to convince them, for example, that they are mentally, spiritually, and culturally inferior to their conquerors and that their lot will be improved under the 'guidance' and 'protection' of their new leaders (p.63).

In this novel, the chief accountant is depicted as a very polished, high class, and educated person who is revered by the natives because his prestige needs a compulsory reverence. Marlow, when he first meets him, says: "I respected the fellow. Yes; I respected his collars, his vast cuffs, his brushed hair. His appearance was certainly that of a hairdresser's dummy; but in the great demoralization of the land he kept up his appearance" (Conrad, 1999, p.45). He is the only person who is identified as an educated person and because of being culturally and mentally superior to the primitive blacks; he is deemed very different from them. The blacks are pictured as animals; they are almost naked, they yell and are frightening to see but this polished and educated agent is very sensitive about his books. "He was devoted to his books, which were in apple-pie order" (Conrad, 1999, p.46). Not only reverence but also worship is granted to Kurtz who is spiritually superior to the natives. He is a religiously knowledgeable person who not only avoids educating these people but also aims to exterminate all of them. Kurtz is a god for them but a contradictory one who is about to suppress them along with their savage custom.

This ideology which is portrayed through the imperialist agents, the chief accountant and Kurtz, is the illusionary light in the middle of darkness; the darkness which is supposed to get luminescent by the existence of these educated whites but gets darker in order not to disclose their true purpose of presence. One egregiously oppressed individual by the British education and behavior is the helmsman, the dressed navigator who is the only black person that speaks English. He thinks that by learning the colonizers' language and behavior he can be different from other natives. In postcolonial terminology it is called "Mimicry (the attempt of the colonized to be accepted by imitating the dress, behavior, speech, and lifestyle of the colonizers)" (Tyson, 2006, p.427). What the Helmsman does is but a tacit acceptance of his inferiority to the superior whites. He is an oppressed black who is neither identified by his own culture nor can be equal to the colonizers. He is caught between two agnostic cultures with any of which he can identify himself.

The next repressive ideology is religion. Marxists believe that religion is a very powerful program of the upper-class society to hold the lower-class in their inferior place and subdue them.

That is why the Marxists are devoid of religion which is defined by those seemingly superior capitalists. They declare that, religion, that is a supreme ideology of the upper class in a split society, completely disappears in a classless one, a Utopian-like place where there is no upper, middle, and lower classes, or in other words where people are all equal. In Congo, the Christian Europeans are the superior and the pagan Africans are the inferior because the whites know the way to get to Heaven but the blacks are doomed to go to Hell. Though the real religion promulgates that all the people are equal, the manipulated one sternly claims the fallible people are doomed to suffer and must be guided and restrained for the sake of their own soul. It claims that those with the genuine religion are the superiors and the heretic superstitious people have to obey these men who are close to God. This ideology is another strong excuse to ravage a primitive culture and territory. It is ironical that there is neither a sense of God nor at least a *Bible* existent in this place, and though their religious leader—Kurtz, is morally degenerate, he is worshiped by the docile and subjugated natives who think of him as a spiritual being. Kurtz is a false god from the upper-class who uses religion to exterminate all the savage customs when unnecessary, though for the time being he reinforces these savage and superstitious deeds in order to be worshiped by the natives and to stay in power. Indeed, were not Kurtz believed as a spiritual character, he would not gain neither the wealth nor the strong position and support of the natives. The customs are wrong and Kurtz is a false person who takes the advantage of this ignorance.

Another ideology which the Marxists strongly detest and disapprove is classism or hierarchy which results in corruption, abuse, and cruel inequity. It is a discriminatory concept which divides the individuals into many distinct and different groups. The group which is deemed to be better gains the power and the inferior groups accept it as superior and acquiesce to its domination. In *Heart of Darkness*, this class difference makes the inferior place of the blacks permanent and reinforces their subjectivity not to revolt against these ostensibly heavenly but innately corrupt white men. Here, the whites have monopolized the power because they are affluent, educated, religious, and hero like but the natives are weak, ignorant, heretic and animal like. The whites have names and titles such as chief accountant, Marlow, manager, Kurtz, and the like but Conrad has withdrawn not only names but also speech from the black people and their primitive place of living which is several times compared to darkness. Marlow calls it one of the darkest places of the earth and deliberately detaches himself from the people and their living place. When prepared to travel with the black crews, Marlow says:

The idleness of a passenger, my isolation among these men with whom I had no point to contact, the oily and languid sea, the uniform somberness of the coast, seemed to keep me away from the truth of things, within the toil of a mournful and senseless delusion. (Conrad, 1999, p.41)

What the prejudiced Marlow wants to signify is the nausea he feels because of the inappropriateness of being in a place where he cannot share anything with those inferiors who cannot perceive him a bit. What Marlow says shows that though he disapproves imperialism he cannot deny that he, as an agent of imperialism, is superior to them.

The last ideology is Stalinism which is both a style of government and a political ideology. After death of Lenin, Joseph Stalin rose to gain the power. Stalin was highly criticized by Trotsky as rude in manner and ambitious in desires. He was an absolute dictator who distorted Marxism along with its supposed Utopia. He executed those who were against him; and though he called himself "pupil of Lenin" he put on trial and executed every single member of Lenin's leadership team and strangled the freedom which Lenin and Marx fought for. Stalinism is an extremely suppressive ideology which concentrates and centralizes the power in an aggressive person or policy and is characterized by the extreme suppression of dissenting political and ideological views. In *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz centralizes and monopolizes the power. He considers the place he is living in as his own and with the help of the native force, he represses all the dissident and agnostic groups. To protect his policy, this ambitious leader orders the attack to the ship which belongs to his own company. When Marlow gets to the central station, he observes the heads of dissenting rebels on the stakes under Kurtz's window and later on he realizes that Kurtz is there to exterminate all the brutes and suppress savage customs. Kurtz is a covetous and absolute leader like Stalin who for being in power does all sorts of evil things.

In order to be transferred, these ideologies need to be interpellated or put into the heads of the individuals. Interpellation is the creation of a servile subject (that is continually ideological) through hailing. These subjects willingly accept the values and rules which are not definitely theirs but are imposed on them (though they do not recognize it). In *Heart of Darkness*, the colonizers have completely interpellated the natives. The members of Eldorado Exploring Expedition, the crews of Marlow's ship, and Kurtz's protecting army are all natives who serve the capitalist whites. These people search for, protect, and work for those white men who constitute and control their society. Indeed serving them is an obligation which they have accepted freely. Marlow tries to hail the readers by calling the black crews of his ship "pilgrims". The hailed readers accept Marlow as a sympathetic character who avoids discrimination and is so generous to call them pilgrims, a name that signifies the blacks as shipmates rather than servants or instruments; the conscious readers, however, doubt him because Marlow's words by which he modifies the native are inherently mixed with racism.

When for the first time Marlow faces the Eldorado Exploring Expedition gang, he says: "this devoted band called itself the Eldorado Exploring Expedition, and I believe they were sworn to secrecy" (Conrad, 1999, p.58). The devotion which Marlow talks of is granted to the uncle of the manager who is an agent of capitalism. Marlow also sees even more devotion in those who work for, protect and worship Kurtz. Kurtz is a god and his subjects worship him not solely out of belief but also out of obligation.

When the ideologies are interpellated and prevailed over the subjects, they alienate and commodify them. There are two different kinds of alienation in this novel. The first is alienation from self and labor, or in other words, dissociation from the product and labor. Here the workers are paid to gain ivories which are going to be transferred and sold in another country. They are alienated from their labor which is changed into a product that is specified to the whites. Marlow says: "I don't like work—no man does—but I like what is in the work,— the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know"

(Conrad, 1999, p.56). It is very ironical to own the products, the producing place, and be the medium of production but have nothing of your own production. Their country is despoiled and is supposed to become the prospective market place of not their own but their European masters who ravage the sources and sell European commodities by which they can still exert their influence. This alienation is not only unjust at the time being but also in the future because it makes the existence of the colonizers stable even after leaving this country.

The other form of alienation which is detected in this novel is alienation from others. In a capital society which labor is treated as a commodity, people assume one another only as tools necessary to obviate their needs. Love, sympathy and humanity are missing in such societies. In Congo, the only black female character is a tool for Kurtz's sexual satisfaction. Besides, being portrayed as domestic animals and nonexistent others, the natives are depicted as commodity; they are explorers, porters, protectors, workers and crew without at least a bit share of power. Marlow speaks about the black helmsman: "for month I had him at my back-a help-an instrument. It was a kind of partnership"(Conrad, 1999, p.78). The partnership that Marlow talks of is but a master-servant relationship; Marlow is actually his master not his partner. This alienation has also affected Marlow and Kurtz. Kurtz is alienated from his fiancée and has completely forgotten his love. Marlow is completely changed after returning from the journey and it sounds the capitalist ideologies have not left any one unaffected in that dark place. This time Marlow shows his detest of his attitude towards his fellow citizens. When he returns from the journey, he finds himself among the people whom he hates:

I found myself back in the sepulchral city resenting the sight of people hurrying through the streets to filch a little money from each other, to devour their infamous cookery, to gulp their unwholesome beer, to dream their insignificant and silly dreams. (Conrad, 1999, p.99)

What Marlow observes in the city is the evil of colonizers manifested in their own people. The alienated Marlow sees them defective and blamable but is unaware of his own faults which are reflected in the people who act as a mirror. Very much like the German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer who believes that a man sees everything in a mirror but his own face, Marlow who is afflicted by the darkness he is living in, finds the faults with these people but is unaware of his own shortcomings. Schopenhauer declares:

A man can see other people's shortcomings and vices but is blind to his own. This arrangement has one advantage: it turns other people into a kind of mirror, in which a man can see clearly everything that is vicious, faulty, ill-bred and loathsome in his own nature. . . . He who criticizes others, works at the reformation of himself. (qtd. in Nazari, 2000, p.26)

If all these ideologies be placed in their historical setting at the end of the 19th century and if the novel be scrutinized from a new historical way of evaluating history that contends, history is subjective, the writing of history is a matter of interpretation, no objective truth exists, and there is only access to the basic facts. The text of the novel is therefore only an interpretation of history where different discourses interacting with each other. About Conrad, Edward Genet argues: "his metaphor is revealing, implying as it does that history, a text inscribed by writers, is a fallible,

human endeavor subject to various distortions, not the monolithic, monologic narrative it was often assumed to be"(qtd. in White, 1993, p.173). Brook Thomas scrutinizes *Heart of Darkness* against the traditional view of history and points out:

Conrad's novel debunks the traditional historicist belief that history is progressive, that human species improves over time; and its narrative structure, which obscures plot behind a hazy veil of subjective description, implies that we do not have access to a clear, unbiased view of the past.(qtd. in Tyson, 2006, p.293)

This uncertainty and subjective analysis is also remarked by the Marxist critic Fredric Jameson who describes Conrad's position as unstable and his works as uncertain: "his place is still unstable, undecidable, and his work unclassifiable, . . . floating uncertainly somewhere in between Proust and Louis Stevenson"(qtd. in Nazari, 2000, p.15).

The only objective truths and basic facts in *Heart of Darkness* are therefore as such: there is a clash between two nations; the powerful whites win it against the weak blacks; their ideologies prevail over and omit the colonized nation's ideologies gradually; the whites gain the power and their ideologies are established; the blacks are expelled from the canon and become the others of their own society; they are deceived and reinforced by these ideological programs, and the European colonizers ravage their lands and its sources on this account. What Marlow seeks to disclose is a voice in this mute nation but these people are so manipulated by the ideologies that they become non-revolutionary, speechless, passive, and docile subjects. If they talk a bit, that is the colonizer's language; if they fight, they fight for the European masters; if they work it is for the foreigners; if they search for money and benefit, they grant it to the masters and if they worship a god, it is the foreigner Kurtz. It is then the colonizer's ideologies that make the history of the so called primitive Africans who are, in colonizer's point of view, less developed, uncivilized, barbarous, lawless, Godless, and highly superstitious and for these forged reasons the colonizers become dominant.

CONCLUSION

Joseph Conrad who sees the evil of imperialism and other ideological programs is ambivalent in portraying what he has once experienced during his travel to Congo. He calls the British presence unjust but his narrator Marlow is not very sympathetic towards the black subjects. Marlow indeed calls them savage and primitive people who are like obedient and mute animals; in other words, though Marlow is against the British ideological programs, he does nothing to stop them. Being completely sympathetic or a revolutionary character is impossible for the ambivalent Marlow because his ambivalent creator, Conrad, is not identifiable by any mode. He once defends colonialist ideologies through decanonizing and portraying the blacks as inferior and another time resists the colonialist ideologies through convicting these unjust programs. Made by the context, Conrad is inevitably handled by the Victorian and Edwardian ideologies, two eras with strict and contradictory ideological programs. What Conrad shows is but a subjective record of what he has witnessed in person about the history of the black nation and the intrusion, pretense, misdeeds and degeneration of the idealist and materialist white colonizers whom he denounces and detests.

Conrad's novel is a personal record of history which is unable to show the true history because literature is a superstructure which is controlled by those powerful hands which handle and affect it. Therefore, neither Conrad nor Marlow, neither his work nor its historical setting can be trusted because they are controlled by the ideologies, the programs which wield power to those in charge in order to reinforce the subjectivity of not only the black people but also the idealist individuals of their own like Kurtz whose idealistic thoughts are finally smashed into pieces and changed into "horror".

REFERENCES

- Achebe, C. (1977). An image of Africa. *The Massachusetts Review*, 18 (4), 782-794.
- Alcorn, M. W. (1994). *Narcissism and the Literary Libido: Rhetoric, Text, and Subjectivity*. New York: New York University Press.
- Althusser, L. (2004). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Eds.). *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 2nd ed. London: Blackwell. (pp.693-702).
- Conrad, J. (1999). *Heart of Darkness and other stories*. Gene M. Moore (Ed.). Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Edition Limited.
- Eagleton, T. (1976). *Marxism and literary criticism*. California: University of California Press.
- Eagleton, T. (1978). *Criticism and ideology: A study in Marxist literary theory*. London: Verso.
- Gramsci, A. (2004). Hegemony. In Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Eds.). *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 2nd ed. London: Blackwell. (p.673).
- Hawkins, H. (1979). Conrad's critique of imperialism in *Heart of Darkness*. *PMLA*, 9 (2), 286-299.
- Hawks, D. (1996). *Ideology*. London: Routledge.
- Nazari, J. (2000). *In Search of Authenticity: A Comparative Reading of Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim and Heart of Darkness and Sadeq Hedayat's The Blind Owl on the Basis of Arthur Schopenhauer's Philosophy*. M.A. Thesis. Shiraz University.
- Said, E. W. (1994). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Sardar, S. S. (2014). A Marxist approach to *Heart of Darkness*: imperialism the peak of capitalism. *New Man International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1(8), 25-31.
- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Watts, C. T. (1969). *Joseph Conrad's letters to R. B. Cunningham Graham*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- White, A. (1993). *Joseph Conrad and the adventure tradition: Constructing and deconstructing the imperial subject*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

THE IMPACT OF TEACHING PRACTICE ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' COGNITION IN LISTENING INSTRUCTION

Anissa Khaldi

AbouBekr Belkaid University, Tlemcen
languageteacher13@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present case study investigates pre-service teachers' cognition about listening comprehension. The participants were Algerian students studying English as a foreign language, at Tlemcen University. They completed a questionnaire which sought to discover whether their cognitions changed after a course of teaching practice. The main result showed that the majority of the participants changed their beliefs and appeared to adopt the methodology of their trainer. The researcher attributed the findings partly to the trainees' dissatisfaction with their teachers' instructional practices throughout their previous learning experience as EFL listeners, and their satisfaction with the period of training. Thus the article ends with a recommendation that practicum experiences should highlight pre-service teachers' beliefs, and challenge those which are inappropriate early in the training in order to maximize the adoption of new cognitions.

KEYWORDS: listening instruction, pre-service, cognition, teaching practice.

INTRODUCTION

Research into teacher cognition has been growing since the 1990s. This can be indicated in the proliferation of studies which examine what teachers think, know, believe in relation to their work. The literature in this field is concerned with either pre-service teachers or in-service teachers. Regarding the former, Borg's review (2009) of 180 studies reveals that only cognitions related to teachers of grammar and literacy instruction (reading and writing) attracted the most significant attention. Graham et al.(2014) notice paucity of research in listening comprehension saying that: "Our review of the literature on language teaching cognition did not uncover a single study examining teacher beliefs about listening."(p.45). Thus, the present study seeks to investigate pre-service teachers' cognition about listening comprehension in an EFL context. The purpose is to examine how flexible are trainees' cognitions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pre-service teachers' perceptions can be grouped into two types: (i) the ones constructed throughout their lives which derive from their memories of their lived experiences as EFL learners (also called apprenticeship of observation), and (ii) the ones constructed during their training. Research into the influence of teaching practice on apprenticeship of observation produced mixed findings. Some researchers reported apprenticeship of observation as being stable and, hence, the dominant source of pre-service teachers' beliefs. Peacock (2001) examined

cognitions of 146 pre-service teachers during a three-year programme and found no significant change. Urmston (2003) also noted resistance to changing beliefs in 30 trainee teachers who enrolled in a TESL course.

However, the idea that training has no or a little influence has been questioned by other researchers. Busch (2010) explored the influence of training on student teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning, and found significant changes. MacDonald et al.'s study (2001) found that the trainees' beliefs shifted from the behaviourists' views to some of the current ideas about language learning theories.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The present case study tries to answer the following research question: Will pre-service teachers' cognitions about listening instruction persist or change after training? It seeks to uncover the nature of such cognitions and the reasons underlying flexibility or persistence.

METHODOLOGY

The participants

The participants of this study are five students who received training in the module of teaching practice. They are third-year learners who study English as a foreign language at Tlemcen University, Algeria. After graduation, they are supposed to teach English in the middle school.

Research instrument

The trainer developed a questionnaire so as to find whether or not the participants' cognitions changed. The first item of the questionnaire investigates the subjects' learning experience (how long they studied English). The second item asks the trainees to describe how they were trained in listening instruction during teaching practice. The third item tries to find whether or not the subjects conducted research about listening comprehension. The following question seeks to find about the participants' experience in listening as EFL learners. Finally, the pre-service teachers were asked about their beliefs regarding the methodology they will adopt, as future teachers of listening.

Procedures

The pre-service teachers were first trained into listening comprehension. The training focused on the three stages of listening: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. They were given opportunities to practise the stages, and they received feedback on such practice, from their instructor. At the end of their course, the researcher gave them the questionnaire. Data was analysed quantitatively using frequencies, as well qualitatively by trying to find the common patterns underlying the respondents' answers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The participants had been learning English from nine to ten years. When asking the trainees to describe how they were taught listening in teaching practice, only three of them mentioned the three stages. One subject stated only the pre-listening stage, and the fifth trainee did not mention any stage. Concerning the third item, none of the five student-teachers cited conducting research about this skill. When asked about their previous experience with their previous teachers of listening comprehension, four participants did not state the stages they were taught in teaching practice. They mentioned activities like, listening and taking notes or/and answering questions, practicing dialogues. Only one participant said that his teacher went through pre-listening, while listening, post listening stages.

The last item sought to find whether the trainees will adopt the three-stage listening lesson that they were taught during teaching practice sessions, or they will keep the way they were taught this skills as EFL learners. The result showed that four participants believed that a listening lesson should comprise three stages. The other participant, who did not adopt the trainers' methodology, expressed dissatisfaction with the period of training, saying that he needed more time. He also criticized the trainer for not using more visuals.

Interpretations

The findings of this study represent evidence that beliefs can be changed under some conditions: (a) providing an intervention which is long enough for the participants, (b) making pre-service teachers aware of the weaknesses of their previous beliefs (c) taking into consideration the learning styles of pre-service teachers. The participants, whose beliefs changed, were not satisfied with the previous methodology of teaching listening, as EFL learners. Encountering new knowledge in teaching practice was a stimulus for them to adopt a new way which is different than the previous, dissatisfying one. At the same time, they did not complain about length of the training course. In contrast, the participant who did not adopt the trainer's methodology also described the sessions of teaching practice as '*very helpful*', yet the period of practicum, which he perceived as being short, apparently weakened the impact of his trainer. What is more, he appeared to be a visual learner who could not process his trainer's lessons effectively.

Pedagogical Implications

The trainees should recognize that their previous beliefs may be inappropriate. Once they are dissatisfied, they need new knowledge to adopt. Furthermore, practicum should provide educational experiences using a variety of learning styles; it should take place in period which is long enough for the trainees.

In order to weaken the negative impact that apprenticeship of observation may have, trainees can be guided through reflective practice. This latter is "the process of critical examination of experiences, a process that can lead to a better understanding of one's practices and routines" (Richards and Farrell, 2005, p. 7). Reflecting on beliefs entails asking questions about how and why things are the way they are, what values they represent, what limitations underlie such values, and what alternatives may be available (Farrell, 2015). In teaching practice, microteaching experience can be used to provide an opportunity to master specific teaching

skills, as well as experiences that can encourage and develop a deeper understanding of teaching through processes of critical reflection (Richards & Farrell, 2011). At the end of each microteaching activity, reflection can be triggered through questions that should be answered in the form of journal writing, lesson reports, group discussions, and students' viewing videotapes of their teaching. In a lesson report, for example, the student teachers record the main features of the micro-lesson in the form of questions to be answered and, then, discussed. The questions include: what were the main goals? What did the learners learn? What were the teaching procedures that I used? What were problems that I encountered and how did I deal with them? What were the most effective parts and why? What were the least effective parts and why? How was I taught as a student? Would I do anything differently if I taught the lesson again and why? What did I learn about the teaching of this skill/ technique? (Lee, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Pre-service teachers enter teacher education programs with beliefs about learning and teaching that are developed from apprenticeship of observation. A priority to trainers is, hence, to bring these cognitions to light and to try to challenge them in order to maximise the adoption of new ones. This can be done through a gradual process of critical thinking and reflection, taking into account trainees' learning styles.

Limitations of the study

In this research, the researcher used only the questionnaire. Additionally, the bulk of the study is concerned mainly with the impact of practicum on trainees' beliefs without examining whether the trainees turned their beliefs into practice. Thus, future research may examine to what extent the newly adopted beliefs in teaching practice are consistent with the instructional practices of teachers. For this purpose, interviews can be used in order to have rich qualitative data.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is grateful to the pre-service teachers who accepted to participate in this case study.

REFERENCES

- Borg, S. (2009). *Teacher cognition and language education*. London: Continuum.
- Busch, D. (2010). Pre-service teacher beliefs about language learning: The second language acquisition course as an agent for change. *Language Teaching Research*, 14, 318–337.
- Farrell, T.S.C. (2015). *Promoting Teacher Reflection in Second Language Education: A Framework for TESOL Professionals*. New York: Routledge.
- Graham, S., Santos, D., & Francis-Brophy, E. (2014). Teacher beliefs about listening in a foreign language. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 40, 44–60.
- Lee, I. (2004). Using dialogue journals as multi-purpose tool for pre-service teacher preparation: How effective is it? *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 31(3), 73–97.
- MacDonald, M., Badger, R., & White, G. (2001). Changing values: What use are the theories of language learning and teaching? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17 (8), 949–963.

- Peacock, M. (2001). Pre-service ESL teachers' beliefs about second language learning: A longitudinal study. *System*, 29, 177–95.
- Richards, J.C., & Farrell, T.S.C. (2005). Professional development for language teachers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C., & Farrell, T.S.C. (2011). Teaching practice: A reflective approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Urmston, A. (2003). Learning to teach English in Hong Kong: The opinions of teachers in training. *Language and Education*, 17 (2), 112–137.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE COMPLAINT SPEECH ACT STRATEGIES USED BY IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF GENDER EFFECT

Alborz Rahbar

*Faculty of Humanity sciences, English Department, Yasouj Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Yasouj, Iran*

Bahman Gorjian

*Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran
Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to compare the speech act of complaints in English in different situations varying in two contextual variables namely social status or power (P) and social distance (D) among male and female Iranian English as foreign language (EFL) learners. Moreover, the performance of students was investigated to see how they perform complaints in the target language. A Discourse Completion Test (DCT), composed of three situations (teacher, roommate and waiter), in each of these situations there are five patterns followed by two multiple choice questions was administered to 20 Iranian males and 20 Iranian females students majoring in the English Language Translation at Abadan University, who were selected based on their score on Oxford placement test OPT (2013). The DCT was administered to the learners and data were collected. Then the data were coded and analyzed based on the taxonomy of complaints developed by Rinnert and Nogami (2006). The taxonomy analyzed the complaint responses elicited from the participants in terms of main components, level of directness, and the amount of mitigation. Independent Samples t-tests were conducted to compare the performance of male and female speakers. With regard to the use of complaint main components, the level of directness and the amount of mitigation, the differences between the complaint strategies employed by male and female learners in waiter situation were statistically significant. However, no significant differences between the two groups were found in teacher and roommate situations. The performance of Iranian male EFL learners showed that they significantly diverged from their female counterparts. The implications of the study could contribute to EFL learners learn not only L2 grammar, but also socio-cultural rules governing the L2 in order to communicate competently in the L2 community.

KEYWORDS: Speech act; complaints; discourse; social distance; social status

INTRODUCTION

Speech acts are “the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication” (Searle, 1969, p.16). The concept of speech act has been suggested by Austin (1962). It is defined as “the level(which) mediates immediately between the usual level of grammar and the rest of a speech event or

situation in that it implicates both linguistic form and social norms” (Hymes, 1979, cited in Farnia, Buchheit & Vedaiei, 2012). Searle (1969) claimed that speaking a language is performing speech acts. In other words, when we say something, we are simultaneously performing communicative acts. A speech act has three types of meaning including locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary meanings. Locutionary meaning is the meaning conveyed by the words that the utterance contains. Illocutionary meaning or force is the effect the speaker wants the utterance to have and perlocutionary meaning is the effect produced by the utterance on the listener’s mind. Based on Searle’s (1976) classification of speech acts, speech acts are fallen into five categories: declarative, representative, directive, commissive, and expressive.

Searle (1976) placed the speech act of complaints into the expressive category, because this category is concerned with the speaker’s psychological state or his expressions of attitudes towards someone’s social behavior. According to Olshtain and Weinbach (1993), *Complaining* occurs when the speaker expresses his/her displeasure to the action that s/he perceives as unfavorable to him/her. Since this speech act potentially is a face-threatening act, second language learners who are not familiar with the conventions of complaining may come up with utterances which are regarded as “impolite” in the target community, and this can result in communication breakdown or threatening the hearer’s face.

There is a positive relationship between indirectness of complaints and politeness; it means the more indirect the complaint the more polite it will be. Several linguistic theories of politeness were proposed. The most well-known theory of politeness was proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). They believe that every human being has a public self-image called face. They further state that there are two types of face: positive face and negative face. Although politeness is a universal trait, its perception varies across cultures. Brown and Levinson (1987) enumerate power, social distance, and the rank of imposition as the contextual factors affecting the choice of politeness strategies in different situations. When the size of imposition is low, it is the two variables of power and social distance, which affect the choice of politeness strategy in performing a face-threatening act. This study focuses on comparing and contrasting the politeness strategies used in the speech act of complaint in relation to the two social variables, that is power and social distance.

The speech act of complaint involves a face-threatening act (Sauer, 2000). Second language learners should be familiarized with the conventions governing the expression of complaints in the target language in order to employ this speech act appropriately in their speeches so as not to cause communication breakdown or misunderstanding on the part of the hearer or complaine.

This study intends to investigate how the speech act of complaint is realized in English, and to study the complaint strategies in the interlanguage of Iranian EFL learners to see whether there are any significant differences between the complaint strategies produced by Iranian male and female speakers. The findings of this study will be helpful for Iranian EFL learners to develop sensitivity and awareness for English, so as to produce polite and meaningful complaints in English. The study will also have several pedagogical implications for teachers of English to pay

more attention to sociolinguistic aspects of English to help learners to communicate effectively and successfully in the target language.

Significance and Objectives of the Study

Despite the importance of the speech act of complaint, this part of language has not received as much attention as other speech acts like apology, thanking and request in Iran. A number of studies such as Salmani-Nodoushan (2008) were conducted on Persian complaints. This study intends to investigate how the speech act of complaint is realized in English and Persian and to study the complaint strategies in the interlanguage of Iranian EFL learners to see whether there are any significant differences between the complaint strategies produced by male and female Persian speakers. The findings of this study will be helpful for Iranian EFL learners to develop their sensitivity and awareness of English, so as to produce polite and meaningful complaints in English. The study will also have several pedagogical implications for teachers of English to pay more attention to sociolinguistic aspects of English to help learners communicate effectively and successfully in the target language. Consequently, this study intends to illuminate the L1 effect on the production of complaints made by Persian EFL learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the process of second language learning, second language learners constantly change some rules to form new ones. Their end product may not match the target language due to the fact that they do not see flaws in it or even see them as grammatical. This idea led to the emergence of the term “interlanguage” which was introduced by Selinker (1972), as he refers to a linguistic system resulting from learners’ attempts to have a functional command of the second language. Interlanguage, as Ellis (1985, p. 45) puts it is “language-learner language”. As its name suggests, it is a separate language knowledge system differing from learner’s L1 and L2 system (Ellis, 1985). Learners’ interlanguage system develops over time as they employ different strategies to achieve the L2 norms. Consequently, interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) as one of the many specializations in interlanguage studies as stated in Kasper and Blum-Kulka (1993, p.3) is “the study of non-native speakers’ use and acquisition of linguistic action pattern in a second language”. Selinker (1972), enumerated five cognitive processes involved in creating learners’ interlanguage:

1. Language transfer: language learners transfer some rules from their L1. This process usually occurs at the early stages of learning.
2. Transfer of training: Sometimes, the ways learners are taught the target language are responsible for some elements of the interlanguage.
3. Strategies of second language learning: some features of the interlanguage may be the result of the specific approach in which the learner is trying to learn the target language.
4. Strategies of second language communication: language learners may produce elements in their interlanguage which result from the way they learn to communicate with native speakers of the target language.
5. Overgeneralization: some elements of the interlanguage result from overgeneralization of the syntactic rules and semantic features of the target language.

Interlanguage studies deal with describing the components of interlanguage system in learner performance and accounting for the processes involved in language learning and use. According to the two studies on interlanguage pragmatics (Bouton, 1994), language speakers will tend to move toward the less severe strategies than do native speakers. In the heyday of Chomskyan linguistics, interlanguage studies focused on grammatical aspects of learner interlanguage, but with the advent of Hymes' (1979) communicative competence their focus shifted. Hymes' (1979) heavy focus on sociocultural knowledge rather than grammatical knowledge inspired L2 researchers to turn their attention to the pragmatics and discourse aspects of language as well as communicative, functional aspects of it beyond grammatical aspects of learner language (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989).

Speech Act Theory

The origins of speech acts theory can be extended to philosophy of language but now it is considered as a sub-discipline for cross cultural programmatic. This theory basically explains how human beings achieve and accomplish desired intentions and motives through the use of language by using words in a way that they actually highlight the meaning of the sentence in a manner that the hearer understands what they actually mean besides the literal meaning. Austin (1962) relates the performance of saying words with an act of locutionary and the study of how specific words are uttered and what impact does utterance have on the message that is being delivered .

Speech acts are one of the key areas of pragmatics. The speech act theory came into existence as the result of Austin's (1962) theories of illocutionary acts, and later on, it was developed by Searle (1976). Austin (1962) states that communication is a matter of 'doing'. In other words, when we say something, simultaneously we are performing some communicative acts or speech acts. The term "speech act" was introduced by Austin (1962). He argued that every speech act has three kinds of meaning as follows:

1. Locutionary (propositional) meaning: this is the literal meaning conveyed by particular words and structures which the utterance contains. For example, if someone says "I'm thirsty", the propositional meaning is what the utterance says about the speaker's physical state.
2. Illocutionary meaning: this is the social function of the utterance, or the effect the speaker wants the utterance to have on the listener. The sentence "I'm thirsty" uttered by someone who is thirsty is not only a mere description of his physical state, but also an indirect request to the addressee or someone nearby to bring him something to drink.
3. Perlocutionary meaning: it deals with the effect produced by the utterance. For example, bringing the speaker something to drink is the perlocutionary effect of the utterance "I'm thirsty".

Later on in 1976, Searle, a student of Austin, worked more on speech acts and extended them into five categories:

1. Declarative: a speech act which changes the state of affairs in the world. For example, "I pronounce you man and wife".
2. Representative: the speaker describes states or events in the world. For example, "this car is brown".

3. Directive: the speaker gets the listener to do something, such as a suggestion, or a command. For example, the utterance "Please sit down".
4. Commissive: the speaker commits the listener to do something in the future, such as a promise. For example: "I'll be back soon".
5. Expressive: the speaker expresses his feelings and attitudes about something, such as an apology, or a complaint. Since the focus of the study is the speech act of complaint, next chapter is devoted to discussing it in detail.

According to Searle (1976, cited in Ellis, 2008, p. 160), speech acts fall into five general classes; a) *Representatives*: These speech acts include assertions relating to true or false values (e.g. asserting, concluding); b) *Directives*: In these speech acts, the speaker tries to have the hearer do something (e.g. requesting, ordering); c) *Commissives*: Speech acts which result in an obligation to the speaker; that is, they commit the speaker to do something (e.g. promising, threatening); d) *Expressives*: These speech acts express feelings and attitudes of the speaker (e.g. thanking, congratulating); e) *Declarations*: Speech acts in which declarative statements are performed (e.g. excommunicating, declaring war, marrying, and firing).

The Speech Act of Complaints

The speech act of complaint belongs to expressive category of Searle's (1976) classification of speech act. Olshtain and Weinbach (1993, p.108) stated that "in the speech act of complaining, the speaker expresses displeasure or annoyance as a reaction to a past or going action, the consequences of which are perceived by speaker as affecting her unfavorably". For a complaint speech act to occur, several conditions should be met. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the speech act of complaining implies that 'S (the speaker) has a negative evaluation of some aspect of H's (the hearer's) positive face' (p.66). From S's point of view, the following preconditions are needed in order for the speech act of complaining to take place:

1. H performs a socially unacceptable act (SUA) which is contrary to a social code of behavioral norms shared by S and H.
2. S perceives the SUA as having unfavorable consequences for him/herself, and /or for the general public.
3. The verbal expression of S relates post facto directly or indirectly to the SUA, thus having the illocutionary force of censure (Olshtain & Blum Kulka, 1984)

A complaint speech act serves many functions; some of them are as follows:

- a) To express displeasure, disapproval, annoyance, censure, threats, or reprimand as a reaction to a perceived offense/ violation of social rules, to hold the hearer accountable for the offensive action and possibly suggest/request a repair (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993)
- b) To confront a problem with an intention to improve the situation (Brown & Levinson, 1987),
- c) To share a specific negative evaluation, obtain agreement, and establish a common bond between the speaker and addressee. For example: A. "I really think his grading is unfair. I worked so hard for this exam." B. "Same here. He wouldn't be satisfied even if we copied the whole book" (Boxer, 1993).

d) To allow ourselves to vent/let off steam. For example: “oh rotten luck!” and “what a shame!” are utterances expressed by a speaker in order to calm him/herself down (Boxer, 1993).

Studies on Complaint

Although the speech act of complaint has not been widely studied as it is the case with other speech acts like thanking, promise, apology, and request, there are a number of studies conducted in this area, which would help to provide a framework for this investigation. The research is designed to investigate the speech act differences between men and women, especially when they were confronted with complaint situations that force them to convey complaints. Based on evidences that have been explained in the previous section, it is concluded that EFL learners realized the speech act of complaining in eight complaint strategies: hints, annoyances, ill consequences, indirect accusation, direct accusation, modified blame, explicit blame (behavior), and explicit blame (person). The most frequently used strategy was accusation. There is a different way between men and women in employing the complaining act. Men use direct accusations as their major strategy while women use indirect ones. However, in the overall blaming distribution, women tend to use soft blaming as their preferred blaming strategies (Abdolrezapour & Eslami-Rasekh, 2012).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study provides answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any difference between the complaint strategies used by male and female speakers in English in different situations?
2. If so, how do Iranian EFL learners express their complaint in English?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In order to conduct the study, the researcher selected two groups of participants. The participants of the first group were 10 Iranian male native speakers of Persian and the participants of the second group were 10 Iranian female native speakers of Persian, majoring in English Language Translation at Abadan University. They were selected among 60 learners based on the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The age of the participants in the two groups ranged from 18 to 26. They were B.A students and were non-randomly selected among the second year students to have a homogeneous group of the participants.

Instrumentation

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

To be assured that the EFL learners' language proficiency level, the researcher used Oxford placement test (OPT, 2013). The test was composed of 90 multiple-choice items covering grammar, and reading comprehension. The grammar section contained 40 items including fill-in the blanks, multiple-choice items and selecting the ungrammatical items. The reading comprehension section contained 50 items. In the reading comprehension section, each passage was followed by several multiple-choice items. The test was piloted on 10 B.A learners before

administration and its reliability was calculated through Cronbach Alpha as ($\alpha=0.731$). 60 minutes was allocated to the completion of the test. The students' performance was assessed based on their scores on the test. Their scores for each item ranged from zero to one (wrong=0, right=1), and for the total test ranged from 0 to 90. Then 20 students whose scores were one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the participants of the study. Thus the participants were determined as the intermediate level.

DCT Questionnaire

The DCT used in this study, was a modified version of Rinnert and Nogami's (2006). In order to ensure the content validity of the DCT, firstly it was checked by the researcher's supervisor, and then the researcher piloted it on a number of the B.A students other than the participant and those items which did not elicit the desired responses were either changed or modified. It was composed of three situations representing five complaint scenarios for each of which we provided five possible complaint statements varying on the contextual factors of the speaker's social power and his/her social distance with hearer. These five complaints scenarios followed by two multiple choice questions and participants are asked to answer them. The relationships between the speaker and hearer in terms of social distance and social power in three situations are given below in Table 1, followed by a summary of each scenario:

Table 1: Description of DCT Items

Scenarios	P	D	Social status
1. student vs. Professor	-	-	S<H
2. student vs. roommate	=	-	S=H
3. student vs. waiter	+	+	S>H

Note: D=social distance, P= Social power, S=speaker, and H=hearer.
Summary of each situation:

S1: A student goes to his/her professor who has a close relationship with him/her to complain about his/her low grade.

S2: A student complains to his/her roommate about the noise after 11:30 p.m.

S3: A student complains to a waiter, whom s/he meets for the first time in a restaurant about spilling the drink over his/her new shirt.

Procedure

Oxford placement test OPT (2013) was administered to 60 B.A learners majoring in English Language Translation at Abadan University and they were given an hour to complete the test. The Persian EFL learners took the English version of the DCT questionnaire.

Taxonomy of complaints developed by Rinnert and Nogami (2006) was adopted to analyze the data. This taxonomy consists of three main components of complaints, namely the main

component, the level of directness and the number of softeners used in the interaction. These components are presented, as follows, in detail:

1. Main component

A complaint consists of three main components including initiators, complaints, and requests, which are presented as follows:

Initiator (e.g. greetings, address terms, and other opening formulas). Initiators include greetings (e.g., “hi”, and “good morning”) address terms (e.g., “hey guy”, and “sir”), and other opening formulae.

Complaints (expressions of negative evaluation, including justification) Complaints refer to utterances expressing negative evaluation, including justification (e.g., “I studied hard in your class so how come I was given such a low grade”).

Request (direct or indirect attempts to get the hearer to redress the situation). Requests refer to direct or indirect attempts to get the hearer to redress the situation (e.g., “can you explain me why I got this grade?”).

2. Level of directness

Indirect (no explicit mention of offense, implied offense only)

Somewhat direct (mention of offense, but no mention of the hearer’s responsibility)

Very direct (explicit mention of offense and hearer’s responsibility for it)

3. Amount of mitigation (*counting the softening expressions*, e.g. “a little, sort of, you know, would/ could, I think/ I wonder”). The amount of mitigation refers to the number of softeners used in interaction. According to Blum- Kulka's (1982) softeners include hesitation markers (e.g., *um, well*), hedges (e.g., *a little bit*), apologies (e.g., *if you don’t mind*), and use of past tense (e.g., *wanted*) or past tense modals (e.g., *could*).

After the coding was completed, descriptive and analytical procedures were conducted. Frequency of responses containing a given complaint pattern in each DCT situation was calculated by finding out how many times each complaint pattern was used by each group in each situation. The number of softeners used by each group was counted separately in each DCT situation. In order to find out the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of complaints between Iranian male and female Persian EFL learners (PEFL), the data were entered into the SPSS software, version 17. Then Independent Sample t-tests were conducted for comparing the complaint responses in terms of main components, level of directness, and amount of mitigation across all situations.

Data Analysis

In order to determine whether is a difference between complaint strategies used by Iranian male and female EFL learner, the collected data will be analyzed by the taxonomy of complaints developed by Rinnert and Nogami (2006). Then, in order to address the research questions, the data will be entered into the SPSS software version 17 for descriptive and statistical analysis. The following chapter reports the language data gathered from the two groups of participants across the three DCT scenarios.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this scenario, the speakers and hearers who are roommates are socially equal and there is no social distance between them (=P, -D). In this situation, the male speakers tended to use these patterns more than females (male $M=2.2470$ and female $M=1.9480$). The findings of the statistical tests demonstrated that in dealing with roommate situation, male speakers employed pattern F significantly more frequently than female speakers. Finally, it is concluded that both two groups thought this pattern is socially appropriate. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Functions Used by Male and Female Students

A) Reza/Mina, I was hoping you'd try to be a little quieter when you come in at night.	Mean	
	Males	Females
How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?	4.11	3.11
How effective/successful do you think it would be?	3.68	2.81
B) Reza/Mina, I've been wondering if you might have forgotten our agreement recently? If possible, could you try to keep our agreement in mind?		
How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?	2.14	1.72
How effective/successful do you think it would be?	3.58	2.58
C) Reza/Mina, be quiet when you come in at night.		
How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?	2.09	1.68
How effective/successful do you think it would be?	1.44	.81
D) Oh, wow, Reza/Mina! Look at the time. I guess it must be quiet time.		
How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?	.66	1.10
How effective/successful do you think it would be?	.87	1.54
E) Reza/Mina, you've been making too much noise at night recently. Please be quiet when you come in.		
How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?	2.09	1.69
How effective/successful do you think it would be?	1.82	2.11

In pattern B for the first question there is not a significant difference between male ($M=2.14$) and females ($M=1.72$) and less than half of participants in the two groups believed it is socially acceptable because their means are close to the value given to "somewhat rude". In pattern C, less than half of participants of two groups believed it is socially acceptable. Like pattern B, in pattern H, females believe this strategy is rudier. Both groups strongly reject pattern D "*Oh, wow, Reza/Mina! Look at the time. I guess it must be quiet time.*" for the first question "*How socially acceptable/appropriate do you think it is in the context?*". In this pattern both two groups had the lowest mean among all patterns of the second situation; both male participants ($M=0.66$) and female participants [$M=1.10$] are close to the value given to "very rude". Most of male students and female students believe that this pattern is a face-threatening complaint and is not a polite way of complaint to a teacher.

In pattern E, the statistical findings showed that the male respondents ($M=2.09$) performed complaints somewhat similar to the way their female counterparts ($M=1.69$) did, as no statistically significant differences were found between the two groups regarding the use of this complaint pattern. They are close to the value given to "somewhat rude". It can be noticed that the means of male and female groups for the second question "*How effective/successful do you*

think it would be?” in this table are also different. In pattern A, males found this strategy more effective than their female counterparts. The mean of males and females for the second question are respectively (3.68 and 2.81). It indicates that over half of the respondents believe this strategy is effective in dealing with the roommate situation. The majority of male students accept this pattern while over the half of females think it is effective. In pattern B, participants had a performance similar to pattern A. Again males found this strategy more effective than their female counterparts. The mean of males and females are respectively (3.58 and 2.58). It indicates that male students tend to accept this pattern more than females. Both groups strongly rejected pattern C for the second question. In this pattern, females had the lowest mean among all five patterns of the roommate situation; both male participants ($M=1.44$) and female participants ($M=0.81$) are close to the value given to “very ineffective” so we can say male and female students believed that this pattern is not effective to complaint and rejected it. In pattern D, male participants strongly rejected it for the second question. In this pattern male participants ($M=0.87$) and female participants ($M=1.54$) are close to the value given to “very ineffective” and ‘somewhat ineffective’ respectively. In pattern E, the means of male and female groups for the second question are (1.82 and 2.11) respectively and they are close to the value given to ‘somewhat ineffective’. It means that most of the males and more than half of the females believed this pattern is ineffective. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test was conducted to assess the data in terms of normality of scores. Results are presented in Table 2.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test was conducted to assess the data in terms of normality of scores. Table 3 indicates the normality of the data. The mean score of male participants is ($M=2.2470$) and the mean score of female participants is ($M=1.9480$) and the difference of these two means is (0.299). The mean score of two groups is 2.0975.

Table 3: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		VAR00001
N		20
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	2.0975
	Std. Deviation	.98445
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.183
	Positive	.183
	Negative	-.084
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.817
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.516

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

VAR00003	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	10	2.2470	1.18410	.37444
Female	10	1.9480	.77086	.24377

Descriptive Statistics Table was conducted to assess the data in terms of mean of scores and shows the descriptive statistics of the participants’ performance in student situation. Table 4

indicates the descriptive statistics of the male and female participants' performance on five patterns in the second situation. The mean score of the male group is 2.2470 and the mean score of the female group is 1.9480. To find out if there is any significant difference between the two groups in the second situation, an Independent Samples t-test was administered. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Equality Variances	Test for of	t-test for Equality of Means					95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the Upper
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differen ce	Std. Error Differen ce	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.493	.238	.669	18	.512	.29900	.44680	-.63969	1.23769
Equal variances not assumed			.669	15.467	.513	.29900	.44680	-.65083	1.24883

The above table shows the observed t (.669) is less than the critical t (1.753). Since the observed t (.669) is less than the critical t (1.753) with: df= 18, the difference between the males and females in this situation is not significant. Despite differences in the frequencies of complaint patterns used by the male and female speakers, the results of t-tests for this situation showed that the differences were not statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion

The speech act of complaint as a face-threatening act may be realized differently in different languages or cultures. This study as a contrastive one investigated the way this speech act was realized in English. It also investigated the performance of Iranian EFL learners to see how they perform complaints in English. In the following sections, research questions are addressed in light of the findings reported in the previous chapter. Discussion of the findings focuses on answering the research questions to accept or reject the null hypotheses. Two research questions and their answers are as follows:

RQ1. Is there any difference between the complaint strategies used in English in different situations?

RQ2. If so, how do Iranian EFL learners express their complaint in English?

There were some differences identified between male and female learners regarding the way speakers of the two groups performed their complaint in lower, equal, and higher settings. Therefore, the answer to the first research question is obviously positive.

Lower Setting

The teacher situation represents lower social settings and the speaker is interacting with someone whom s/he is intimate with (-D). Regarding complaint patterns, it was demonstrated that in this situation male speakers showed more tendency to start their complaining with the least face-threatening complaint strategies as it contains greetings, apologizing expressions, and address terms. However, the findings of the study are in line with the study conducted by Rinnert and Nogami (2006), which demonstrated that English native speakers in the teacher situation employed I+C+R (I; initiator, C; complaint, R; request) complaint pattern more frequently than other complaint patterns and in this study male speakers preferred to use more number of softeners to mitigate the threat to the hearer's negative face.

As an indicator of politeness towards their teacher, male and female speakers used pattern C: *Excuse me, Professor Amiri. Sorry to bother you, but I was hoping to discuss my final grade. I was rather surprised and disappointed with the grade. Could I perhaps find out how the grades were figured?* And pattern E: *Professor Amiri, I was hoping to acquire some information on my final grade. If possible, could I find out how the grades were figured?* Was more than other patterns of the first situation. The means of males and females in pattern C for the first question are (3.11 and 2.39) and for the second question are (4.06 and 4.25) respectively. Also the means of males and females in pattern E for the first question are (3.22 and 3.04) and for the second question are (3.75 and 2.37) respectively. In pattern C, there are several softeners such as *a; sorry to bother you, I was hoping..., I was rather surprised, Could, perhaps*. Also in this pattern the complaint is indirect; *I was rather surprised and disappointed with the grade*. In pattern E like pattern C we have several softeners "*I was hoping, if possible, could*" to mitigate the threat to the hearer's negative face and the complaint is indirect "*I was hoping to acquire some information on my final grade*". It means that both two groups believe these two patterns are both socially acceptable and effective.

On the contrast, patterns D and B had the lowest means among five patterns. The means of males and females in pattern D "*Professor Amiri, I don't understand why you gave me a C. Did you make a mistake?*" for the first question are (0.36 and 1.08) and for the second question are (1.06 and 2.00) respectively. The means of males and females in pattern B "*Professor Amiri, I want to discuss my final grade with you. Please explain why I got a C.*" for the first question are (1.23 and 1.58) and for the second question are (0.75 and 1.25) respectively. In pattern D, there is no softener and in pattern B we have just one softener "*please*" and both two patterns are very direct and face threatening. Wolfson (1989, p. 79) addressed terms such as "very salient indicator of status relationship". In lower settings, interlocutors used address terms more frequently. The result is in line with the findings of Behnam and Niroomand's (2011) study. They found that lower status interlocutors used more address terms than higher status interlocutors. In this study, address terms were more frequent in the first and second situations because just in these two situations the interlocutors were expected to complain to higher status individuals. In lower settings, where the hearer has dominance over the speaker, the speaker tended to express their complaint as indirectly as possible. In the teacher situation, both male and female speakers violated the maxim of manner as majority of them expressed their complaint indirectly. Maxim of manner wants every interlocutor speak directly, not ambiguously and

abundantly. As compared to the teacher situation, both male and female speakers tended to make complaints directly more frequently in the last situation. This difference can be justified on the ground that in dealing with unfamiliar individuals, they feel it more comfortable to challenge the hearer less indirectly. Due to the formality of the teacher situation, male and female speakers showed a tendency to use more polite strategies in this situation than in other situations. They showed deference for the addressees' negative face. Their politeness was reflected in their use of considerable amount of mitigation and less use of direct complaint strategies. In the unfamiliar setting, i.e., the waiter situation, they used politeness strategies fewer than in the familiar setting, i.e., the teacher and roommate situations. This shows that both male and female speakers pay attention to both social power and social distance factors in expressing their complaint. It runs counter to previous studies conducted in Iranian culture on different speech acts, i.e. requests (Abdolrezapour & Eslami-Rasekh, 2012) and reprimands (Ahmadian & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2010) which demonstrated that Persian speakers tend to pay attention to social status and ignore the social distance factor.

Equal Setting

The roommate situation in the DCT represent equal social settings and the speaker is dealing with an intimate (-D). As for the complaint patterns used in the roommate situation, the results showed that all complaint patterns were used by both male and female speakers but pattern F has the highest mean for males and females among other patterns of second situation. Means of male and female speakers for the first question are (4.11 and 3.11) respectively and for the second question are (3.68 and 2.81) respectively. We saw that they employed an initiator (i.e., *Hey Reza/ Mina*) and a request for action (i.e., *I was hoping you would try to be a little more quiet*) and a number of softeners (i.e., *hoping, would, a little*) to avoid producing an act which was too face-threatening to his/her roommate. It shows that in female group, there is a tendency to express complaints to familiar equal status individuals more directly.

In pattern B, we have all three components; initiator: Reza/Mina, complaint: I've been wondering if you might have forgotten our agreement recently? And request: If possible, could you try to keep our agreement in mind? It is an indirect complaint and there are several softeners in it: if you, if possible and could you. Based on the means of males and females for the first question (2.14-1.72) and for the second question (3.58-2.58) it is concluded that male speakers accepted this pattern more than female speakers. In patterns C and E, means of male and female participants for the first question are close together; C (males mean=2.09, females mean=1.68) and E (males mean=2.09, females mean=1.69). It is concluded that over half of the males and majority of females rejected this pattern as a face-saving strategy. Most of the participants believed these patterns are ineffective. Unlike pattern A, pattern D has the lowest mean for males and females among other patterns of the second situation. Means of male and female speakers for the first question are (0.66 and 1.10) respectively and for the second question are (0.87 and 1.54) respectively. It is concluded that both male and female participants believe that pattern D is a face-threatening strategy and strongly rejected it. It is realized that male speakers tend to use face-saving strategies more than females. Regarding the amount of mitigation in equal settings, the findings showed that male speakers used more softeners than female speakers.

Higher Setting

The waiter situation represents lower social settings in which the speaker is interacting with a stranger (+D). Because a power inconsistency exists between interlocutors and the addressees who the speaker is complaining to, the results are different with two previous situations results. Since the observed t of situation one (0.295) and situation two (0.669) are less than the critical t (1.753), then the difference between the males and females in these situations is not significant but in situation three the observed t (2.628) is greater than the critical t (1.753) so the difference between the males and females is significant. In higher settings, interlocutors used address terms less frequently than two previous situations. The results are not in line with the findings of Behnam and Niroomand's (2011) study.

About half of the speakers in the male group preferred performing the FTA directly by the use of somehow direct, very direct complaints and fewer softeners to express their disapproval towards the hearer. As compared to their performance in higher social setting, they employed initiators less frequently and complaints more frequently. This situation can be justified on the ground that they have power over the hearer and do not feel it necessary to use initiators to redress the threat to the hearer's face. The analysis of the amount of mitigation used by male speakers showed that they tended to use softeners rarely. In the situation where the interlocutors know each other very well (roommate situation), most of speakers in the male group tended to use indirect responses with the highest number of softeners in their complaints to redress the threat to the hearer's face. Their performance across these two situations and the third situation indicated that degree of familiarity of the interlocutors is an affective factor in lower settings. The statistical findings of the roommate situations also showed that the female respondents performed complaints similar to the way their male counterparts. There was no statistically significant differences were found between the two groups regarding the use of complaint patterns of the waiter situation in which the participants tended to use more softeners significantly more frequently than the male speakers ($t = 2.628$, $df = 18$, $sig = 0.015$) to redress the threat to the hearer's face. Unlike to their female counterparts, male speakers employed direct complaints more frequently in lower settings than higher settings. The majority of them did so within complaints (e.g., *you spill coffee on my new shirt and I should cancel my appointment just because of your mistake.*).

CONCLUSION

This study explored differences and similarities between complaint strategies used by male and female EFL learners in terms of main components, level of directness, and amount of mitigation. With regard to the use of complaint patterns, the complaint patterns used by the two groups were quite similar, but some significant differences were found between the frequency uses of each complaint pattern by the two groups. In the teacher situation, male speakers used A, C and E complaint patterns more frequently than their female counterparts but no significant differences were found between the two groups.

In the roommate situation, it was demonstrated that although the frequencies of using each complaint pattern were different between male and female speakers, like the first situation the male speakers tended to use more face-saving strategies but the difference between the two

groups was not significant. Regarding the level of directness, it was demonstrated that in situation three the frequencies of using each complaint pattern were different between male and female speakers. As far as the amount of mitigation was concerned, despite differences in the frequencies of using softeners in the patterns between the two groups in the first and second situations, in the third situation the males tended to be more polite and the difference between the two groups was found to be significant.

Implications for EFL

The findings of this study contribute to teachers in accomplishing their challenging task of teaching English in various EFL contexts where students have less exposure to language compared to ESL contexts. Teachers can help learners use appropriate strategies based on socio-cultural rules in order to interact competently with other people. According to the results of this study, it is suggested that EFL teachers implement the findings of this study into their instructional programs to teach their learners how to express complaints appropriately.

The study entails some important pedagogical implications. Its findings will be helpful for EFL learners. They increase the quality of their interactions by learning how to use complaint speech act appropriately. They also will be aware of what factors affect the realization of the speech act of complaint in order to perform complaints appropriately so as to avoid communication breakdown. The implication of this study for material designers would be that they should pay more attention to complaint speech act while designing courses for EFL learners. The findings of the study will be helpful for material developers to include exercises and activities focusing on pragmatic competence of text users in designing textbooks or other educational materials. The material designers should believe that including these elements in the students' textbooks has become a necessity.

There are a number of limitations to the study. One limitation of the study lied in the data-collection method, namely the DCT. In spite of a rationale for the use of DCT as an appropriate method for this study, using only the DCT as a means of data collection is insufficient as they might yield results different from naturally occurring data. Other methods of data collections such as role-plays and oral DCTs are needed in order to authenticate data collected through the DCT. Another shortcoming of the study is the lack of English native speakers in the study. Due to the issue of availability and security, it was hard to find enough number of English native speakers to participate in the study. As the sample of EFL learners, only advanced EFL Iranian learners were selected and gender difference of the participants was taken into account.

In order to fully investigate the speech act of complaint in Persian and English, studies should be conducted using other ethnographic methods such as role-plays, besides the DCT to offer more in-depth data. Other studies are needed to include a large number of participants so that the results will be more reliable and generalizable. Proficiency level may be a factor influencing EFL learners' performance, so other interlanguage studies should be conducted to investigate complaints among EFL learners in different proficiency levels.

REFERENCES

- Abdolrezapour, P., & Eslami-Rasekh, A. (2012). A cross-cultural study of perception of politeness by Iranians and Americans in request forms. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(2), 164-169.
- Ahmadian, M. J., & Vahid Dastjerdi, H. (2010). A comparative study of perception of politeness of American reprimands by Iranian EFL learners and Americans. *The Social Sciences*, 5(4), 359-363.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Behnam, B., & Niroomand, M. (2011). An investigation of Iranian EFL learners' use of politeness strategies and power relations in disagreement across different proficiency levels. *English Language Teaching*, 4(4), 204-220.
- Blum-Kulka, S. (1982). Learning to say what you mean in a second language: A study of the speech act performance of learners of Hebrew as a second language. *Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 29-60.
- Blum-Kulka, S., House & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Bouton, L. F. (1994). Conversational implicature in a second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22, 157-167.
- Boxer, D. (1993). Complaints as positive strategies: what the learner needs to know. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(2), 277-299.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Farnia, M., Buchheit, L., & Vedaiei, M. (2012). Move away so I can hear: Iranians and Americans' responses to rudeness- A pilot study. *International Journal of Humanities*, 8(4), 51-63.
- Hymes, D. (1979). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-293). Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.
- Kasper, G., & Blum-Kulka, S. (1993). *Interlanguage pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Olshtain, E., & Weinbach, L. (1987). Complaints: A study of speech act behavior among native and non-native speakers of Hebrew. In J. Verschueren & M. Bertucelli-Papi (Eds.), *the Pragmatic Perspective*. (pp. 195-208). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Olshtain, E., & Weinbach, L. (1993). Interlanguage features of the speech act of complaining. In G. Kasper & S. Blum-Kulka (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 108-122), New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rinnert, C, Nogami, Y., & Iwai, C. (2006). Preferred complaint strategies in Japanese and English. *Paper presented at the 5th Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference*. Tokai University, College of Marine Science (pp. 32 - 47). Shizuoka, Japan.
- Salmani-Nodoushan, M. A. (2008). Conversational strategies in Farsi complaints: The case of Iranian complainers. *Iranian Journal of Language Studies*, 2(2), 187-214.
- Sauer, M. (2000). *Complaints: A cross-cultural study of pragmatic strategies and linguistic forms*. Paper presented at AAAL Conference, Vancouver, Canada.

Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Searle, J. R. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society*, 5, 1-24.

Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *IRAL*, 10, 209-231.

Wolfson, N. (1989). *Perspectives: Sociolinguistics and TESOL*. New York, NY: Newbury House.

THE EFFECT OF STRETCHED TEXTS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' WRITING FLUENCY AND ACCURACY IN LORESTAN PROVINCE, IRAN

Ahmadreza Jamshidipour

Department of English, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khouzestan,
Iran, Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

*Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present paper investigated the effect of stretched texts on Iranian intermediate English as foreign language (EFL) learners' writing fluency and accuracy. Stretched text is a text displayed on a computer with references (hyperlinks) to other texts which the reader can immediately access, or where text can be revealed progressively at multiple levels of details (also called Hyper Text). To conduct the current study, sample research included 60 male and female English language learners were selected from an English language institute in Poldokhtar city, Iran. They were given a teacher made proficiency writing as a pre-test to select the participants at a homogeneity level. Then they were divided in two equal experimental and control groups. The experimental group received stretched text through the Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) medium while the text displayed on a computer with references (hyperlinks). The control group received conventional method of reading texts via reading their text book. Both groups received the same materials and time of instructions. After 10 sessions of treatment, the post-test of writing fluency and accuracy was given to the learners. Data were analyzed through an independent sample t-test to find if there are salient differences between the findings of the two groups in their writing test. Results revealed that there was a significant difference in the performance of the experimental group in comparison to the control group. Results showed the experimental group outperformed the control one in the post-test. In other words, the stretched text could provide EFL learners' with enough exposure in writing tasks and enhance their writing fluency and accuracy.

KEYWORDS: stretched text, English institution, writing fluency, writing accuracy

INTRODUCTION

Stretched text consists of nodes or chunks of information and links between them in a virtual space in the Internet. Stated in this way, it might seem easy to find examples of stretched text any text which references another can be seen as two nodes of information with the references forming the link; any text which uses footnotes can be seen as containing nodes of information the text and the footnote providing the link or pointer from one node to the other (Jahin, 2012).

The idea of a node is very general and there are various rules about how big a node should be or what it should contain. Thus there are some variations governing what information gets linked to the other one.

Recently, writing is receiving great interest and a significant role in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) educational setting since teaching English L2 writing is different from other language skills as it is used as a supportive skill in language learning (Reid, 2002). On the other hand, writing is an outlet for emotions and thoughts which makes it as a skill that is at the final stage of language acquisition; therefore, it still forms an important component of second/foreign language learning (Fageeh, 2011). Reilly and Reilly (2005) believed that writing is also a skill that many teachers find difficult to teach and, as a result of this, many learners do not enjoy to teach it. That is why during the last two decades there have been new ideas in the introduction of new techniques for helping students become fluent and accurate writers. Thus writing as a productive skill is more complicated than it seems at first and often seems to be the hardest of the skills since it involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the presentation of thoughts in a structured way (Gabrielatos, 2002). In fact, it plays a significant role in academic writing in educational settings. Consequently, it has become one of the major requirements in English for General Purposes (EGP) as well as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) syllabi. Fluency and accuracy development is an essential component of language learning.

Statement of the Problem

Writing is a complicated process where in most EFL learners have difficulties in expressing themselves by means of this skill either at fluency or accuracy levels. Written communication is a need for people to express their own thoughts and views (Baron, 2007). Hence, in the current study attempts will be made to examine resorting to stretched texts as a facilitating way of mastering on writing fluency and accuracy. Therefore, the researchers will measure the influence of stretched text model on enhancing writing fluency or accuracy achievement. The present research will consider the influence of this approach called stretched texts on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing fluency and accuracy.

The present study was supposed to investigate the effect of stretched texts on writing comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners positively. Put another way, this study will examine the impact of stretched text on the enhancement level of writing among Iranian EFL learners. Thus, the fundamental aim of the present study is solve the research problems of: (1) investigating the effect of the stretched text on EFL learners' writing fluency and accuracy and (2) teaching EFL learners how to work with stretched text to enhancement their writing fluency and accuracy.

Significance of the Study

Writing is one of the important ways of expressing one's thoughts and communicating ideas to others. Some have the innate ability to put their thoughts into words. Writing is more beneficial, specifically for those who are working in an academic setting. This tool allows them to express their ideas, thoughts or their existing mental condition. Writing is one of the basic skills which

people acquire throughout their life. Writing skill is an important part of communication which is a vital mean of communication within an organization. Therefore, the skill of tactful writing is essential for achieving career and business goals. Apart from the workplace, writing is essential in many other areas like academic writing as well. If one wants to achieve his/her goals, the art of superior writing is imperative. Recently, CALL could be a great help in developing a variety of methods to enhance this ability. Good writing skill allows EFL learners to communicate appropriate messages with clarity and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face or telephone conversations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As students create texts, they develop spaces for themselves and others. Just as an architect who designs spaces by means of the resources at hand, learners are constantly engaged in spaces that they create from their resources, frameworks, machinery at hand, and goals. Stretched text is a non-sequential form of composing and writing. Therefore, it provides choices for the reader as to how to navigate such text. While the organization of regular, sequential text may be based on a multitude of criteria and dimensions, the final product freezes the presentation into a single, sequential chain of paragraphs and chapters (Jamal, 2012). The author is to satisfy the reader to accept this text organization or has to resort to a supplementary source such as a dictionary or technology based facilities like e-dictionaries or hyper-reading notes with the help of table of contents, indices and previous notes (Kim & Hirtle, 1995).

Pianfetti (2001) argues for a more prominent place for technology in professional programs for teachers. Some of the features identified in her discussion are administrative support and give time to teachers to learn new skills. They also can learn explorations of the ways in which those technology skills which is integrated in the curriculum, access to up-to-date resources, and develop educational technology. In brief, digital literacy will prevail when teachers address pedagogical changes that may be necessary with the implementation of technology in the classroom. This idea invites the teachers to introduce a pedagogical experience integrating stretched text design to teach fluency and accuracy in writing, so the learners may get the benefit of dealing with this electronic age that demands proficiency in utilizing information. According to Glistner (1997, as cited by Pianfetti, 2001), this format has to do with the main construct of deep research into the usability of stretched text. Stretched text is the ability to link any place in text nodded by some links with any other places in the same or different texts that permit rapid access through buttons and other tools across nonlinear pathways.

The electronic text can be interactive and satisfies specific requirements of a reader. The design of an electronic text can incorporate media that guide the reader in his exploration, promoting and encouraging in reading comprehension. The structure of an electronic text lets the reader search multiple nodes of complementary information and have access to various multimedia resources (i.e., audio, video, animation, photos) (Conklin, 1987). The stretched text comes up as a new textual structure that provides the learners with huge volume of information. Great advances of storing information made easy the digitalization and storing of graphs, audio and video and there is a beginning of creating and designing reading and learning material in hypermedia format

Goldman (1996). Some other stretched text features are focused on rapid browsing. Thus the user must be able to get around in the stretched text quickly and easily which means that the user interface must enable the user to navigate across the links in the system. They can do this through a couple of clicks of a mouse to focus on non-linear discorsal sources and information that are non-linearly structured. It refers to the non-linear structure of the text and non-symmetrical organization (Horn, 1989). Teachers in the same schools with the same years of experience can have different notions about using texts in their classrooms. It was suggested the students could split up and check their ideas on a way to determine the amount of pollution in a local stream using various textual resources. The teacher has some notions of nonlinear texts and opens to various non-linear texts which invite the students to find out information everywhere. The teacher encouraged the students to be interested in webs of information by using non-linear hypermedia or what the authors call in this article non-linear texts. Non-linear texts represent a web of connected knowledge similar to the distributed knowledge which is stored "out in the environment" (p. 202), in books, computers, and many varied sources.

The students became more fluent in using web information available in the real world (i.e., in the classroom, school building, and beyond the boundaries of the school). Authors discovered that teachers have a common-sense definition of text that does not include many formal components and that they see non-linear text as something different from other texts. They wonder if increased effort in the form of writing to non-linear text might lead to better readers. Landow (1992) sees personal textual construction as a major component in his definition of non-linear text. Landow's English students may respond to texts in marginal notes, references, even complete other texts. Although this is possible with paper-based texts, a big difference within computer-based non-linear text is that others may immediately see the newly created text and, in turn, comment on it. This experience is very convenient to incorporate in the school work and to understand that teachers and students need to be familiar with hypermedia environments, structure and functioning. After checking the main features of the stretched text as a non-linear phenomenon, it is necessary to look at its structure whose basis is a kind of concept mapping since it is a developing technology that can ultimately make people more effective researchers (Altun, 2000, 2003). It is a method of giving a text depth, structuring it, and let the computer help you explore it. Stretched text is normally defined as accessing information in a non-linear fashion.

The emergence of computers by a few years has been suggested in 1945 by inventor, scientist, and Vannevar Bush (1890–1974, cited in Flynn, 2002). This led the researchers to use computer as a teaching tool. Stretched text as a teaching tool may give the teachers a chance to use new sources in teaching EFL. Stretched text which is also called hyper linking can link the related pieces of information by electronic connections in order to allow a user easy access between them. Stretched text is a feature of some computer programs that allows the user of electronic media to select a word from text and receive additional information pertaining to that word, such as a definition or related references within the text. In the article "whale" in an electronic encyclopedia, for example, a stretched text link at the mention of the blue whale enables the reader to access the article on that species merely by "clicking" on the words "blue whale" with a mouse. The stretched text link is usually denoted by highlighting the relevant word or phrase in

text with a different font or color. The stretched text links the text with pictures, sounds, or animated sequences. It is the text which is displayed on a computer display or other electronic devices with references (hyperlinks) to other text which the reader can immediately access, or where the text can be revealed progressively at multiple levels of detail (Bolter, 2001). The stretched text pages are interconnected by hyperlinks, typically activated by a mouse click, key press sequence or by touching the screen.

The stretched texts could be operated very similar to the way our brains do in a series of networks or associations that are opposed to a linear path. The stretched text software provides the human beings with the elements in the management of information. They analogize the way our minds normally work (i.e., not in a straight line but in several dimensions at once) and they are also can be considered as a thought machine (Landow, 1992). It may conclude that the stretched text is one of those crucial ideas in intellectual history to the development of the printing press of the computer itself. It is highly significant for all disciplines that are concerned with the creation and providing supplementary information. Providing access to information is a core mission of all libraries; therefore, an important line of inquiry is the effect of stretched text and its nodal organization of information on users' abilities to find and understand texts. At the most basic level, users need general reading skills along with particular equipment and the knowledge of how to use it in order to read stretched text documents. More than that, it is essential for information professionals to understand the reasons that lead clients to seek, consume, and use information in particular ways. In a broader context, there are two distinct structures in stretched text including hierarchical and networked structures. In hierarchical structures, readers are provided with contextual cues and organizational links; whereas in networked structures, readers are provided with relational links. In either of these structures, links could be presented in various modalities (types), among which are verbal and pictorial links.

The idea of stretched text is now emerging as a serious and sensible approach to use the computer for reading and writing. Technical writing and pedagogy such as interactive communication between teachers and students are obvious and important applications for the stretched text systems. However, the stretched texts may apply to the whole range of human literacy, including the writing and reading of fiction (Smuts, 2009). Using the stretched texts as a vehicle for fiction could be a great help in providing enough input for the EFL learners who are using it for technical writing or academic education. It is more usable since fiction seems practical in the pragmatic world of data processing. It also could be useful at least in modern fiction, which is by nature open to experiment, and being open or open-ended in creativity of writing. It is precisely enhancing the quality of text and fostering writing. The point is that the stretched text can change for each reader and for each act of reading. According to Taylor's (2006) meta-analysis, there was a statistically significant difference between two conditions of a CALL gloss group and a traditional gloss group with a large effect size since the CALL gloss group outperformed the traditional gloss group on a reading comprehension test.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With regard to the main intention of the present research, the following questions will be made:

RQ1. Do stretched texts affect Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency?

RQ2. Do stretched texts affect Iranian EFL learners' writing accuracy?

METHODOLOGY

Design

The design of this study was based on a pre-and post-test control group design. Sixty EFL learners took part as the participants in two groups of 30 EFL learners. The treatment period lasted 10 sessions. The post-test was conducted to determine the impact of the stretched texts on writing fluency and accuracy of the participants.

Participants

To fulfill the objectives of this study, 60 male and female Iranian EFL students in an English language institution in Poldokhtar city were chosen among 100 pre university students. Then they were given a teacher made language proficiency as a pre-test. They were in the age ranging from 17 to 19 studying participated in this study. The participants' selection procedures were done at the beginning of the semester meaning. Then they were non-randomly divided into two equal control experimental groups.

Instrumentation

For data collection purpose, the following instruments were used: A teacher made writing test was used as a pre-test which included 15 open ended questions which held 100 marks. The pre-test was scored based on using appropriate grammar, vocabulary, and unity. The students answered the questions in explanatory forms. According to the participants' scores, the students' writing fluency and accuracy level was determined. This test was given to a rater for rating and correcting probable errors. This could add the reliability of the test scoring. The reliability of the scoring was met through inter-rater reliability as ($r=.681$).

The post-test was designed based on the pre-test in terms of its difficulty level and the number of open ended questions. The learners' answers were rated in 100 marks and each wrong structures or problematic meanings scored based on a checklist focused on grammar, meaning, spelling errors, cohesion, and sentence development. The papers were scored by two raters to obtain the reliability index. The reliability of the scoring was met through inter-rater reliability as ($r=.808$).

Procedure

In the beginning of the study, based on the teacher made writing test, 60 participants out of 100 learners were randomly selected based their scores at the pre-test and assigned into two groups (i.e., control and experimental groups, 30 students in each group). After they are assigned into two groups, the treatment (stretched text treatment) was begun to see whether it does have any effects on EFL learners' fluency and accuracy. A researcher made checklist was used to score the fluency and accuracy of the learners' sentence completion.

The pre-test conducted to exclude any bias or preference in doing the research regarding the EFL learners' homogeneity level. The teacher made writing pre-test was designed in sentence

completion form to assess the two groups' writing proficiency at fluency and accuracy levels. According to learners' means of the pre-test the trainee got, they were divided in two groups at the beginning of the course. Then they formed a control and experimental groups. The experimental group took benefits of stretched texts as the effect of this trend on their own writing enhancement in the whole semester and the control group did not take benefits of stretched text during the course.

The participants in the experimental group were trained based on a series of stretched texts by means of CALL facilities. They encountered long passages to read and practice grammatical points and writing fluency and accuracy through scrolling (*windowing*) and card (frame) model which are in fact the basic trends and models of the intended stretched text. One major approach is the scrolling (or *windowing*) models in which a node may be contain more information. They could use the stretched texts on the writing fluency and accuracy by means of computer programs. In reality, the classes were held twice a week each time one hour in ten sessions while the control group did not have the benefit such a trend and they were taught in the traditional method of reading comprehension including reading aloud, search the vocabulary meanings, skimming and scanning. The user moves linearly in the node by scrolling its window up or down. The benefit of this model is that a node may contain as much information as is needed to explain whatever concept it is supposed to cover. The other fundamental approach to stretched text is the card (or *frame*) model in which a node has a fixed size and layout, all of which is displayed at once. This model limits the amount of information that can be contained in any given node, and the user has to move to another node to see more. The benefit of the card model is that the author can exercise more control over the appearance of the information and that whatever has been designed to be a node is in fact seen as a unit with everything visible.

After the treatment, a final writing achievement test as the post-test was conducted for both control and experimental groups. In order to determine whether there are any identifiable differences in the writings completed by the learners working individually, the writings were analyzed for the fluency and accuracy issues such as length of each essay in words and then dividing the written work into T-units and clauses, and identifying dependent clauses. Fluency measured in terms of the average number of words, T-units and clauses per text. Accuracy is measured by global units expressed in terms of the proportion of error-free T-units of all T-units (EFT/T) and error-free clauses of all clauses (EFC/C). Errors in lexis (word choice) included only when the word used obscures meaning. All errors in spelling and punctuation were ignored. Then the Independent and Paired Samples t-tests were used to calculate the data.

Data Analysis

The results of the statistical analysis provided direct answers to the research questions. Descriptive statistical, analysis of variance, and inferential statistics between the experimental and control groups showed any significant differences regarding the pre-test and post-test scores. Independent sample t-test was run to compare the writing ability of the control and experimental group on the pre and post-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Independent Samples t-test was calculated the differences between the two groups which showed that they were homogeneous at the pre-test. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Independent Samples t-test for both Groups' Performance (Pre-test)

Groups	Mean	SD	N	df	T obs.	T crit.
Group1(Experimental)	58.36	23.38	30	29		
Group 2 (control)	58.70	23.16	30	29	-.055	1.645
Total			60	58		

Table 1 indicates that the t-observed is less than the t-critical at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the difference between two groups is not meaningful and both groups are nearly homogeneous. It indicates the observed t ($t_o = -.055$) is less than the critical t ($t_c = 1.645$) with df (58); therefore, the difference between the two groups is not significant at the level ($p < 0.05$). This shows the groups' homogeneity at the beginning of the experiment. After the treatment period, both groups took the post-test and the data were calculated through the Independent Samples t-test. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-test for both Groups' Performance (Post-test)

Groups	Mean	SD	N	Df	T obs.	t crit.
G1(Experimental)	70.00	13.84	30	29		
G2(control)	44.33	11.43	30	29	7.832	1.645
Total			60	58		

Since the observed t ($t_o = 7.832$) is greater than the critical t ($t_c = 1.645$) with df (58), the difference between the two groups is significant at the level ($p < 0.05$). In other words, stretched text media application trait has been effective in developing participants' knowledge of writing fluency and accuracy. Thus, it indicates that students' knowledge of writing in experimental group improved significantly. More specifically speaking, descriptive statistics including minimums, maximums, means, and then standard deviations of pre-test and post-test of all groups were computed. Results indicated that the mean score of control group which had been 58.70 in pre-test exam reached to 44.33 in post-test exam. It also indicated that the mean score of experimental group which had been 58.36 in pre-test exam promoted to 70.00 in post-test exam.

Discussion

Results of the present study showed the positive effect of stretched text instruction on students' post- test since there was significant compared to control group. The results of Independent Samples t-test analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of stretched text instruction ($p < 0.05$). By the comparison of mean scores of participants,

the instructional method of stretched text media instruction application strategy appeared much more beneficial to the experimental group rather than the control one. The post-test scores indicated that the stretched text group following the appropriate instruction was positively gained higher scores. The post-test scores of the experimental group indicated that the group had better improvement compared to the control one. Descriptive statistics also showed that the mean scores of the experimental group were greater than the control group. Therefore, stretched text media instruction application strategy had positive effects on enhancing in writing fluency and accuracy. EFL students mostly tend to experience considerable difficulty in writing English texts. Not only do these texts most often contain unfamiliar vocabulary, but they also need proper styles. Traditionally, attempts to enhance writing text comprehension for EFL students have focused on familiarizing the students with the vocabulary needed to comprehend the passage. Such instruction, however, is unlikely to raise students' interest in writing the text or to well prepare them for the writings of the standard texts.

The basic question in this study was whether or not the stretched text media instruction application enhances EFL writing fluency and accuracy. The results are straightforward and make a strong argument in favor of considering the stretched text media instruction application with Iranian EFL learners. Investigation of the differential potential of experimental group's writing of the text indicated that EFL writing fluency and accuracy of Iranian EFL learners was more significantly facilitated in doing the writing activities. The activities based on stretched text media instruction might also make writing more enjoyable and thus encourage the learners to participate in more writing activities. This would result in the building of the learners' background knowledge and lead them to a better grasp of the English language. The field of the stretched text has covered so much in the last few years that many researches needed to discover its effects on educational settings and its curriculum. Thus the results of the present study should be studied with care. Rather, it is needed to provide a perspective on the stretched text while offering guidance to the published literature.

Many websites are entirely or largely use the stretched texts. It refers to the presentation of video, animation, and audio, which are often referred to as “dynamic” or “time based” content or as “multimedia.” Non-Web forms of stretched text and hypermedia include CD-ROM and DVD encyclopedias, E-books, and the online help systems we find in software products. It is common for people to use the stretched text as a general term that includes hypermedia. For example, when researchers talk about “stretched text theory,” they refer to theoretical concepts that pertain to both static and multimedia content.

A remarkable difference came about between the two groups at the post-test stage. The data revealed a significant difference between the performances of the two groups. This means that learning writing skills in English by experimental enhances a better understanding of the writing skills. After comparing the two mean scores through t-test calculations, the null hypothesis was justifiably rejected. The results showed the degree of performances of the two groups was totally different since the experimental group demonstrated a more-superior improvement than the counterpart group. The use of the stretched text strategies helped the experimental group learn writing fluency and accuracy and enhance their attention to writing fluency and accuracy. The

stretched text has proved to be effective and has desirable impact on the writing skill. The two groups were not significantly different at the outset of the study but they behaved differently on the final test. Therefore, it seems to be justifiable that holding the idea that the stretched text application has served the intended purpose of the present study. It could be strongly argued that the stretched text application strategy instruction can significantly influence EFL language learners' enhancement of writing fluency and accuracy.

To answer the above-mentioned questions the researchers reached the conclusion that after the administration of the pre-test and determination the homogeneity of the two groups in the ongoing study, the stretched text helped the experimental group to improve their writing fluency and accuracy. It was clearly seen that stretched text media application was effective and had an affirmative influence on Iranian EFL learners' writing fluency and accuracy achievement. It can be claimed that it is clearly seen that there is a positive effect of the stretched text on learners' progress in writing fluency and accuracy.

CONCLUSION

Findings of this study indicated that the stretched text strategy training in a classroom had a significant effect on the students' writing fluency and accuracy skills. Prior to the treatment, the Independent Samples *t*-test was administered to find out any significant difference in pre-and post-test mean scores in both groups. The findings revealed that both groups were nearly equal in their performances at the beginning of the course ($p < 0.05$). After the treatment, the data analysis was done to find out any significant difference in reading post-test mean scores between the both groups. Results indicated that students in the experimental group showed a significant improvement in their writing compared with the students in control group ($p < 0.05$). This study came to a conclusion that the stretched text training can contribute to the improvement of the students' writing fluency and accuracy skills.

The findings of this study will be highly invaluable for EFL teachers, material developers and text designers to consider the usefulness of the stretched text to invest more in designing and applying such materials. However, the present thesis focused on the stretched text strategy training task as a treatment which can be useful and effective in boosting Iranian learners' writing fluency and accuracy. It was supposed that the stretched text strategy training would reinforce the learners' writing fluency and accuracy of learners more effectively than the normal traditional way. Likewise, it seems that the stretched text strategy training tasks are more powerful in testing students writing fluency and accuracy skill. The results also showed that there was a positive impact of the stretched text on the students' writing fluency and accuracy.

This study may be useful to Iranian EFL learners who have serious problems with writing fluency and accuracy. Instruction based on the stretched text prior to the writing activities and before engaging those in writing tasks may encourage the teachers to replace conventional or traditional method of instruction for the purpose of enhancing EFL learners' writing fluency and accuracy. However, teachers and researchers are highly suggested to use this approach in a flexible manner (Braaksma, Rijlaarsdam, Couzijn & van den Bergh, 2002). This can be helpful if

the stretched texts are used with other tasks leading to success. Other studies may be needed to find that whether the stretched text strategy training could affect other language skills or the users' higher levels of self-esteem. Although the stretched text training is perceived as a desirable trend, the technology may have some side effects such as lack of live interaction among the participants or technophobia which affect the learners' motivation in using the computer for learning a language. The limitations of the present study could be the small size of the research sample and slow internet which halted the searching hypertexts difficult.

REFERENCES

- Altun, A. (2000). Patterns in cognitive processes and strategies in stretched text reading: A case study of two experienced computer users. *Journal of Educational Hypermedia and Multimedia*, 9, 32-48.
- Altun, A. (2003). Understanding stretched text in the context of reading on the web: Language learners' experience. *Current Issues in Education*, 6(5), 25-50.
- Baron, D. (2007). Do your writing skills let you down? *Strategic Communication Management*, 11(2), 15-30. Retrieved May 23, 2015 from: <http://news-usiness.vlex.com/vid/do-your-writing-skills-let-you-down-63749942>.
- Bolter, J. D. (2001). *Writing space: Computers, stretched text, and the remediation of print* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Braaksma, M. A. H., Rijlaarsdam, G., Couzijn, M., & van den Bergh, H. (2002). Learning to compose stretched text and linear text: Transfer or interference? In R. Bromme & E. Stahl (Eds.), *Writing stretched text and learning. Conceptual and empirical approaches. Advances in learning and instruction series* (pp. 15-37). Amsterdam: Pergamon.
- Conklin, J. (1987). Advantages of stretched text (<http://www.cs.mdx.ac.uk>).
- Fageeh, A. I. (2011). EFL learners' use of blogging for developing writing skills and enhancing attitudes towards English learning: An explanatory study. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 2(1). ISSN: 2078-0303.
- Flynn, I. M. (2002). *Stretched text*. Retrieved May 27, 2015 from: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3401200066.html>
- Gabrielatos, C. (2002). EFL writing: Product and process. *ERIC*, ED476839.
- Goldman, S. R. (1996). Reading, writing, and learning in hypermedia environments. In H. van Oostendorp y s. de Mul (eds), *Cognitive aspects of electronic text processing*. Norwood. NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Horn, R. E. (1989). *Mapping stretched text*. Massachusetts: A Publication of the Lexington Institute.
- Jahin, J. H. (2012). The effect of peer reviewing on writing apprehension and essay: The writing ability of prospective EFL teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 3(11), 59-84.
- Jamal, H. (2012). The effect of peer reviewing on writing apprehension and essay writing ability of prospective EFL teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(11), 1-15.
- Jonassen, D. H. (1991). *Technology as Cognitive Tools: Learners as Designers*. Retrieved November 4th, 2015 from itech1.coe.uga.edu/itforum/paper1/paper1.html

- Kim, H., & Hirtle, S. C. (1995). Spatial metaphors and disorientation in stretched text browsing. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 14, 239-250.
- Landow, G. (1992). *Stretched text: the convergence of contemporary critical theory and Technology*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Landow, G. P. (2006). *Stretched text 3.0: Critical theory and new media in an era of globalization*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Pianfetti, E.S. (2001). Teachers and technology: Digital literacy through professional development. *Language Arts*, 78(3). Retrieved March 2015 from: epo/papers/volume3/issue3/ep036rr.pdf
- Reid, M. J. (1995). *Learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Reilly, J., & Reilly, V. (2005). *Writing with children*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smuts, A. (2009). What is interactivity? *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 43(4), 53-73.
- Taylor, A. (2006). The effects of CALL versus traditional L1 glosses on L2 reading comprehension. *CALICO Journal*, 23(2), 1-15.

USING COHESIVE DEVICES OF REFERENCES IN ENGLISH POLITICAL NEWS WRITTEN BY PERSIAN NON-NATIVE RESEARCHERS

Bahman Gorjian*

Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

Samira Hassanvand

Department of English, Payam Noor University of Andimeshk Center, Iran

Iman Ghanbari

Department of English, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Iran

**Corresponding author: bahgorji@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study compared and analyzed the use of references as cohesive devices in English political news articles written by American natives and Iranian non-natives. It aimed to find the possible similarities and differences in using cohesive, demonstrative, comparative, and personal references. Thus, 200 news articles from international and national online newspapers and magazines were selected from 2011 to 2014. News articles included 100 on American native political news and 100 on Iranian non-native ones. The Halliday's (1994) study was adapted to form the model for analyzing the data in the present study. The number of references used in American native political news included 6308 among 64046 words while the number of references in Iranian non-native political news composed 4353 words among 64054 words. After determining the frequency and percentage of each reference, Chi-square was used to see if the difference between these references in group of writers who used references was significant. Descriptive analysis showed that the reference "the" held the highest frequency and references like "hers" had the lowest frequency among Native American news articles. In Persian political news, the highest frequent reference was "the" and references such as "yours" had the lowest frequency. Thus, the quality and quantity were totally different. Implications of this study for teachers could be useful in teaching effective writing through using cohesive devices like cohesive, demonstrative, comparative, and personal references.

KEYWORDS: Cohesive devices, reference, news articles

INTRODUCTION

A text or discourse is not just a series or combination of sentences for introducing different random topics. It is combining sentences in a logical way, according to their meaning and that helps to create unity for a text. This is what we call cohesion in which sentences stick together to function as a whole. Cohesion, the most important principle and criterion of textuality, is the

connection or the connectedness manifested when the interpretation of one textual element in the text (a word usually but not necessarily in another sentence).

Dooley and Levinson (2001) state that cohesion is achieved by “using linguistic signals in the text as clues to help hearers in coming up with an adequate mental representation. Within a discourse structure, these linguistic signals function as a link which glues the individual parts of discourse together. In addition, Pickering’s (1978) discussion in the introduction paragraph of *Cohesion* implies that how much and fast a person’s mind can accommodate new information depends on how much that piece of new information relies on what the person has already known, that is, old information. This statement relates directly to the concept of cohesion.

Pickering (1978) also views cohesion as something which ties a discourse together in a linear way. Halliday and Hasan (1976) explain that cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another element and that one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. Thus, cohesion is the use of linguistic means or linguistic devices to knit the unity of a text. Cohesion, the most important principle and criterion of textuality, is the connection or connectedness manifested when the interpretation of one textual element (a word located in one sentence) is dependent on another element in the text (a word usually but not necessarily in another sentence). Cohesion relates to the “semantic ties” within text whereby a tie is made when there is some dependent link between items that combine to create meaning. The foundations of text linguistics were laid down by Halliday and Hasan’s “*Cohesion in English*” in 1976. Cohesion is defined as the set of linguistic means we have available for creating texture (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 2), i.e., the property of a text of being an interpretable whole (rather than unconnected sentences). The purpose of the present study is to compare English political articles in mass media written by American native and Iranian non-native authors concerning the use of references as cohesive devices.

Statement of the problem

Second language acquisition researchers on writing skill as Halliday and Hasan’s work in 1976 (*Cohesion in English*) emphasize the act of producing cohesive discourse in order to ensure texture or cohesion in writing. The effect of discourse devices on writing is very strong since they provide us with various kinds of grammatical devices which are used to stretch any piece of discourse to be cohesive. Thus, since in traditional grammar the focus is on form not syntax, there was a need to have sentences in combination which are created with discourse analysis attempts. This need originates from two factors. One the one hand, researchers such as Halliday and Hasan (1976) see that using linguistic ties makes the text more cohesive and understandable. But, it seems that students do not use grammatical cohesive devices efficiently because the problem noticed by teachers is that students have many problems in writing effective discourse in general and in using cohesive devices in particular. On the other hand, although a number of researchers (Yoon-Hee Na, 2011) have mainly investigated the area of referential cohesion from varying perspectives and in different disciplines, a handful of them have merely conducted a comparative study on using references in the discussion section of English political articles written by American natives and Iranian non-natives.

Significance of the study

This study may help to accelerate the knowledge of ESP students who are going to be the future writers in this domain. Findings of the present research may provide various types of references which are different in the discussion section. It is worth noting that the use of references in political articles can be realized differently among native and non-native authors. By comparing the American native with those of Iranian non-native corpora, one can draw his/her attention to how different authors treat differently with references to make their discussion sections cohesive. Its pedagogical recommendations can lead to enhance the knowledge of those instructors who teach academic political writing and make them be conscious of the standard references of “discussion” section as a subgenre.

This may make their students aware that such references are to be included in their political article discussions. Actually, this will help political students be sensitive to the format of discussion section and the design of references within the text which affect the readers’ comprehension significantly. The role of discussion as an argumentative text could be revealed through analyzing and comparing the native and non-native political discussion section in the present study. In a nutshell, what manifests as the product of this analysis will be utilized for pedagogical implementations including writing and analyzing political papers, especially in ESP courses.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cohesion has been studied thoroughly in various aspects. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion enables us to create a text. It is defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as the “set of semantic configuration that is typically associated with a particular class of context of situation, and defines the substance of the text”. In their view, the function of cohesion is to relate one part of the text to another part of the same text. Consequently, it lends continuity of the text. Most scholars (e.g., Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981; Halliday & Hasan, 1976) define cohesion as the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations.

Cohesion has gained prominence in studies on discourse analysis as well as L1/L2 writing research following Halliday and Hasan (1976) seminal work on *Cohesion in English*. Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined cohesion as “the set of possibilities that exist in the language for making text hang together” (p.18). In a similar vein, conceptualized cohesion as “the connectivity of ideas in discourse and sentences to one another in text, thus creating the flow of Hinkel's (2003) information in a unified way.” (p. 279). For Halliday and Hasan (1976) and other researchers in Hallidain tradition, the organization of text is made up of relationships among items in the text and those relationships are realized through the use of cohesive devices. Reid (1992) further extrapolated cohesion devices as “words or phrases that act as signals to the reader; those words or phrases make what is being stated relate to what has already been stated or what soon will be stated” (p. 81). Cohesion is divided into two subcategories: grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion in then divided into five main categories: reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction. Reference occurs whenever an item indicates that the identity of what is being talked about can be retrieved from the immediate context. Pronouns,

determiners, definite articles, and comparatives such as *he*, *this*, *the*, *less* are reference items. The interpretation of the reference elements depends upon presupposed information contained in the sentences immediately above it.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), such cohesive devices which mentioned previously serve to contribute to text cohesion. They believe that text cohesion leads to greater text coherence which in turn enhances quality of writing. Although Halliday and Hasan (1976) did not consider issues of language pedagogy in their research, the effective use of cohesive devices has been identified as one of the important criteria for good writing and thus considered as something to be treated in a pedagogical context (Hinkel, 2001). The theory and practice of grammatical cohesion has been widely analyzed by many foreign linguists (e.g., Baker, 1992; Valeika & Buitkiene, 2006).

Classification of cohesive devices

Halliday and Hasan (1976) provide us with the basic categories of cohesive devices in academic texts which distinguish grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion and recognize more specific subcategories within them. This model is discussed in the following table:

Table 1: Cohesive Devices (Adapted from Halliday & Hasan, 1976)

Category	Function	Examples
Grammatical cohesion		
	help to guide reader through the text	
Reference	create surface links between sentences	these/her/similar/it/otherwise
Substitution	replace a previous word or expression	one/ones/same/do/so
Ellipsis	leave out words or phrases from sentences	
Conjunction	show the relationship between sentences	moreover/and/but/or/for instance
Lexical cohesion		
	involve the reader in the argument	
Repetition	restate the same lexical item in the later part of the discourse	e.g., newspaper for newspaper
General nouns	refer back to animate and inanimate nouns	e.g., (stuff) for inanimate, (place) for location; (people) for human
Synonymy	express a similar meaning of an item	e.g., “slope” for “incline”
Super ordinates	involves the use of general class words	e.g., “vehicle” for “car”
Collocation	tendency of some words to co-occur	e.g., fruit, skin, citrus, lemon, etc.

Grammatical cohesion refers to the linguistic structure. The highest structural unit in the grammar is "the sentence" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 28). The structure determines the order in which grammatical elements occur and the way they are related within a sentence. Cohesive relationships with other sentences create a certain linguistic environment, and the meaning of

each sentence depends on it. On the other hand, “Lexical cohesion is ‘phoric’ cohesion that is established through the structure of the vocabulary” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 318). Lexical cohesion occurs when two words in a text are related in terms of their meaning. References, as one of the groups of cohesive devices, have been defined by some of the scholars to be presented briefly.

The concept of references

Brown and Yule (1983, pp. 27-28) see the nature of reference in text and in discourse as an action on the part of a speaker/writer. It describes what they are doing “not the relationship which exists between one sentence or proposition and another.” Mc Carthy (1991, p. 37) states that we must consider the notion of discourse segments as “functional units, rather than concentrating on sentences and to see the writer/speaker as faced with a number of strategic choices as to how to present them to the receiver.” He adds that reference items can refer to segments of discourse or situations as a whole rather than to any one specified entity in that situation. The main feature that characterizes reference is that the information signals for retrieval. The identity of particular thing that is being referred to has a referential meaning and cohesion is found then the same thing occurs a second time. Reference has the semantic feature of definiteness or specificity. Because of that there has to be reference to the context of situation. Referencing items do not have to match the grammatical class they must have semantic properties (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 31). Reference shows the connection between the real world and the entity, because of that it cannot refer to something that does not exist. Yule (1996) and Lyons (1995) point out that not all referring expressions have identifiable physical referents, they can be imaginary, hypothetical, or fictional entities (such as the Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus), but they do exist in imaginary or fictional world. Expressions themselves cannot be treated as having reference, but the speaker or writer gives the referential function in a context. For us it is left to assume if we can identify what they are talking about, even when the entity or individual described may not exist. Communities which share the common language and culture have certain referring expressions to identify certain entities on regular basis. We usually think that certain referring expressions can only define very specific entities and we may think that a name like ‘Shakespeare’ which can only be used to define a specific person.

One of the options that grammar of English offers creating surface links between sentences is reference. Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out that reference features cannot be semantically interpreted without referring to some other features in the text. A pronoun is the most common linguistic element as referring devices in a textual environment. However, there are other linguistic elements used to fulfill the same function such as: articles, demonstratives, and comparatives.

Reference can be accounted as “exophoric” or “endophoric” functions. This is because simply when we refer to a given item, we expect the reader to interpret it by either looking forward, backward, or outward. Exophoric involves exercises that require the reader to look out of the text in order to interpret the referent. The reader, thus, has to look beyond or out of the text with a shared world between the reader and the writer. “Exophoric reference directs the receiver ‘out of’ the text and into an assumed shared world” (Mc Carthy, 1991, p. 41). For example, *‘that must*

have cost a lot of money' in this example we have to look out of the situation to retrieve the meaning of the sentences (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Hessamy and Hamed (2013) attempted to compare and contrast the frequency of the use of cohesive devices in independent and integrated essays written by 95 upper-intermediate Iranian EFL learners to find out about any possible changes in the type and frequency of using cohesive devices due to the nature of writing task. The participants were native speakers of Farsi between 18 to 30 years old, studying English as a foreign language in an English language center in Yazd, Iran. The sample included 58 female and 37 male students. They were asked to compose an integrated argumentative essay after reading a text and listening to a lecture on the same topic as it is designed in TOEFL iBT writing test. The participants first completed an independent task which had to prompt to write about and then completed an integrated writing task with a two-week interval between the writing sessions. The tasks were taken from the TOEFL iBT writing task. Results indicated that there was a significant difference in the use of almost all types of cohesive devices between the two conditions with the independent task producing essays with lower cohesive device counts. The results revealed that in terms of textual cohesion, the participants preferred using anaphoric references to cataphoric references while substitution and ellipsis in both independent and integrated sample writings were rarely used. The students were also found to be better at using references and lexical cohesion in their integrated writings than in their independent essays. Finally, it can be concluded that the integrated writing task has positive effects of test method on writing performance and may advocate the use of integrated writing tasks to provide a better picture of students' writing abilities.

Ghasemi (2013) investigated the use of cohesive devices in second language writings. As far as the communicative nature of writing is concerned, cohesion is regarded as an essential textual component in creating organized texts and rendering the content comprehensible to the reader. Many researchers have explored the connection between the use of cohesive devices (CDs) and the quality of the writing. To gain more insight into this area, this study reviewed some studies focusing on the use of CDs and the relationship between the numbers of CDs and writing quality. The analysis of collected data from different EFL/ESL researchers has shown that the learners were able to use various CDs in their writings. Additionally, the study highlighted some of the cohesive problems in writing and the possible pedagogical implications for teachers. The purpose of the study was to investigate CDs used in different genres composed by learners from around the globe and the relationship between the use of CDs and quality of their essays. The findings also provide insight into the abilities of native and non-native writers to convey their ideas into written forms. The results of the study showed that some CDs were more preferred than some others for a variety of reasons. The dynamic nature in the use of CDs could be contributed to the nature of the data collection procedure since some CDs belong to the conversational data in oral performance. The other reason might be minimal amount of knowledge and necessary discourse in which such structures are used.

There are cross linguistic differences in the use of CDs by native and nonnative learners. Findings proved that language users resorted to pronominal more than other CDs in order for creating textuality between the sentences. There might be some other reasons for the distinct

differences between the natives and non-natives in the use of certain CDs on account of cross-linguistic differences. On the one hand, it could be emanated from the lack of non-natives' English language proficiency, especially, because non-natives may lack knowledge of what makes a written material a meaningful English text. The results of this study provided some insights into the general pattern of CDs in EFL/ESL learners' academic and nonacademic writing. This would help to identify students' problems in using CDs, for instance, overuse or underuse of certain categories, and, thereby, modify teaching writing and incorporate a more precise plan for teaching the appropriate use of CDs. The pedagogical implication is that it is essential to incorporate reading into writing in order to enhance students' awareness of coherence and cohesion. Students can acquire syntactic structures, features of genre, or vocabulary through the process of reading to write. What's more, observing the use of CDs can also enhance students' writing skills and promote writing teachers' teaching quality.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The present study investigated the answer to the following research question:

Do non-native Iranian researchers use cohesive references functionally as similar as the American native ones in the political articles?

METHODOLOGY

Data

The research sample that is used in this study consists of 200 political articles and news i.e., American native researchers (100 written by NRs of English and 100 written by Iranian non-native researchers of English). They were randomly chosen from recent publications in prestigious international online newspapers and magazines such as (*US news, Yahoo news, Newsweek magazine, Jame Jam online, & Keyhan International*) in the field of politics. It should be mentioned that they were news articles of media, not the research articles published in political journals. In order to specify whether the native articles are written by American writers, the CV of each writer, that is, the country of birth and the University of their Studies were checked online. The data set were developed by selecting articles published internationally and nationally from 2011 to 2014. In order to compile more reliable and recent corpora, only the articles published since 2011 onwards were selected. There are some rationales behind this selection:

1. Firstly, many natives and non-native authors of English have written significant articles regarding this domain in various journals, etc.
2. Secondly, a bundle of theses have conducted studies on other corpora such as economics, chemistry, physics and so on.
3. Thirdly, the availability of these political articles in Mass Media like magazines, newspapers, or even on-line websites relevant to politics (e.g., *News Week, Iran Daily, Tehran Times, Jame Jam online, US news, Iran news, Keyhan International*, etc.) makes data collection much more feasible.

When conducting studies in contrastive analysis, Connor, Nagelhout, and Rozycki (2008) pointed out that it is important to establish a valid criterion of comparison between data, in other words, to examine sets comparable original texts with “maximum similarity” written in two or more languages. Although one set of articles in the current study were written by Iranian non-native authors, their English writing proficiency can be taken to be at a native or near-native level since the articles have been published in these widely-known national magazines and journals.

As mentioned above, this study relied on just English political articles in two set of corpus written by Iranian natives and American natives, which were compared in terms of references. The first section, political articles written by native authors, comprised of 100 articles with 64,046 words. The latter part, articles written by Iranian writers, comprised of 100 articles with 64,057 words in the articles. On the whole, 200 articles which included 93,019 words were analyzed. The reason for selecting political articles published in media was that writing articles appears to be a very complicated activity with many visible and invisible layers. Moreover, in order to communicate effectively with English language countries via media (e.g., newspapers, magazines, etc.), knowledge of *Lingua Franca* is a pre-requisite and lack of this knowledge leads to misunderstanding. Thus, this comparative analysis enhances native authors’ proficiency in writing highly-qualified political news articles.

Instrumentation

The present study employed a framework for the analysis of references. It was extracted from Halliday’s (1994) classification of references based on Halliday (1994). This checklist contains three or four types of references concerned with cohesive devices including *cohesive*, *demonstrative*, *comparative* and *personal* references. The references were compared to other sources (e.g., *Comparative Analysis* by James, 1980 & *Discourse Analysis* by Brown & Yule, 1983).

Procedure

As mentioned before, the non-native corpus consists of 100 published articles or stories contributed by Iranian authors. Meanwhile, the native corpus contains 100 articles published in prestigious international journals mentioned earlier. Based on the above-mentioned checklist, we extracted all the references used by writers. This researcher read the articles completely to find the full references. The selected RAs which were obtained directly from online magazines and newspapers, converted to Word Format. So, we could count the total number of words in each article and find the references one by one with (*Find*) section in the *Microsoft Word 2007* in order to calculate the distribution of references. Our main focus was only to analyze the function of references not the structures. At first, we highlighted all the references in (*Find*) section of Microsoft Word, and then we began counting those which merely had the function of reference and skipped those which had other functions. For example, sometimes *that* had the function of a cohesive reference, but sometimes a conjunction. e.g., *Friends of former president George Bush are worried that his health may be in a dangerous decline*. The latter one was ignored in counting. Or *it* mostly was a cohesive reference and sometimes acted as an expletive. For example: *It’s inappropriate for Trump to moderate the event*. In addition, the references which equaled to zero or one were not taken into consideration because their frequency was low. Some

references overlapped. In other words, they had more than one function and belonged to two or three categories. Thus, it made the decision challenging for the researcher to put them in which category. Because of that, among the nine categories, only four of them which were the most frequent were chosen in order to narrow down the scope of analysis because this research cannot cover all of them. For instance, *ambiguous pronoun reference* was totally removed from the checklist due to multifunction of some references. The references were calculated twice to estimate inter-rater reliability. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Inter-rater Reliability of the References

Articles	Inter-rater reliability			
	Cohesive	Demonstrative	Comparative	Personal
American	0.909	0.994	0.783	0.987
Iranian	0.877	0.901	0.834	0.842

By this descriptive analysis, the researcher can determine the frequencies of the selected references in native and non-native articles and stories within the mentioned field. The quantitative analysis also enables the author to come to an appropriate conclusion of any difference or similarity on the using of the references. All the references in all the articles were calculated. As a result, the total word count performed by Microsoft Word Office for the non-native data was about 64,057 words and 64,046 words for the native corpus. In the final stage, various references will be identified using Non-parametric Chi-square procedure, which is a technique for looking at how references function in the corpora. The sole objective of this test here is to identify the probable significant concordance among references in these two separated collection of articles. And in case of no compatibility, or at least slight correspondence, we can figure out how and why non-natives prefer some specific references and overlook some others which natives do not. In summary, 200 articles from one discipline in two languages were randomly chosen from recent published leading journals. First, the overall organization of the articles was analyzed based on Halliday's (1994) model. Then the frequency of references was analyzed in the English political articles.

RESULTS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The first step taken in the analysis of references in the mentioned articles was to run word count to determine the length of the two corpuses. A total of 4353 references were identified among 64,057 words in the Iranian non-native corpus, and 6308 references were recognized among 64,046 words in American native data.

Frequency and percentage of references

The two sets of political articles investigated in this study were analyzed concerning the frequency of occurrence of references in each of the 4 categories of the checklist used in this study. The data presented in the following tables show the statistics which were obtained after the analysis of the articles; rows numbered 1-4 represent the taxonomy applied here in the present study. The frequency and percentage of all references in each of the two groups (data) of political

articles under study are shown under the columns of native and non-native corpora (data) as well. Total number of references is also given.

Table 3: Native American and Non-native Iranian Articles Using References

American native articles and news					
cohesive references	Demonstrative references	Comparative References	Personal References	Total references	Total words
5464	91	306	447	6308	64046
Iranian non-native articles and news					
3387	81	375	510	4353	64054

Frequency of occurrence of references in articles

Cohesive References

The first category in the classification used here represented the cohesive references. Different cohesive references were found which were mostly situated in texts on politics by native writers. However, the least amount of this category was found in political articles written by Iranian non-native authors. The sum of the occurrence of this category in the two groups of articles equaled 8851 cases (83.02% of all the references) among which the definite article “*the*” had the highest frequency in both native and non-native articles while “*yesterday*” had the lowest.

Demonstrative References

The most frequent demonstrative reference was found in political articles written by native writers. This category had the frequency of 172 cases in all the two groups (1.61% of all the references) among which the demonstrative reference “*those*” had the highest frequency and clearly “*then*” the least frequency in both native and non-native articles.

Comparative References

This category occurred 681 times in the two groups (6.38% of all the references). The most frequent type of this category was found in articles by American native authors and clearly the least amount of this category was found in articles by Iranian non-native writers. Among which, in native corpora “*other*” had the highest and “*identical*”, “*differently*” and “*equally*” had the lowest frequency. Nevertheless, “*more*” had the most and five items, that is, “*additional*”, “*else*”, “*identically*”, and “*likewise*” had the lowest frequencies in non-native articles.

Personal References

The fourth category of references in the classification of references in the present study deals with the personal references. The overall number occurrence of this category was 957 cases equal to 8.97% of the references highlighted in this study. The most frequent type of this category was found in articles on politics by non-native writers, while the least amount of this category was found in American native articles.

Descriptive statistics

There were some differences in the frequency of references used by American and Iranian writers of the news articles.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
American	4	91.00	5464.00	1577.0000	2595.46438
Iranian	4	81.00	3387.00	1088.2500	1542.93041
Valid N (listwise)	4				

In this table, N is the number of four items of references we considered in each group. The obtained mean was 1577 for American native articles and 1088 for Iranian non-native articles. It shows that Iranian writers used fewer references in comparison to American native ones. Since descriptive statistics cannot show the significant difference between the groups, data were analyzed through Chi-square analysis.

According to Tables 3 and 4, there are four categories of references in both groups which are compared. The American NSs and Iranian NSs used references in their political news and editorials. The contingency table was used to do the Chi-square calculation. The significance level was at ($p < 0.05$.) which indicated the difference between each category of the references between American NRs and Iranian NNRs regarding the use of references in the political texts.

Discussion

In this section, the results were discussed to give the possible reasons for the results obtained from the study. Moreover, it gives answers to the research question.

Do non-native Iranian researchers use cohesive references functionally as similar as the American native ones in the political articles?

In answering the research question, the researchers proposed the following discussion: The results of the Chi-square analysis showed that there are some differences and similarities between native and non-native news articles. The most frequent types of references used by American researchers were cohesive references, and the least used ones were demonstrative references. For instance, the following examples show this phenomenon.

*In the end, Gingrich emerged where **he** started under sharp attack from his rivals and under increasing security by the media as **he** tries to maintain his position as the GOP front-runner.*

*People who heard the debate on the radio thought Nixon won but **those** who saw it on TV thought he lost.*

In Iranian non-native articles, the most frequent items of references were *cohesive references*, but the least used items were *demonstrative references*. For example, the use of “he and those” in the following examples.

*On Iran’s nuclear program, Gates has said **he** still believes Iranian leaders are intent on building a nuclear weapon and are “getting closer.”*

*A senior advisor to the Islamic Revolution leader says the European Union serves as a tool in the hands of the U.S., adding the policies of the bloc are influenced by **those** of Washington.*

In native news articles, 6308 words out of 64046 were references whereas in non-native news articles they were 4353 words out of 64054. Generally, the writers of American news articles used more references than those of Iranian ones. The probable reasons and justifications for the obtained results may be due to the mastery of native researchers in their writings. Due to the fact that there are some differences between English and Persian grammar, and overgeneralization which sometimes occur by non-native researchers in writing English political news. In other words, Iranian writers feel free to overuse some references in their own language and may omit some of them without clear reasons. The other reason may be due to transferring this habit in writing English texts coming from their L1. In fact, overuse of the references is open to criticism heavily reference-based might appear “layman like” and also readers may lose their trust in what writers try to express. On the other hand, because of uncertainty and lack of sufficient knowledge, some other writers prefer to underuse them. It may expose them with a lot of criticism on the part of readers. Thus, learning how to use references is a must. Difficulty with cohesive devices is either because of discourse conventions or because of the lack of familiarity of Persian writers with a wide variety of techniques in applying these devices. Differences in the use of cohesive references may be due to the knowledge of grammar Iranian researchers may have in using grammatical patterns which help them to feel self-confident in using grammatical elements without referring to the English native samples in using the pre-fabricated structures. Other references such as comparison, personal and demonstrative were not significantly different from Persian researchers’ use of references. This may be due to the lack of enough knowledge on using such references since they hold less frequency and Persian researchers may follow the English native researchers in using such structures.

The result of the present study is compatible with the following works including Abdul Rahman (2013) who has emphasized that there was a vast difference between the natives’ and the non-natives’ use of cohesive devices such as reference in frequency, variety, and control. Similarly, Ghasemi (2013) in his study concluded that there were distinct linguistic differences in the use of cohesive devices by native and non-native learners. In a similar vein, Hessamy and Hamed (2013) in an attempt to compare and contrast the frequency of the use of cohesive devices in independent and integrated essays found out that there was a significant difference in the use of almost all types of cohesive devices between the two conditions.

In American native news and articles, the frequency of cohesive references was 5464 cases, 91 demonstrative references, 306 comparative references, and 447 personal references. On the whole, the total number of used references was 6308. The most frequent types of references used by American writers were cohesive references, and the least used ones were demonstrative references. The following examples present the use of these references.

*In the end, Gingrich emerged where **he** started under sharp attack from his rivals and under increasing security by the media as **he** tries to maintain his position as the GOP front-runner.*

*People who heard the debate on the radio thought Nixon won but **those** who saw it on TV thought he lost.*

Meanwhile, the frequency of these four categories of references in Iranian non-native news articles were 3387 cohesive references, 81 demonstrative references, 375 comparative references, 510 personal references. Totally, Iranian non-native writers used 4353 references in writing news and articles. In Iranian non-native articles, the most frequent items of references were *cohesive references*, but the least used items were *demonstrative references*.

*On Iran's nuclear program, Gates has said **he** still believes Iranian leaders are intent on building a nuclear weapon and are "getting closer."*

*A senior advisor to the Islamic Revolution leader says the European Union serves as a tool in the hands of the U.S., adding the policies of the bloc are influenced by **those** of Washington.*

A comparative analysis between these two sets of articles indicates that Iranian non-native writers used less references than American native writers. This incompatibility may be due to several reasons proposed as follows:

Lack of mastery on cohesive markers can lead to inappropriate use of references.

Iranian students' lack of variety in using references. For instance, some of comparative references are unique in use like *otherwise*, *less*, *identically*, etc. They may not have known the function of each reference and also the context they should use.

Teachers are not competent enough to teach references to students appropriately.

Sometimes students cannot distinguish form from the function. For example, students have difficulty comprehending the difference between the two functions of the same form such as *it*, *this*, or *there* which may be references or expletives in terms of function in different contexts.

CONCLUSION

Cohesive devices are important features of academic writing which connect the sentences together in a text and make it cohesive. The main purpose of cohesive devices is to help readers make logical connections between sentences. Writers use these devices in their academic writing in order to make their writing more accurate and comprehensible. The results of this study showed that the researchers of Iranian political news and articles used fewer references than those of American news. This underuse problem may be related to the impact of first language and culture of non-native writers on the use of references in the second language. Following Atai and Sadr (2006), results of this study showed that familiarizing and involving students with the rules of academic writing may improve their reading ability and can help them to know what kind of discourse they have to produce and understand in academic settings.

Finally, it can be said that even when Iranian non-native researchers have a good knowledge of references, they may be influenced by their first language and culture. Contrastive studies on the use of references in two or more languages could help the writers to be familiar with the differences between the Persian and English structures and cultures and the language use of discourse markers when they write the text.

The most important contribution of this study to English for academic purposes classrooms is that students seem to have little awareness of these cohesive devices and the interactional nature of reading in general. In Iranian context, special instruction should be integrated into ESP or EAP for political courses specially and for writing courses generally to help students become competent and successful writers. There are discrepancies in different disciplines in applying references. A better understanding of these discourse devices by Persian writers can help them to have a good command of using these cohesive devices to be able to write their essays articles with standard academic format and to introduce themselves as members of the academic discourse community. Despite the growing demand for English for specific purposes instruction in Iran, ESP courses are still limited to learning specific cohesive texts rather than a variety of these linguistic elements. With the continued expansion and participation in the international specific arena, much attention should be drawn to the design of ESP courses and the roles of references in binding the sentences together in an ESP passage. This can help to prepare learners for future professional communication. The materials should help learners to be familiar with different strategies which are helpful to comprehend the grammatical structures of the passages deeply. The results of the present study can be useful for both ESP developers and ESP text designers to explain the structure of disciplines which have specific characteristics in terms of using grammatical cohesive devices specially references. Finally, the results of this study can be useful for every EFL teacher and learner who is interested in learning the nature of English political news and articles and their linguistic structures.

This study is limited to the size of two sets of data. We used the “data” here instead of “corpora” due to the fact that this work does not include a wide range of computerized data but only 100 native articles and 100 non-native articles. The researcher merely took an adapted checklist based on Halliday (1994) and four categories of references including cohesive, demonstrative, comparative, and personal. The other references out of the scope of the checklist were not included in the analysis.

For future research, it is hoped that more large-scale, corpus-based studies on non-native and native writers’ articles will be done to enable us to gain a more comprehensive picture on the interlanguage development of references by different group of learners and nations. Another research can be an investigation on the reasons of over-use or under-use of references by Iranian native authors. With regard to pedagogical implications, address to the effective practices in helping the learners to improve cohesion of their writing.

Other studies can provide a list of references in Persian and compare and contrast in order to predict what problems students might encounter based on the differences and to discover whether students over generalize and transfer the use of references from their first language to English. Further studies can be done to compare the frequency and position of references in native and

non-native essays, compositions, and letters to provide important implications for the teaching of references in those genres. The focus of some other studies can be on those cohesive references which were not included in the proposed checklist.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Rahman, Z. A. A. (2013). *The use of cohesive devices in descriptive writing by Omani student-teachers*. Faculty of English Studies, Sohar University. Oman.
- Atai, M.R., & Sadr, L. (2006). A cross-cultural genre study on hedging devices in discussion sections of applied linguistic research articles. *Proceeding of the Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistic*, 15, 42-57.
- Baker, M. (1992). *In other words a course book on translation*. London: Routledge.
- Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U., Nagelhout, E., & Rozycki, W. V. (2008). *Contrastive rhetoric: Reaching to intercultural rhetoric*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamin Publishers.
- Dooley, R. A., & Levinsohn, S. A. (2001). *Analyzing discourse: A manual of basic concepts*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Ghasemi, M. (2013). An investigation into the use of cohesive devices in second language writings. Ferdowsi University of Mashad. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(9), 1615-1623.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An Introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Hessamy, G., & Hamed, S. (2013). A comparison of the use of cohesive devices in EFL learners' performance on independent vs. integrated writing tasks. Payame Noor University. *Study in English Language Teaching*, 1(1), 121-146.
- Hinkel, E. (2001). Matters of cohesion in L2 academic texts. *Applied Language Learning*, 12(2), 111-132.
- Hinkel, E. (2003). Simplicity without elegance: Features of sentences in L1 and L2 academic texts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 275-301.
- James, C. (1980). *Contrastive analysis*. London: Longman.
- Lyons, J. (1995). *Linguistic semantics: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pickering, W. (1978). *A framework for discourse analysis*. Arlington: University of Texas.
- Valeika, L., & Buitkiene, J. (2006). *Functional English syntax*. Vilnius: Vilnius Pedagogical University Press.
- Yoon, H. (2011). Cohesive devices in CMC texts produced by American and Korean EFL writers. Chonnam National University. *Linguistic Research*, 28(3), 743-771.
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University.

MORPHO-SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF PERSIAN-ENGLISH BILINGUAL WRITTEN CODESWITCHING BASED ON THE MATRIX LANGUAGE FRAME MODEL

Sara Hakimian

M.A in linguistics, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan branch, Esfahan, Iran

Ahmad.R Lotfi

Assistant professor, English department, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan branch, Esfahan, Iran

ABSTRACT

The present paper investigates Persian-English codeswitching based on the Matrix Language Frame(MLF)Model of Carol Myers-scotton,1993 in written texts of bilinguals in online communications. Three principles of MLF model is tested on Persian-English bilingual discourse extracted from a website named www.mohajersara.com. The three principles of the model are as follow: the morpheme order principle, the system morpheme principle, the uniform structure principle. The method of this study contains three stages. At first stage, each principle was tested on the corpus of 300 bilingual CPs separately to see whether our data validate the principles or not. Then the morpho-syntactic analysis and explanation for each sample CP was provided. The morpho-syntactic analysis provides general support for the principles of the model although a few counterexamples were founded in the corpus. Finally the numerical results for the principles were calculated using the percentage formula. The results of the numerical analysis reports that the principles of the model are valid for Persian-English written data. The results also design a pattern for Persian-English compound verb formations.

KEYWORDS: codeswitching, MLF model, morpheme order principle, system morpheme principle, uniform structure principle

INTRODUCTION

In some societies, where language speakers apply more than one common language during their conversations, a number of outcomes may result from the grammars of those languages in contact. Among those outcomes, codeswitching is a subject which has strongly attracted linguists and language researchers' attention. The researchers introduce different definitions for CS in the literature but all share the common idea of, in order to codeswitch, language speakers must know more than one language. One of the definitions is by Muysken (2011) which defines codeswitching as "the use of more than one language during a single communicative event". Studies on the subject of codeswitching (CS hereafter) generally look into sociolinguistic approaches but in recent two decades some researchers developed structural theories to find the possible universal structural constraints on CS. Among the studies of such material Poplack's(1980) linear order constraints and other non-linear approaches have been developed

such as Woolford's (1983) government and binding framework and Disciullo, Muysken, and Singh, 1986, the Null Hypothesis of Mahootian in 1993, Myers-scotton's 1993 MLF model, the Functional Head Constraint (Belazi, Rubin, & Toribio, 1994) and the Minimalist approach (MacSwan, 1997). Among the structural approaches MLF model claims to be universal and applicable for languages which are not mutually intelligible. Most of studies in CS in general and within the MLF model in specific focus on oral CS and not written CS.

Matrix Language Frame Model

Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model is a theoretical model which applies a production-based approach for CS. It was first proposed by Myers-Scotton in 1993 in a book named *Duelling languages* and then it has been developed and expanded with adding a new supporting model named 4-M model in some further publications for instance Myers-Scotton and Jake (2000a, 2000b, 2001). According to Myers-Scotton, the participating languages in CS do not participate equally. The language with the larger participation is called the Matrix Language and the other language is called Embedded Language (Myers-Scotton, 2002). This model is designed for intra-sentential CS. In general, intra-sentential CS refers to a switch between languages in a particular clause or sentence but according to Myers-Scotton (2006) clause is the best unit of analysis for bilingual data whether dependent or independent clauses and the sentences can not be considered as the unit of analysis.

This model is built on two oppositions, Matrix Language (ML) vs. Embedded Language (EL) opposition and content vs. system morpheme opposition. It is essential to divide content and system morphemes for identifying which language is ML and which is EL. And it should be mentioned that what 4-M model does is the division of content and system morphemes and clarifying of the three categories of system morphemes. So, the categories are divided as follow: content morphemes such as nouns, verbs, some propositions and system morphemes: 1-early system morphemes for instance determiners, plural –s and some propositions, 2-late system morphemes, 3-bridge late system morphemes e.g. possessive “s and of”, 4-outsider late system morphemes for instance the 3rd person singular –s.

Content morphemes according to Myers-Scotton and Jake (2000a, 2000b, 2001) are those “morphemes which express semantic and pragmatic aspects and assign or receive thematic roles, e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives and some prepositions”. These morphemes are necessary to transmit messages in communication. System morphemes like function words and inflections, express the relation between content morphemes and do not assign or receive thematic roles. They are crucial in building grammatical frames. In bilingual CPs, system morphemes are coming only from the ML and content morphemes are taken from both the ML and EL.

According to Myers-Scotton (1993a), a bilingual clause may consist of three types of constituents:

“1- ML islands which are made of ML morphemes only and are under the control of ML grammar. They don't have any influence from the EL”.

“2-EL islands, EL islands are also well-formed by EL grammar but they are inserted into an ML frame. Therefore EL islands are under the constraint of ML grammar”. (2002:58)

3-“Mixed constituents include morphemes from both Matrix Language and Embedded Language”.

The following examples show constituents types:

- (1) yeki az sargarmi-ha **walking mall** hast.
ML island + EL island → Mixed constituent
One of hobby-pl walking mall is.
One of the hobbies is walking mall.
- (2) **job offer-am** umad
Mixed constituent
job offer-poss come-3rds-PST
I received my job offer.

Regarding the above information, the MLF model is based on several principles. Three principles of the MLF model which were tested in the present study are:

The morpheme order principle

In Matrix Language + Embedded Language constituents consisting of singly occurring Embedded Language lexemes and any number of Matrix Language morphemes, surface morpheme order will be that of the Matrix Language. (Myers-Scotton, 1993:83; 2002:59)

The system morpheme principle

In a mixed constituent, all system morphemes “which have grammatical relations external to their head constituents will come from the Matrix Language”(Myers-Scotton, 2002).

The uniform structure principle

This principle predicts that “the structure of the Matrix Language is always preferred in bilingual speech”. (Myers-Scotton, 2002)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on MLF Model

Since the arise of the MLF model in 90s when Myers-Scotton (1993) examined a Swahili-English data of conversations in Nairobi and proposed the model after a large corpus was tested, it has been employed to test different contact phenomenon such as CS and convergence for different pairs of languages. A number of studies in CS have applied the MLF model; one of the studies was applied by Margaret Dauchar (2006) who tested three principles of the model on the collected data of informal conversations by bilingual Welsh-English speakers. She examined the model to decide whether Welsh-English can be considered as a classic case of CS or not. The results of her analyses suggested general support for the three principles she tested which were as follow: the asymmetry principle, the uniform structure principle and the matrix language principle. The principles of the model were examined on the collected data of informal conversations by bilingual Welsh-English speakers. Finally the result showed that Welsh-English CS can be marked as a classic case. Another study which was conducted by Laura Callahan in 2004, applied the model on a corpus consist of Spanish-English CS in novels published in the

United States. She found implications for applying oral model to a written corpus and the results of tested principles supported the model on the especial corpus. It has been several studies in different language pairs, like the above studies and other language pairs such as German-English, Russian-English, Turkish-English and etc; still it seems there is a lack of enough study on the corpus consisting Persian language as one of the participating languages in CS. Examples of such studies are two studies which have conducted this model to a corpus consisting Persian language

in 2013. One of them is a study of Azeri-Turkish/Persian CS conducted by Rouhi and Heidri. They employed this model for the features of light verb construction in Azeri/Turkish-Persian. The data collected from the interactions between bilingual students and teachers. The results revealed that Persian finite verbs do not participate in Azeri-Turkish morpho-syntactic frame simply because such verbs are [+thematic role assigner] and carry more syntactic baggage. Another study is a test of this model in 2013 by Rahimi and Dabaghi which is conducted to an oral corpus of Persian-English data. The corpus was obtained from conversations of Persian - English bilinguals on TV shows. Then the three principles of the MLF model were validated. The results of the analyses suggested general support for the principles of the MLF model. They also concluded that Persian-English CS can be considered as a classic case of CS.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the Matrix Language Frame model principles, the problem statements are as follow:

1. Is the MLF model which is a model for oral CS, qualified to predict written CS?
2. Is Persian-English written CS a "classic case" of CS?

METHODOLOGY

Data collection procedure

The data used in this study were collected from a website names www.mohajersara.com, and thus this study can be considered as a part of what is known as Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). The website is a virtual community in which the Persian-English bilinguals communicate and write about various topics such as immigration ways to different countries, how to apply for higher education abroad, the life styles outside Iran and etc. The participants are Iranian bilinguals who live/are going to live in English speaking countries. The data which gathered from this website are written texts on different subjects and also the comments which the participants make on each others' texts. A numbers of bilingual clauses with intra-sentential CS were extracted from these written texts. It should be mentioned that according to Myers-Scotton bilingualism is "the ability to use two or more languages sufficiently to carry on a limited casual conversation." (Myers-Scotton, 2006).

Instruments

We have applied Computer and internet as the instruments of the present study in order to collect data, no special software was used to extract the information, and the data was extracted randomly and manually through the pages of Mohajersara website.

Statistical procedure

As mentioned in the previous section this model has some principles for determining the matrix language from the embedded language and therefore the model has a specific design and procedure. In this study two decisive factors which are morpheme order and the source of a special type of system morphemes were considered in each bilingual clause for identifying the Matrix Language. Wherever the two languages involved in CS have distinct surface orders, the morpheme order will be applicable and thus this is true of Persian and English, since Persian is SOV language while English is SVO.

The application of the first factor which is morpheme order results in four possible outcomes:

- (1) “Persian” is marked as the ML if the order of morphemes follow Persian rules;
- (2) “English” is marked as the ML if the order of morphemes follow English rules;
- (3) “either” is marked if the order is well-matched with both of the languages;
- (4) “neither” is marked if the order is not well-matched with either of the languages.

After the application of the first factor (morpheme order), the application of the second factor was applied. Identifying the source of system morphemes. According to Myers-Scotton (2002), in a mixed constituent, all system morphemes which have grammatical relations external to their head constituents will come from the Matrix Language. These morphemes are called the outsider late system morphemes. Examples of outsiders are morphemes marking sub /obj-verb agreement and case affixes in some languages. Considering this factor, we can have three different conditions in our bilingual CPs:

- (1) Persian is the source of outsider late system morphemes
- (2) English is the source of outsider late system morphemes
- (3) Both Persian and English provide late system morphemes

After the application of above factors on the data, the percentage of Persian and English as the matrix language is shown in different tables for each principle.

Data Analysis

All of the bilingual utterances were extracted manually. The utterances were then divided so that the resulting units of analysis were bilingual clauses. The data were analyzed according to the MLF framework, in order to identify each clause as having a Persian, an English, either or neither ML. Additionally another classification was defined in the data analysis process, which was the verb formation process for Persian compound verbs found in data. The verb formation processes were involved (1) EL Verb + ML Verb and (2) EL Noun +ML Verb. In fact the samples were descriptively analyzed one after each other. By descriptive analysis we mean that for each example, the reasons which made the CP to mark as Persian, English or etc. were discussed. Then, after the process of descriptive analysis for each CP, the number of each ML categorization was counted and the percentage for each ML category was calculated using the percentage formula for both morpheme order principle and system morpheme principle.

Testing the Morpheme Order Principle on data

According to this principle in any of the bilingual clauses of the data, the Matrix Language dictates the word order of the CP. As we know the word order for Persian language and English language are not equal. The major constituent order of Persian is SOV and the major order for English is SVO.

The following are several examples that show the differences of ML and EL word order and we can obviously see that one of the participating languages which is ML dictates the surface structure of the CP.

- (3) har **state-i** ye **tax-i** dare bara mahsoolat-eš.
each state-indef one tax-indef have.3rds for product-pl-posspr
Each state has different taxes for its products.

This clause simply shows the different patterns for Persian and English word order. The place of object and verb show that the ML is Persian. Another point is that although the word *tax* can be used as a singular mass noun in English, but it uses in plural form when it aims to refer to different kinds of levies. Here the word *tax* which is a noun of EL, embedded in a bilingual CP, have a singular form in the CP refereeing to different kinds of levies. It seems that the word *taxes* tend to be singular here because the morpho-syntactic frame is organized by Persian grammar. But it may sounds ungrammatical if we use the singular form in the same CP of English.

- (4) Ø mixāstim **cell phone** begirim
want-1stpl cell phone get-1stp
We wanted to get (buy) cell phone.

In this example we can obviously see that the word order of the CP obeys Persian grammar. Considering the fact that Persian is a pro-drop language, the subject can be absent and when the subject is absent, the ending of the verb determines the person and number of the subject. Here for the subject *ma* which is a null-subject, we have *-im* clitic which is a subject-verb agreement on both of the verbs in CP. We can also see that the word *cell phone* (which is an EL element) is placed in the Persian object position and placed before the verb *begirim*. According to these two reasons Persian is the Matrix language.

- (5) Ø say konid be Engelisi **communicate** konid. (SCV)
Try do-2ndpl in English communicate do-2ndpl
Try to communicate in English.

In the previous example we pointed out that Persian is a pro-drop language but English is not. When a language is not pro-drop, it means that it is a non-null-subject language. But there are exceptions even for a non-null-subject language as English. For English language, it is standard for clauses in imperative mood to lack explicit subjects. Considering this fact, the above example is a challenging case in determining the ML.

In this CP we can see that the subject position is empty in Persian, and Here we have a null-subject (*šoma*), which is a characteristic of Persian language but not English. Besides since the clause has an imperative mood, it has a null-subject (*you*) in English too. This may cause the CP to seem to be compatible with the word order of both Persian and English. But still, there remain some points which make Persian as the ML. Firstly; here we have inflection on the verbs which is a specific feature of Persian. Secondly, the position of the verb shows that the ML is Persian.

- (6) man tu **highway** ziād ranandegi mikonam. (SACV)
I on highway too much drive do-1S
I drive too much on highway.

As we can see the verb *mikonam* is in the final position in this clause and the word *ziād* which is a complement for the verb, obeyed Persian word order and placed before the verb; but for English the verb complement position is after the verb, thus the clause has obeyed the Persian word order. So we should consider Persian as the matrix language of the clause.

- (7) key **approve-šun** umade?
when approve-POSS come-PST
when did their approve(letter) come?

Here the affix-*šun* is the possessive adjective which joints to the English noun, *approve*. According to the place of pronoun, the ML for this CP is considered to be Persian.

Persian compound verb formations in bilingual Cps

EL verb+ ML verb

- (8) Ø bayad **apply** konam.
should apply do-1sts-PRES
I should apply.

The word order of this CP is SV, and thus the ML can be marked as 'either', because it's acceptable in both of the languages. But before deciding on the matrix language, there is a point about Persian verbs that we should pay attention to. As we know in Persian language like many other languages, verbs are divided into two categories of simple and compound verbs. A compound verb is a multi-word compound that functions as a single verb. For a compound verb in Persian usually a noun or an adjective is combined with a light verb and makes a compound verb. For example:

Noun + Light v → compound v šekast dādan / šekast xordan
Adj + Light v → compound v xaste šodan / xaste kardan

Here we have an English verb (*apply*) in the CP which combined with a Persian light verb (*konam*) and formed the Persian compound verb (*apply konam*). But as we referred to Persian compound verb formations, a v+v compound do not occur in Persian language. Although we do not have such a compound v constituent in Persian but the combination of this English v with a

Persian light v is completely meaningful and possible here in this CP. This makes the decision a little bit hard. So, we mark the ML of this CP as ambiguous. There are several cases in the data in which an English lexical verb is combined with a Persian ¹light verb. The following are some examples:

- (9) Ø bad az yek sāl **instate** šodim.
after one year instate become-1stpl-PST
We instated after a year.

Although in this CP the Persian compound verb formation goes through the same process as number (9), and it makes the decision on what is the matrix language a little difficult but we can simply mark Persian as the ML if we look at the word order which obeys Persian rules, v is located at the final position and verb complement is placed before the verb.

- (10) Øunja ro(-ra) **leave** kardim.
There obj-marker leave do-1stpl-PST
We left there.

The determining factors in this CP are as follow: subject and object position. Subject-verb agreement and verb position. All these elements follow Persian grammar rules.

- (11) key šomā **lease** kardid?
when you -pl lease do-2ndpl-PST
When did you lease?

The surface structure seems to be equal in both Persian and English, so the matrix language can be marked as either by morpheme order principle.

- (12) agar in kar-o bekonid, mojebe **distract** šodane havas-e-šun miše.
If def job-obj do-2ndpl, cause distract become attention-poss become.
If you do this, it will distract them.

- (13) Ø faqat bače ro(-ra) **care** mikone.
just baby obj-marker care do-3rdS-PRES
She/He just takes care of the baby.

Persian is considered as ML in two (12-13) above clauses.

EL noun+ ML verb

In a number of cases an English noun joints to a Persian light verb to built up a Persian compound verb. A number of examples are as follow:

- (14) Ø mitars-am na-tun-am **handle** kon-am.

¹Persian light verbs are as follow :Kardan / šodan / zadan / dādan / dāštan / āmadan / andāxtan / āvardan

afraid-1sts NEG-can-1sts handle do-1sts
I'm afraid (that) I can't handle the problems.

In this CP the English noun (*handle*) combined with the Persian light verb(*konam*), made the compound v (*handle konam*) which means (*edāre konam*) in Persian. The compound verb formation obeyed the Persian formation process. The surface word order seems acceptable in both Persian and English. But since we have subject-verb agreement on verbs and we have a Persian compound verb formation process, we marked ML to be Persian.

(15) Ina ro bayad raayat konid vagarna **detention** mikonan.
These obj-m should respect do-2ndpl otherwise-NEG detention do-3rd pl.CONT
You should respect these (law), otherwise they will arrest you.

Here the noun (*detention*) is added to the verb (*mikonan*), and made the compound v of (*detention mikonan*) which obeys Persian grammar rules. We considered Persian as the ML in number 15.

(16) tā do sāl-e dige **citizen** miše.
In two year other citizen become.3rdS
He will be a citizen in two years.

Table 1: Persian compound verb formations found in bilingual CPs

EL verb + ML verb	EL noun + ML verb
Instate šodan	Handle kardan
Distract šodan	Detention kardan
Apply kardan	Citizen šodan

Testing the System Morpheme Principle on data

As we mentioned earlier, according to system morpheme principle, outsider late system morphemes must come from the ML. There are some examples of outsider late system morphemes:

(17) Ø tuye dog friendly-tarin šahr zendegi mi-kon-**am**
in dog friendly-superlative city live do-CONT-1sts
I live in the most dog friendly city.

(18) bedune passport ne-mitun-**id** check in beš-**id**.
without passport NEG-can-cont-1stpl check in become-2nd pl
You cannot check in without a passport.

(19) Øgofteš ke she drives like crazy.
Say-past-3rds that she drive-3rds like crazy

He/she said that she drives like crazy.

As we can see in above (17, 18) examples, Persian personal endings (-am, -id) which are morphemes that placed at the end of verbs and are used to mark person, and the number of the verb are coming from Persian, these are a typical examples of outsider late system morphemes and thus according to system morpheme principle “Persian” should be marked as the ML here. For number (19), we can see that the personal endings are coming from both Persian (-š in *gošteš*) and English (-s in *drives*), and the ML should be marked as “either” according to system morpheme principle. But if we take a deeper look into this CP we can see that there exists a challenging point which makes it a little hard to decide which language is the ML here. If we consider the morpheme order principle here, at first it seems that the order of morphemes in the whole CP is compatible with both Persian and English, and thus the ML must be marked as “either” according to morpheme order principle, but in a deeper look of Persian and English structure, we know that it’s only in “Persian” that we can have null subjects and not English. Considering this feature, Persian is qualified to be marked as ML according to morpheme order principle and not English, because it is only in imperative mood of English that we can have null subjects. So, the challenging point is that if we have Persian as ML according to both morpheme order and system morpheme, then how can it be possible to have an outsider late system morpheme from the EL? We mark this CP as “ambiguous” for system morpheme principle.

(20) Ø faqat bače **ro(-ra)** **care** mikone.
just baby obj-marker care do-3rdS-PRES
She/He just takes care of the baby.

(21) man **white trash-ha** **ro(-ra)** qabul daram
I white trash-pl obj-marker accept
I count on white trash(Americans) .

(22) aval begir **permīto (-ra)**, ba’ad...
first receive Permit obj-marker , then...
First, receive the permit, then....

(23) Amricai- hā nemipazirand discrimination **o(-ra)**
American-pl NEG-accept-3pl discrimination obj-marker
The Americans do not accept discrimination.

Another type of outsider late system morphemes are case affixes. Considering this fact, we can note that Persian has one overt case morpheme, the accusative suffix –ra which is obligatory on specific direct objects (Ganjavi 2007, Karimi 1991, 2003a, 2005). Although there have been debates on what –ra actually is, most of the linguists suggest that –ra is, in fact the accusative case morpheme. So, Persian is considered as the matrix language according to system morpheme principle in examples number (20) to (23).

Testing the Uniform Structure Principle on data

As it was mentioned before in the definition of this principle, uniform structure principle predicts that the structure of the Matrix Language is always preferred in bilingual CPs. In the previous sections, we saw that content morphemes are supported by both ML and EL, whether each of the languages is the ML in each specific CPs. But outsider late system morphemes supports only from the ML. In other words, English as the EL in our corpus provides only content morphemes. This obviously indicates that the structure of Persian is preferred in our data as the Matrix Language, and thus this is a support of the uniform structure principle.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Having applied the principles on the data, the results indicated that in most of the bilingual clauses in the sample, the Matrix Language can be identified as Persian according to the morpheme order principle. In fact only 15 CPs found for which the matrix language can be marked as 'either' which is equal to 7.00 %. The analysis of the bilingual clauses in the sample according to the System Morpheme Principle showed that Persian provides system morphemes in 91.66percentages of the cases. Table 2 and 3 show the percentage of each principle for the sample data.

Table 2: Percentage of matrix language according to morpheme order principle

Matrix language	Number of CPs	Percent
Persian	265	88.33
English	8	2.66
Either	21	7.00
Neither	6	0.66
Total	300	100

Table 3: Percentage of matrix language according to system morpheme principle

Matrix language	Number of CPs	Percent
Persian	275	91.66
English	8	2.66
Either	17	5.66
Total	300	100

According to the results of this study the answer to the first question reveals that written CS can be predicted by MLF model which is a model developed for speech and therefore there found no limitations for the application of the MLF model to written data and thus the written data can be as much valuable in morpho-syntactic analysis of CS phenomenon as speech data are. For the second question we came to the conclusion that Persian-English CS can be considered as a classic case of CS in order to which only one of the participating languages is the source of morpho-syntactic frame of the CPs. In 88.33% of CPs considering the morpheme order principle and 91.66% of CPs considering the system morpheme principle, Persian is the source of morpho-

syntactic frame of the bilingual CPs. The results of this study are in line with other earlier studies on CS through the framework of MLF model in Persian as a participating language and other language pairs like Welsh-English (Margaret Deuchar, 2006), Spanish-English (Laura Callahan, 2004), Chinese-English (Yu Liu, 2007) etc. Although all these mentioned studies, validate the applicability of MLF principles, but it seems that ambiguous CPs or counterexamples might be found in data samples, like what we found in number (8) and (19), and thus there is a need for further research in this framework.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the data tested was significantly compatible with the MLF principles. This suggest that written Persian-English CS in indeed a classic case of CS and the morpho-syntactic analysis of the data indicates that Persian is the ML which dominantly provides the morpho-syntactic frame for the mixed constituents and on the other hand English is contributed as the EL. The findings have implications for the use of written data in linguistics analysis in our limited corpus. Applying morpho-syntactic models rather than sociolinguistic models can be considered as a tool for analyzing different contact phenomena, such as CS, especially for analyzing bilingual children's CS since its obvious that different developmental factor interact with language contact phenomena. The MLF model also can be applied to classical bilingual written texts in Persian such as S'aadi or Molana books, etc in order to testify the universality of the principles of the model and in order to test the validity of written data for linguistic analysis.

REFERENCES

- Belazi, H. M., Rubin, E. J., & Toribio, A. J. (1994). Code-switching and X-Bar Theory: The functional head constraint. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 25, 221-37.
- Callahan, L. (2002). The Matrix Language Frame model and Spanish/English code-switching in fiction. *Language & Communication*, 22, 1-16.
- Callahan, L. (2004). *Spanish/English Code-switching in a Written Corpus*. Philadelphia: John Benjamin's publishing company.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (6th ed.). Blackwell publishing, Oxford, UK.
- Deuchar, M. (2006). Welsh-English code-switching and the Matrix Language Frame model. *Lingua*, 116, 1986-2011.
- Disciullo, A. M., Muysken, P., & Singh, R. (1986). Government and code-mixing. *Journal of Linguistics*, 22, 1-24.
- Jake, J., Myers-Scotton, C., & Gross, S. (2002). Making a minimalist approach to code-switching work: adding the matrix language. *Bilingualism, Language and Cognition* 5(1), 69-91.
- Joshi, A. (1985). Processing of sentences with intrasentential code-switching. In: Dowty, D. R., Karttunen, L., & Zwicky, A. (eds.), *Natural language parsing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 190-205.

- Liu, Y. (2007). Evaluation of the Matrix Language Hypothesis: Evidence from Chinese-English Code-switching Phenomena in Blogs. *Journal of Chinese Language and Computing*, 18(2), 75-92.
- MacSwan, J. (1997). *A Minimalist approach to Intrasentential Code Switching: Spanish-Nahuatl Bilingualism in Central Mexico*. (PhD dissertation, University of California Los Angeles).
- Mahootian, S. (1993). A null theory of code-switching. (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University).
- Muysken, P. (2011). *Code-switching*. In: Mesthrie, R. (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, 301-302.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993a). *Duelling languages: Grammatical structure in code-switching*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993b). *Social Motivations for Code-switching: Evidence from Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C., & Jake, J. L. (1995). Matching lemmas in a bilingual language competence and production model: evidence from Intrasentential Code-switching. *Linguistics* 33, 981-1024.
- Myers-Scotton, C., & Jake, J. L. (2000). Testing a Model of Morpheme Classification with Language Contact Data. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 4(1), 1-8.
- Myers-Scotton, C., & Jake, J. L. (2001). Explaining Aspects of Code-switching and Their Implications. In Nicole, J. (ed.), *One mind, Two Languages; Bilingual Language Processing*. Oxford: Blackwell, 84-116.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). *Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes*. Oxford University Press, New York, N.Y.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2006). *Multiple Voices: an Introduction to Bilingualism*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, UK.
- Poplack, S. (1980-2000). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en espanol. *Linguistics* 18, 581-618. Reprinted in: Li, Wei. (ed.) (2000). *The Bilingualism Reader*. London: Routledge. 221-256.
- Rahimi, M., & Dabaghi, A. (2013). Persian-English code-switching: A test of the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model. *System*, 41, 32 -351.
- Rouhi, F., & Heidari A. (2015). Light verb constructions in Azeri-Turkish/Persian Code-switching based on the Matrix Language Frame Model. *Language Related Research*, 6, 1-22.
- Woolford, E. (1983). Bilingual code-switching and syntactic theory. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 14, 520-523.

ENGLISH LINGUAFRANCA (ELF) AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AMONG CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN GHANA

Albert Agbesi Wornyo

University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

ABSTRACT

In countries that English is spoken as a second language, it is mainly learnt in the classroom as a school subject. However, individuals who have not had formal education can acquire and use English in informal settings outside the classroom. This study explores the various social contact situations and instances that motivate or make it necessary for construction workers to acquire and use English at the construction site. It also seeks to discover the communicative strategies employed by the construction workers to communicate. Using observations and interviews, it was discovered that some construction workers acquire and use English through their interaction with workers they do not share the same Ghanaian language with. The findings of the study show the reality of the global use of English as a language for communication beyond academic and official circles. The study concludes that though the English acquired and used among the construction workers is not the Standard English spoken by educated Ghanaians, it enables them to communicate to get their work done at the construction site.

KEYWORDS: construction workers, social interaction, communicative strategies

INTRODUCTION

In Ghana, English is spoken as a second language. In English as Second Language (ESL) countries, the English language is used as the official language of the country as well as for inter-ethnic communication. For this reason the English language serves as the language of rule and it is learnt in school. Though the English language is mainly learnt in the classroom as a school subject because it is spoken as the official language and used for inter-ethnic communication among educated people, the communicative environment serves as language input for people who have had little or no classroom education to acquire English. Rogers (2004) observes that because English is dominantly spoken or is the official language in an ESL context, language learners can make use of social interaction as a source of language input to acquire the language in an informal setting.

In Ghana, just as it is in most African countries, people migrate from the rural areas to the capital city to work. Some of the people, who migrate to the capital city to work or look for job, are people who have had little or no classroom education. Some of these people who migrate to the capital city, Accra, work as artisans, casual workers in factories, labourers, taxi drivers and others engage in all sorts of petty trading.

For some of these people, the environment or the social context in which they work make them come into contact with people who speak English. For this reason, they have the opportunity to learn English in an informal setting outside the classroom.

In addition, people who migrate to the capital city come from different parts of the country and for that matter speak different languages. As pointed out earlier, English is used for inter-ethnic communication among educated Ghanaians. People with little or no classroom education who speak different languages and cannot speak English like the educated Ghanaians are confronted with communication problems when they have to interact with people outside their ethnic group in the city of Accra. How is this communication problem resolved?

As noted earlier, the social context of ESL countries as the case is in Ghana provides the opportunity for some of the people who migrate to the capital city to learn English. Even though the multilingual situation in Ghana has led to the situation where many Ghanaians speak two or more Ghanaian languages, the ESL context still enables some Ghanaians who have not had formal education to learn English outside the classroom in an informal situation.

The kind of work that people who have not learnt English in the classroom do to some extent determine the people they come into contact with. Individuals who by virtue of the work they do or the kind of social interactions that they have expose them to people who speak English, are likely to learn to speak English to some level of proficiency.

Apart from the kind of work or exposure that an individual has had which is a factor that can facilitate the learning of a second language, learning a second language is also facilitated by different kinds of motivation. The inner edge that an individual has toward the learning of language facilitates the learning of a second language. In addition, the purpose of enhancing one's intercultural communication and affiliation serves as motivation for learning a second language.

Gardner (2001), states that learning a second language stems from the integrative motivation of the individual to identify with the speakers of the second language (L2) community. And Dornyei (1990) explains that in the absence of a salient L2 group in the learner's environment (as the case is in the ESL context of Ghana where English is learnt in school) the identification can be generalized to the cultural and intellectual values associated with the L2.

Though social interaction and motivation are not the only factors that facilitate the learning of a second language, they are by far the major factors to consider in any study that investigates the learning of a second language.

This paper seeks to explore the various social contact situations and the factors or the instances that motivate or make it necessary for individuals who have had little or no formal education and work in the construction field to acquire and use English outside the classroom in the ESL context of Ghana. It also seeks to discover the communicative strategies employed by the construction workers to manage communication when they have to use English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of studies have been conducted on the role of motivation and social interaction in the learning of a second language. Social contact situations and motivation play vital roles in the acquisition of a second language. In an informal setting too these factors still play important roles in the acquisition and use of English as a second language. People in ESL countries learn English in informal settings under several different circumstances and for several different reasons. Moreover, the way communication takes place in multilingual communities involves certain negotiation strategies. The literature review focuses on studies that have considered how communication takes place in multilingual communities and also addresses the role of social interaction and motivation in the acquisition and use of a second language with reference to the acquisition and use of English in ESL settings.

Communication in Multilingual Communities

How people communicate in communities which are linguistically heterogeneous is different in many ways from how people communicate in monolingual communities. In multilingual communities the complex language contact situation brings with it different norms. Canagarajah and Wurr (2011) question the theorization of speech community as based on shared language which makes the notion of a speech community homogeneous. According to them, for South Asians, community is based on shared space. Therefore, it can accommodate many language groups living in the same geographical space. Such communities assume diversity and contact. Language diversity is the norm in such communities. This is the kind of communities we have in the situation of Ghana; especially in the capital city Accra and other urban communities in Ghana.

In one neighbourhood in Ghana, one can count as many as more than ten languages co-existing in one community. When one moves out of one's house, one encounters people who speak different languages. One does not assume one will come into contact with others who speak one's own language. Though many people speak more than one language, sometimes, there is no common language to facilitate interaction among interlocutors. In most cases the common language that interlocutors may share may be English or Akan. Canagarajah and Wurr (2011:2) in their description of the situation in Asia, pointed out that what enables people to communicate in such multilingual communities is "not a shared grammar, but communicative practices and strategies that are used to negotiate their language differences." They observe that the speakers negotiate their differences to construct norms that work for them in their conversation. These are intersubjective norms; they are co-constructed. While these norms will work in that particular context, they may not work for another set of communicators.

One of the earliest strategies to emerge in the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) was documented by Firth (1996) in what he calls the let it pass principle. It is noted that multilinguals do not disturb the flow of communication when one encounters a word or structure that deviates from one's norms or turns out to be unintelligible. The person waits patiently for further occurrences of the item, so that with more clues or additional opportunities the person is able to renegotiate it for him or her to construct meaning. Canagarajah (2007) points out that to know more about the negotiation strategies and communicative practices that facilitate communication,

we have to directly observe and empirically analyze interactions. The strategies we derive from ELF research is a good starting point. They help us develop a more representative taxonomy and a list of strategies that multilinguals adopt in their interactions.

Kramersch (2002) points out that what multilinguals aim to achieve therefore is an alignment of the language resources they have with the purposes in question. He indicates that successful communication depends on aligning the linguistic resources to the social, situational, and physical features operative in a context. Atkinson, Churchill, Nishino and Okada (2007:171) define alignment as “the means by which human actors dynamically adapt to—that is, flexibly depend on, integrate with, and construct—the ever- changing mind-body-world environments posited by sociocognitive theory”. In other words, alignment takes place not just between human beings, but also between human beings and their social and physical environments.

Khubchandani (1997:94) cited in Canagarajah and Wurr (2011:2) identifies two strategies used by communicators to negotiate their language differences. He referred to these two strategies as “serendipity and synergy.” He explains these strategies as follows:

Individuals in such societies acquire more synergy (i.e., putting forth one’s own efforts) and serendipity (i.e., accepting the other on his/her own terms, being open to unexpectedness), and develop positive attitudes to variations in speech (to the extent of even appropriating deviations as the norm in the lingua franca), in the process of coming out from their own language codes to a neutral ground. (Khubchandani, 1997:94)

The communicators in these situations are constantly exposed to codes that they are not familiar with in their interaction with speakers of other languages. In their effort to construct mutual intelligibility, they become more open to unexpected norms.

Several studies have confirmed that multilinguals who use English in contact situations do not adopt a common code. For example, House (2003) in a study, shows how students of English from different countries use culture specific pragmatic strategies to facilitate communication with outsiders. Canagarajah, (2006) found that multilinguals who use English for contact purposes start with their own codes and adopt negotiation strategies to achieve intelligibility. In this sense, LFE is a locally achieved practice.

It has also been pointed out in the literature that the objective of language learning is also different for multilinguals. They do not aim to master a language for all purposes and functions. They master the codes that are sufficient for the functions they want that language to perform. There is no need to develop proficiency in all the languages for the same purposes or the same language for all purposes. Multilinguals adopt different codes in different contexts and for different objectives. From this perspective, the objective of their acquisition is repertoire building rather than total competence in individual languages. Multilinguals prefer to develop a range of codes for a range of purposes.

Based on her observations of multilinguals, House (2003:559) argues that ELF (English lingua franca) users are competent enough to be able to monitor each other’s moves at a high level of

awareness. Canagarajah (2007) observes that the competence of ELF speakers is of course different from that of monolinguals. This competence for cross-language contact and hybrid codes is derived from their multilingual life. According to Canagarajah, because of the diversity at the heart of this communicative medium, ELF is intersubjectively constructed in each specific context of interaction. The form of this English is negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes. The speakers tend to be tolerant and try to monitor each other's language proficiency to determine mutually the appropriate grammar, phonology, lexical range, and pragmatic conventions that would ensure intelligibility. The speakers involved in the interaction tend to negotiate what is acceptable for the purpose of their interaction.

Motivation in L2 Learning

L2 motivation research started in Canada because of the unique situation of Canada with the co-existence of English and French communities (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). As a result of this, early studies on L2 motivation such as Gardner and Lambert (1972) viewed L2s as mediating factors between different ethnolinguistic communities in multicultural settings.

In this case, an individual's motivation to learn the language of another community is for the purpose of enhancing intercultural communication. The idea of an individual's desire to communicate with people from the other speech community led to the notion of the language learners' desire to integrate into the culture of the second language community. For this reason, the L2 motivation that has been well developed is the integrative motive.

A well known example is Gardner's (1985) motivation theory. Under the integrative motivation approach, it implies that the learner of a second language has a positive affective disposition toward the L2 community or speakers and has the desire to interact with them and associate with them and become similar to the members of that community. This further implies that the L2 learner has respect for the members of the L2 group and wants to be identified with them.

For the case of an ESL situation, there is no salient L2 group that the L2 learner would like to integrate with. Since there is no salient L2 group, Dornyei and Csizer (2002) have expanded the meaning of the integrative motive to also refer to some more basic identification process within the individuals self concept. They pointed out that the concept of 'possible self' and 'ideal self' proposed by Markus and Nurius's (1986) form part of the integrative motivation. According to Markus and Nurius (1986 : 954) 'possible selves' represent "individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" and "ideal self represent the attributes that a person would like to possess."

Gardner (2007) states that when considering motivation and second language learning or acquisition, it is possible to consider two types of motivational constructs. According to him research has always contended that there are in essence two types of motivation that should be considered when referring to second language acquisition. The two motivational constructs that are well known are integrative and instrumental motivation.

Instrumental motivation in learning a second language relates to how the learning of a second language can help an individual to improve in his or her career. An example of instrumental motivation for L2 is a study carried out by Wongthong and Sriwanthana (2007). The study reports how a group of taxi drivers experienced problems because of their lack of fluency in English caused by extreme poverty that denied them access to formal education. According to the study, the drivers believe that with improved English competency, they would live their lives and earn a living more comfortably.

Social Interaction in L2 learning

Research on interaction is conducted within the framework of the Interactive Hypothesis, which emphasizes that conversational interaction facilitates language acquisition because it connects input (what learners hear and read); internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output (what learners produce) in productive ways (Long, 1981). Interaction provides learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input and feedback as well as to make changes in their own linguistic output by making adjustments in what they say to match with the norms of the target language. Long investigates conversations between a native speaker (NS) and nonnative speaker (NNS) and proposes that negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways (Long, 1983).

Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the acquisition of language and proposes the “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD). The most frequently referenced definition of the ZPD is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978:86). Vygotsky laid the foundation for the interactionists view of language acquisition. According to Vygotsky, social interaction plays an important role in the learning process.

Vygotsky suggests that private speech, as is the case of social speech between people who have a great deal of shared knowledge, need not be fully syntactic in its form. Frawley (1997) argues that such utterances serve to focus the speaker’s attention on what needs to be accomplished, how to accomplish it, and when something has been accomplished, and then allows the speaker evaluate what has been accomplished. He points out that different languages offer their speakers different linguistic options for carrying out such mental activities.

Social interaction plays an important role in language acquisition. Dornyei and Csizer (2002), observes that the importance of language learning as a social event is recognized by L2 researchers, resulting in the inclusion of a prominent social dimension in most comprehensive constructs of L2 motivation, related to issues such as multiculturalism language globalization, language contact and power relations between different ethnolinguistic groups. The role of social interaction in the learning of L2 is also emphasized by Williams (1994) when he points out that though L2 is a ‘learnable’ school subject that is taught explicitly, it is also a deeply social event that requires the incorporation of a wide range of elements of the L2 culture.

Social interaction is important in second language acquisition because of a number of reasons. The purpose of learning a language is to communicate with others. For one to learn the language of another group of people is to enable one communicate with that group of people. Bahrani and Sim (2012) point out that whether language acquisition is to take place in formal or informal language learning settings, ESL context or English as a foreign language (EFL) context, language learners need to have exposure and access to a sort of language input.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Much of language acquisition studies tend to be classroom based. But we do know that a lot of language acquisition takes place outside the classroom in informal settings. Language acquisition takes place in a number of everyday contexts. Classroom learning strategies may not fully reflect the acquisition in everyday communicative contexts. There is therefore the need to study interactions outside the classroom. There is also the need to conduct studies in communities outside the academic or scholarly environment to enrich knowledge about language acquisition and use.

There is the need for more studies on everyday contexts of language acquisition and use. There is the need to learn more about why adults learn a second language and the negotiation strategies they employ to manage communication and learning. Canagarajah (2007) strongly suggests the need for more studies to be conducted in communities outside the academic setting to provide insight into language acquisition and use in multilingual communities. According to him such studies are important because they reveal that language acquisition is based on performance strategies, purposive uses of the language, and interpersonal negotiations in fluid communicative contexts

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of the study is to explore the acquisition and use of English outside the classroom in the ESL context of Ghana.

The research questions of the study are:

1. How does social interaction enhance the acquisition and use of English among construction workers who have had little or no formal education?
2. What factors motivate construction workers to acquire and use English?
3. What are the motivated learning behaviours of construction workers?
4. What social contexts facilitate the acquisition and use of English among construction workers?
5. What are the negotiation strategies employed by construction worker to manage communication?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is conducted within the framework of English lingua franca or English as a lingua franca (ELF) which falls within the broad framework of World Englishes (WE). According to

Pakir (2009) the label WE is used to refer to 'new Englishes (institutionalized varieties or nativized and indigenized varieties used in countries that use English as a second language) proposed by Kachru. WE also refer to the wide-ranging approach to the study of the English language worldwide. Kachru (1985) proposes three circles in which the English language is used: the inner circle for native speaker setting, the outer circle for ESL settings and the expanding circle for the spread of English around the world.

An important contribution to the groundbreaking work by Kachru is now occurring for the Expanding Circle English. In this respect, Brutt-Griffler (2002) proposes the term World English. This he explains as language change through the processes of world language convergence and world language divergence (i.e., World English spreads due to the fact that many people learn it rather than by speakers of English migrating to other areas; thus two processes happen concurrently: new varieties are created and unity in the world language is maintained.) World English proposed by Brutt-Griffler (2002) is now used as a general cover term for uses of English spanning Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle contexts proposed by Kachru (1985). The meaning of the term WE thus now, comprises uses of English within and across Kachru's 'Circles', for intranational as well as international communication.

Some researchers who study the use of English have indicated that the labels inner circle, outer circle and expanding circles are misleading. For example, Schneider (2003) points out that the use of outer circle to refer to ESL countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, India and Singapore, for example is not appropriate because there exists an increasing proportion of indigenous people who grow up speaking some form of English as their mother tongue. From Schneider's point of view, the three overlapping circles proposed by Kachru seems to draw a distinction between English as a native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). But Kachru indicates that English belongs to all who use it and that norms and standards should no longer be determined by Inner Circle/ENL. This revolution started by Kachru has led to the wide spread study of English use among non-native settings.

The study of English use among non-native speakers of English who do not share the same L1 is the new paradigm within the study of English. What is established in the study of English is that it is the inner circle or native speakers' variety that directs the current of English language teaching pedagogies. This is what is usually referred to as Standard English. The definition that is generally accepted to represent this variety is that given by Trudgil and Hannah (1995:1) cited in Pakir (2009:225) as:

The variety of the English language which is normally employed in writing and normally spoken by 'educated' speakers of the language. It is also, of course the variety of English that students as Foreign or Second Language (EFL/ESL) are taught when receiving formal instruction.

The established paradigm is being challenged in the 21st century by the emerging and evolving paradigm of non native speakers' use of English within the world Englishes. Pakir (2009) indicates that it took a long time before admitting WE perspectives in discussions or even recognizing WE as a viable approach to studying English in the world. Schmitz (2012) also

observes that the realization that there are more nonnative speakers than native speakers of English in the world with institutionalized and nativized varieties as well as their own specific communicative, cultural and pragmatic competencies has led to the rethinking of present-day practices in teaching, teacher preparation, and the writing of textbooks. The World Englishes 'revolution' led by Kachru established itself as a new and emerging alternative to teaching and researching English as a language in the world. It is within this paradigm that English used by nonnative speakers for intra-ethnic communication as well as international communication referred to as English as a lingua franca (ELF) is gaining recognition and spread.

Now let us turn to the definition of English as a lingua franca or English lingua franca (ELF) and what it entails. Seidlhofer (2005) states that in recent years, the term ELF has emerged as a way of referring to communication in English between speakers with different first languages. And according to Crystal (2003) roughly, only one out of every four users of English in the world is a native speaker of the language. So, most ELF interactions take place among nonnative speakers of English. What is distinctive about ELF is that, in most cases, it is a 'contact language' for inter-ethnic or inter-national communication.

The widely cited definition of ELF is that of Firth (1996:240) who defines ELF as "a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication." The website of ELF known as the VOICE describes ELF as an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages. Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey (2011) observe that no definition of ELF could be complete without considering its similarities to and differences from the well-established World Englishes paradigm. They pointed out that while these two paradigms differ in certain ways, their research orientations have a good deal in common. Both explore the ways in which the resulting 'new' Englishes develop in their own right as a means of expressing their nonnative speakers' sociocultural identities instead of the norms of a native speaker of English.

One difference between WE and ELF pointed out by Dewey (2007) is that while World Englishes research is interested primarily in the study of 'bounded' varieties of English, the position of ELF research is that the world has become so interconnected, and English so bound up with processes of globalization, that a traditional varieties orientation is no longer viable, and that we should, instead, focus on English as fluid, flexible, contingent, hybrid and deeply intercultural by the nature of its use. Pennycook (2007) also points out, that the world Englishes framework places nationalism at its core while ELF, with its built-in scope for variability, is similar to the notion of plurilithic Englishes.

The definition of ELF makes it part of the general phenomenon of WE. The specific instance that ELF is used is when English is chosen as the means of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across linguistic boundaries.

ELF is described as emerging. It is not a finished product and therefore difficult to describe; it is being developed. Jenkins (2007), who is one of the proponents of ELF, considers it an emerging

language that exists in its own right and is being described in its own terms. Jenkins contends that ELF is a contact language not dependent on native speaker norms (British or American English) and is molded by its many speakers in the world who are multilingual and whose L1s are not English. Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey (2011) also noted that ELF involves not only the frequent systematic use of certain forms (lexicogrammatical, phonological and so on) that are not found in native English, but also a range of pragmatic on-line processes that determine which particular forms are utilized at any particular point in a given interaction. And this calls into question the viability of attempting a description of ELF in the first place, at least according to the traditional sense of 'language description'.

ELF researchers are engaged in exploring ELF use in a number of domains of social contact, particularly those of business, education (both school and university settings), tourism, politics, technology and the media (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey, 2011). They noted that two domains – business and higher education – have been more extensively studied in relation to ELF than any other. ELF research focus on domains is said to be in line with the observation of McGroarty (2003) that there has been a shift of emphasis in sociolinguistics from the study of language contact across geographical boundaries to domains as fruitful contexts for the study of language contact.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The research design was aimed at finding out how construction workers who have had little or no formal education acquire and use English to communicate with people they do not share the same L1 with. The social contexts that facilitate the acquisition and use of English among construction workers were explored. There was also a focus on the negotiation strategies used by the construction workers in their interaction with others who do not speak their L1.

Participants

The participants for the study were construction workers who were carpenters, masons, painters, electricians, still benders and labourers resident in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. There were between twenty to thirty workers at work at the times that the construction sites were visited for observation. Though these workers reside in the Accra, they travel to other parts of the country to work.

Some of these workers have had little or no formal education and for that matter cannot speak English as educated Ghanaians. These workers come from different parts of the country and speak different languages. Though the majority of them speak more than one Ghanaian language, a few of them speak only their native language. In their interaction with one another they speak the local language common to them.

However at the construction sites they sometimes work together with other construction workers who speak other languages. This is where communication problems arise. Because some of these construction workers speak only their native languages, in their interaction with other construction workers at the construction site it becomes necessary for them to speak English.

This is a challenge in multilingual communities like Ghana. The construction workers who have not had formal education and therefore cannot speak English are sometimes compelled to use English to communicate with other workers they do not share the same Ghanaian language with. For these workers, the acquisition and use of English is spontaneous.

Selection Criteria for Sites and Participants

Five construction sites were visited to observe instances where the construction workers use English in their interactions. The visits were meant to observe the communicative practices and strategies the construction workers use in their interactions.

The construction sites were selected according to how big the sites were in terms of the number of workers contracted from different ethnic backgrounds to work. This was the case because it is when a large number of workers are at the sites that one gets a multilingual situation of workers from different ethnic groups. It is during these instances that it becomes necessary for the workers to use English in their interactions because the workers come from different ethnic backgrounds and speak different languages. Moreover, it is on these occasions that you get workers who have had no formal education using English in their interaction with other workers they do not share the same Ghanaian language with at the site.

After interacting with a number of workers, seven workers were selected for interview. The interviews were conducted to find out from the workers the instances that they have to use English in their interaction with others and the factors that motivate them to use English. The interviews were also meant to find out from the workers who have not had formal education how they learnt to speak English.

The participants for the interview were selected according to workers who have had little or no formal education but speak English with other workers especially at the construction site and their willingness to be interviewed. They were selected in consultation with the master carpenter who works as one of the supervisors. Five workers who have had little or no formal education were interviewed and two workers who have had formal education were also interviewed. In all, seven workers were interviewed.

Research Methods

Research methods comprised the following:

Non-participant site observation with field notes

Interviews with seven workers (some of the interviews were recorded)

The Research Process

Initial contact was made by contacting a master carpenter and a supervisor who has been working with a number of construction workers. This was meant to find out the instances that English is used as the medium of communication among the construction workers. Also, the initial contact was made to find out if there had been some workers he had worked with who have not had formal education and do not speak the languages that he speaks and how he was able to instruct them.

The initial contact was followed by an initial visit to one of the construction sites to meet some of the supervisors and workers. The visit was made to explain the purpose of the study to supervisors of the various sections or divisions of the construction site. There were supervisors for each group of workers. There were masons, carpenters, still benders, painters and electricians.

Five visits were made to the construction sites to observe the use of English among the construction workers. The observations were made to find out how English serves as the lingua franca in the situations where the workers speak different Ghanaian languages. The negotiation skills used by the workers in their interaction with other worker they do not share a common Ghanaian language with were taken note of.

In all, five visits were made to three construction sites. Of the three sites, two of them were visited twice and the third site was visited once, bringing the total number of visits to five.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the observations and interviews conducted, the acquisition and use of English among construction workers takes place at the construction sites as a result of real communication needs. For these workers, their use of English becomes necessary when there is a communication gap as a result of language barrier. When two workers realize they do not share a common Ghanaian language, they resort to the use of English. This use of English among construction workers serves as a form of input for the workers who have had little or no formal education to acquire and use English to some level of proficiency.

The first objective of the study is to find out how social interaction among construction workers facilitates the acquisition and use of English. For individuals who have had little or no formal education, their interaction with construction workers who have had some formal education and speak English facilitates their acquisition and use of English. Some of the workers interviewed indicated that they began to use English to communicate at the construction sites right from their period of apprenticeship. According to the workers interviewed, the use of English begins with the learning of the names of their tools and how to take measurements.

The supervisors interviewed confirmed that people who have not had formal education acquire some level of English expressions that they interact with at the construction site even before they complete their period of apprenticeship which takes two years. According to them, most apprentice who have not had formal education are able to start using English expressions after a few weeks of going to the sites and interacting with them and other construction workers. The supervisors made it clear that people who have had formal education do not come under apprenticeship to become carpenters or masons. It is individuals who have had little or no formal education who come for training to become construction workers.

The social context that facilitates the use of English among construction workers is when working at the site with other workers who do not share the same Ghanaian language with them. Some of the workers interviewed stated that it is advisable to use English at the site when

working with people one does not share the same Ghanaian language with. According to them, when some workers begin to speak a particular Ghanaian language that the other workers do not understand, it raises suspicion and mistrust because of theft cases at construction sites. In such cases, English becomes the language that all the workers use. These situations serve as English language input for the workers who have had little or no formal education to use English in their interaction with the other workers. This facilitates their acquisition and use of English.

The English language is no doubt perceived as a prestigious language. There are some of the workers who are supervisors but did not have much formal education and are not able to express themselves well in English. Some of these supervisors insist on using English even when one is interacting with them in a Ghanaian language they speak. The motivation for their insistence on the use of English is obviously because of the prestige associated with English. This reflects Dornyei's (1990) explanation that in the absence of a salient L2 group in the learner's environment, the individual's desire to identify with the L2 can be generalized to the cultural and intellectual values associated with the L2.

Some individuals, like the supervisors with little formal education who want to be associated with the prestige that comes with the speaking of English are motivated to learn to speak English. The attitude of these supervisors confirms MacIntyre, Baker, Clement and Donovan (2002) observation that an individual's willingness to communicate is a motivating factor for the acquisition of a second language. A willingness to communicate is a motivating factor in L2 acquisition because there are L2 speakers who avoid communication in the L2 while some less proficient L2 speakers actively engage in L2 conversation.

Communication Strategies at the Construction Sites

The observations carried out reveal some strategies employed by the workers at the construction site to manage communication. One of the strategies used by the workers is to use a different code to respond to something said in English. Some of the labourers who cannot express themselves in English use the local language that they speak to answer questions posed to them in English. One of such scenario was an interaction between a mason who speaks Ewe and English and a labourer who speaks Akan. Questions posed in English were answered in Akan. Yet, the person who asked the question in English (who does not speak Akan) understood the answers given in Akan. Below is an example of a short conversation between the two workers.

Mason: Where is foreman?

Labourer: ɔse ɔreko fie (He said he has gone home)

Mason: Oh! So, when are we going to start the work?

Labourer: ɔse moba a menka nkyere mo se monhye ase (He said when you come I should tell you to start)

Mason: From where?

Labourer: ɔse aha (He said here)

Another communication strategy employed by the workers is translation. Sometimes, certain instructions given in English are translated into Akan by one of the workers to the rest of his colleagues. As if by convention or something agreed upon by the workers, to a large extent,

English and Akan serve as the two languages which are frequently used when there are workers who do not share the same Ghanaian language. There were instances that some workers who could not express themselves in Akan gave instructions in English to a group of labourers but the instructions were translated into Akan by one of the labourers to the rest of his colleagues.

The use of English among the workers goes on with some negotiation of meaning. Often, certain orders or instructions given are not fully understood. In such instances the addressees ask for clarification. Sometimes too, English expressions used were accompanied by gestures to facilitate communication. Much of English expressions used at the construction sites among the workers were not full sentences that were grammatical. Much of the expressions that the workers used were expressions that the workers themselves refer to as “broken English”.

In general, construction workers are not very proficient in English. My interaction with some of the supervisors reveals that in their use of English, their concern is not about grammar. This confirms Canagarajah and Wurr’s (2011) observation that what enables people to communicate in multilingual communities is not a shared grammar, but communicative practices and strategies that are used to negotiate their language differences. In addition to the use of “broken English”, there was codeswitching (a pervasive phenomenon in Ghana) among the workers. There were several instances of English expressions and expressions in Ghanaian languages juxtaposed in the same conversation and the insertion of English words into Ghanaian language sentences.

CONCLUSION

Even though English is mainly learnt in the classroom in ESL countries like Ghana, there are certain social contexts and instances that enable some individuals who have had little or no formal education to acquire and use English (at least to some level of proficiency). The English language acquired in informal settings outside the classroom may not be the Standard English spoken by educated Ghanaians but it enables them to communicate. After all, as pointed out by Canagarajah (2007) language acquisition is based on performance strategies, purposive uses of the language, and interpersonal negotiations in fluid communicative contexts.

The study is limited in its selection of construction sites for observation. Only construction sites where workers had been contracted from different ethnic backgrounds were selected for the study. Moreover, the workers who were interviewed may orient to the use of English differently in different contexts. In spite of these limitations, the findings of the study confirm that ELF is a flexible communicative means that takes place alongside other languages and forms part of a larger framework of multilingualism.

REFERENCES

- Atkinson, D., Churchill, E., Nishino, T., & Okada, H. (2007). Alignment and interaction in a sociocognitive approach in second language acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, 91, 169-188.

- Bahrani, T., & Sim, T.S. (2012). Informal language learning: Technology or social interaction? *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 11 (2), 142-149.
- Brutt-Griffler, J. (2002). *World English*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Canagarajah, A., S., & Wurr, A. (2011). Multilingual communication and language acquisition: New research directions. *The Reading Matrix*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2006). Negotiating the local in English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 26, 197-218.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2007). Lingua franca English, multilingual communities and language acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91, 923-939.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language* (2nd edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dewey, M. (2007). English as a lingua franca: An interconnected perspective. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17(3), 332-354.
- Dornyei, Z. (1990). Conceptualizing motivation in foreign language learning. *Language Learning*, 40, 46-78.
- Dornyei, Z., & Csizer, K. (2002). Some dynamics of language attitudes and motivation: Results of a longitudinal nationwide survey. *Applied Linguistics*, 23, 421-462.
- Firth, A. (1996). The discursive accomplishment of normality: On lingua franca English and conversation analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 26, 237-259.
- Frawley, W. (1997). *Vygotsky and cognitive science: Language and the unification of the social and computational mind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation*. London : Arnold.
- Gardner, R.C. (2001). Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. In Z. Dornyei & R. Schmidt (eds.), *Motivation and second language learning*, pp. 1-20. Honolulu HI: University of Hawaii Press.
- Gardner, R.C. (2007). Motivation and second language acquisition. *Porta Linguarum*, 8, 9-20.
- House, J. (2003). English as a lingua franca: A threat to multilingualism? *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 7(4), 556-578.
- Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, J., Cogo, A., & Dewey, M. (2011). Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca. *Language Teaching*. 44 (3), 281-315.
- Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures*, pp. 11-30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Khubchandani, L. M. (1997). *Revisualizing boundaries: A plurilingual ethos*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Kramsch, C. (2002). Introduction: How can we tell the dancer from the dance? In C.Kramsch (Ed.), *Language acquisition and language socialization: Ecological perspectives*, pp. 1- 30. London: Continuum.

- Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction and second language acquisition. In H. Winitz (ed.), *Native. language and foreign language acquisition: Vol. 379. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, pp.259-278. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Native speaker / non-native speaker conversation and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics*, 4, 126-141.
- McGroarty, M. (2003). Editor's Introduction. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 23, vii-xi.
- MacIntyre P. D., Baker, S. C., Clement, R., & Donovan, L. A. (2002). Sex and age effects on willingness to communicate, anxiety, perceived competence and L2 motivation among junior high school French immersion students. *Language Learning*, 52, 537-564.
- Marckus. H., & Narius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologists*, 41, 954-969.
- Pakir, A. (2009). English as a lingua franca: Analyzing research frameworks in international English, World Englishes and ELF. *World Englishes*, 28 (2), 224-235.
- Pennycook, A. (2007). *Global Englishes and transcultural flows*. London: Routledge.
- Rogers, A . (2004). Looking again at non-formal and informal education, towards a new paradigm, the encyclopaedia of informal education.
www.infed.org/biblio/non_formal_paradigm.htm. Last updated: June 04, 2004.
- Schmitz, J. R. (2012). "To ELF or not to ELF?" (English as a Lingua Franca): That's the question for Applied Linguistics in a globalized world. *RBLA, Belo Horizonte*, 12 (2), 249-284.
- Schneider, E. E. (2003). The Dynamics of New Englishes: From Identity Construction to Dialect Birth. *Language*, 79 (1), 233-281.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2005). Key concepts in ELT: English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal*, 59 (4), 339-341.
- Trudgill, P., & Hannah, J. (1995). *International English: A Guide to Varieties of Standard English* (3rd edition). London: Edward Arnold. VOICE website www.univie.ac.at/voice
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (eds.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Williams, M. (1994). Motivation in foreign and second language learning: An interactive perspective. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 11, 77-84.
- Wongthong, Y., & Sriwanthana, S. (2007). Learning English outside the classroom: Case study of tuk-tuk drivers Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya. *International Education Journal*, 8 (2), 433-448.

AN APPRAISAL OF KRASHEN'S MONITOR MODEL

Hamza Cherifi

University of Mostaganem, Site ITA, Mostaganem 2700, Algeria

ABSTRACT

Of all the constructs relevant to second language acquisition, Krashen's ideation appears the most "voicing" and, paradoxically, the most arrowed with questions of validity and pedagogical fitness. This disparity has, unfortunately, turned out to be a fashion move in discourses on the Monitor Model, resulting in uncritical 'advocacies' and 'objections'. The present paper, rather, takes to provide an appraisal of Krashen's theory of second language acquisition. In line with Widdowson (1990), the appraisal partly involves a measure of the theory's tenets along internal validity, calling for exposing, and gauging the uptake of the criticism the theory has been generating, alongside an evaluation of the model in the light of variables as input, interaction and interlanguage variation. The second portion effecting our appraisal relates to the assessment of the operational dimension of the theory, where questions of applicability and utility to practitioners and learners are raised. That the model's 'advantages' and 'drawbacks' alternate, it is concluded that judgments of worth make not a proper "marking criterion", for the flaws of the model are not so serious that the claims behind it are to be falsified, but are serious enough to falsify a focal adoption.

KEYWORDS: the monitor model, second language acquisition, the input hypothesis. explicit learning, output, interaction

INTRODUCTION

A salient feature of the language teaching and learning enterprise is that conducts, for their justifiability, have to base on a particular ideation. This component, which discharges the conceptualization of how language competence is attained, renders practices reputable, for they are said to reflect a particular understanding, or as Schouten (1979) calls "a sense of direction". In fact, the inception of second language acquisition (SLA) as a recognizable area of enquiry marked the departure of rival claims, each competing to provide the adequate idealization for the nature of the processes involved in acquisition. This tension, which features in the multitude of constructs, may not be problematic, nor is it, as Schouten qualifies an "indicative of the immaturity of the field" (as cited in Ellis, 1995, p. 73). Tension, perhaps more accurately, does justice to the complexity of language as it touches on a variety of spheres and, thus, identifies with multiple frames of reference. Such multidimensionality hardly allows the persistence of a monologic, self sufficient theory. It is, yet, undeniable that some theories—perhaps for the audacity of their generators—are more attractive than others. Indeed, among the many SLA theories, Krashen's Monitor Model appears of high prominence, for initiating a postulate for the importance of a specific input state, triggering research investigating the role of input in SLA, and for being the theoretical platform from which several models—even opposing ones—

emerged on the surface. This reputation explains the multitude of ‘assessments’ whose very being reasserts such reputation.

Krashen’s model is made up of the intersection of five “inter-informing” tenets, each appearing to provide a partial rationale for another. The acquisition-learning distinction, as the label denotes, shows the ‘duality’ of language competence, while the monitor hypothesis further specifies the functioning of ‘learning’ as represented in the *monitor*. The natural sequence advocates that ‘acquisition’ comprises several stages the movement through which gets explained via both the affective filter and the input hypothesis alike. This combination poses limitations on the act of appraisal, given that proving a tenet’s validity or otherwise cannot subsume the entire model. For this, not only the tenets would be examined, but the very move of their combination as well. In what follows, I shall begin with an interpretation of the model, providing a summary of its central tenets and an examination of ideas “within their own theoretical provenance” (Widdowson, 1990, p. 31). Embarkation, then, will be on a quest of whether the model enjoys pedagogical relevance.

THEORETICAL EVALUATION

The Acquisition-Learning Distinction

Overriding the acquisition-learning distinction is an ontological distinction positing two distinct environments language is possibly learnt in. Formal or artificial environment often identifies with classroom learning whose salient features are, more or less, utterance decontextualization, rule presentation, metalanguage as well as corrective feedback. Informal environment, nevertheless, embodies the setting characteristic of natural, tangible learning of languages. Krashen asserts that “formal and informal environments contribute to second language competence in different ways” (1975, p. 163), resulting in two distinct modes of developing language. The first mode, which Krashen labels *acquisition*, is seen similar to the manner in which children develop competence in their native language. In this mode, learners unconsciously “pick up” language as they are aware neither of the rules underlying the meaning they are consciously involved in negotiating, nor of their ‘acquiring’ language. Krashen maintains that. *Learning*, or “knowing about”, is the other way in which competence in language develops, and gets represented as “knowing about rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them in non-technical terms” (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). Operating through focus on function, the process of ‘acquisition’ effects and brings about an acquired system that takes the generation of utterances, while, ‘learning’, which is defined by focus on form, makes up a learnt system that discharges checking the “well-formedness” of the generated utterances at various stages. It is worth noting that Krashen does tighten the relatively problematic notions of consciousness and unconsciousness, defining them in terms of attendance to form and mere concern with meaning, respectively.

It is likely to complain, as does Mclaughlin (1990), that the acquisition-learning distinction is unreliable, because it is defined in term of conscious and unconscious processes, which are not open to inspection. It might, yet, be accepted to uphold Krashen’s tightening of these concepts, and regard the identification of consciousness with focus on form. This distinction appears self-evident, as it is undeniable the prevalence of ‘dual’ trends as one tends to interact in—at least—a

second language: “When we read or listen to an utterance in our language, or in a second language in which we are fluent, we become aware of its meaning but we are seldom aware of the complex decoding processes that proceed awareness (Schmidt, 1990, p. 131). In the same vein, Krashen reacts: “Acquisition and learning are no more difficult to define empirically, as their synonyms, implicit and explicit, are terms that Mclaughlin and other critics have no problem using” (as cited in Mehdi et al., 2013, p. 225). Yet, the deviance lies in Krashen associating consciousness with knowledge of rules. Schmidt, yet, asks what he labels *the articulate report question*: “Can learners say what they appear to know?” (1990, p. 131).

It is my contention, thereby, that what is debatable in Krashen’s treatments is not the conceptualization of consciousness and unconsciousness as much as it is the position of, and the relation assumed to hold between both competences. It might, yet, be an adequate practice to point to the gap of explicit specification, as consciousness identifies with attention which may be either intentional or unintentional. It is perhaps the ‘unspecified’ use of the term that generated criticism, though in my opinion, this should have been taken for granted, for it is hard to imagine intentional focus on form during the process of ‘generating’ utterances. Even when postulating the need for noticing and conscious knowledge in ‘acquisition’, Schmidt himself asks: “If noticing is required, is such noticing automatic or must learners consciously pay attention” (1990, p. 134). This presents the likelihood that ‘acquisition’ involves a stage of noticing, especially in the light of the assertion that “people learn much about the things they attend to and do not learn much about the things they do not attend to” Schmidt (2001, p. 30). Later, Krashen reasserts:

The last 30 years of research in language acquisition show that people certainly can acquire language without paying attention to form. The fact that acquirers use rules they have never learnt, rules in fact that linguists have not described, confirms that attending to form is not necessary. John Truscott has an excellent discussion of Schmidt’s claim in his 1998 paper (as cited in Mehdi et al., 2013, p. 225).

Krashen conceives a dichotomy, where each of the two systems resultant from ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ respectively stands as a modular entity that “gravitates around itself”. This entails the independency of both ‘processes’, and the unlikelihood for the learnt knowledge to rank as acquired, embodying *the non-interface position*. Bialystok (1981a, 1981b, 2001), while enriching the argument for the acquisition-learning distinction, reverses the idea of their being assigned unrelated roles, raising the notion that ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ represent different entries of the same “continuum”. The idea is that language use being an alternate of degrees of analyzability (explicitness) and automaticity (implicitness). Similarly, Mclaughlin (1978) refutes the non-interface position, advancing an approach central to which is the view of “controlled processing”, which underlies the operation of the learnt system, possibly evolving to “automatic processing”, which beholds the functioning of the acquired system: “Interlanguage production requires controlled processes which demand the learner’s attention, but repeated performance leads to the availability of the form via automatic processes” (Mclaughlin, 1978, cited in Maria & Lopez 1997, p. 369). This denotes that attention, which the learnt system identifies with, diminishes as learners practice the form, leading to the automaticity of retrieval characteristic of acquired competence. It is even that the merits of automatization are extended to allow classroom

learners to outstrip naturalistic learners. Similarly, Spolsky (1991) notes that “language knowledge that is analyzed, and so available for recombination, may be intuitive and so not consciously available for the learner (p.47).

In the process of enhancing the claim behind the acquisition-learning distinction, Krashen asserts that ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ are complementary processes given that “we learn small parts of our first language in schools” (1982, p.11). This proposal is valid only in case the language spoken outside and the one taught in school are basically the same, given that another possibility prevails in diglossic communities. In the context of Arabic-speaking communities, accordingly, the learnt competence learners develop in schools is not applied to the acquired competence as the former relates to the linguistic properties of Standard Arabic, while the latter concerns the vernacular, or local language which is distinct not only in terms of the attributes of syntax and semantics but in terms of context of use—the vernacular is the medium of daily communication, while Standard Arabic is the codified vehicle deployed in formal settings. This may contemplate certain constraints on the scope of the Monitor Model.

The Monitor Hypothesis

Derived, and extended from the acquisition-learning distinction, is the notion of the *monitor*, embodied in the likelihood of interplay between the acquired and learnt system. The latter, being in its very nature, knowledge of rules, operates as a language editor. In Krashen’s terms, ‘acquisition’ initiates one’s utterances in second language and is responsible for fluency, and the competence gained from learning can only operate as a monitor, or as a self-editing tool, coming into play to check the “well-formedness” of the utterances generated on their way to the status of output. The peripheral role assigned to the monitor does justice to the features of consciousness, since “one of the most peculiar features of consciousness is its narrowness compared to the vast and almost limitless unconscious processing capacity at our disposal (Dorynei, 2009, p. 133). Consciousness is “often seen to help focus the brain’s vast unconscious resources and make them available for specific cognitive use” (Dorynei, 2009, p. 133). Figure 1 models the functioning of the monitor.



Figure 1: Operation of the Monitor (Krashen, 1977, 1981, 1982)

It would, thus, be misleading to think of both competences being of equal contribution. Otherwise, the type of ‘communication’ in which the learnt system approximates the generator in reference is, at its best, artificial, and learners who tend to constantly “help the brain’s vast unconsciousness” can hardly be said to be successful. Indeed, the claim that the learnt system

discharges a peripheral role is subsided by considering conditions for its functioning. Krashen (1982, 2013) notes that for the monitor to operate, three conditions are to intersect: Time, knowledge of rules, alongside focus on form. These three factors, according to Krashen (1981) rarely intersect, and a possible illustration of their intersection and application in performance resides in grammar tests (discrete-points tests). However, grammar tests, in their very nature, require for their fulfillment no activation of the acquired system, but the mere concern with accuracy that the learnt system is, perhaps, the dominant trend in tasks as such. Accordingly, it is plausible to advance that the relation between the learnt and acquired system is bound to the demands of the tasks learners undertake.

Too, allocating the monitor an act of performance edition at times of concern with accuracy does justice to the psychological salience of language learning as represented in anxiety, resulting from duality of cognitive tasks characterizing language learners, for a learner, alongside ‘striving’ to generate utterances, is occupied with self-perception, which poses cognitive demands. In other words, the intrusion of the monitor derives from a relative concern with accuracy as well as from the feeling of losing face as to communicate in a foreign language. In fact, performers are said to differ in their refuge to the monitor. Monitor *over-users* are performers heavily deploying consciously learnt grammar to edit their output. In effect, “such performers may speak hesitantly, often self-correct in the middle of utterances, and are so concerned with correctness that they cannot speak with any real fluency” (Krashen, 1982, p. 19).

For Krashen, monitor over-users do not often acquire enough of the second language that they employ first language competence as an utterance generator, making a way to interference errors. At the other extreme stand monitor *under-users* who, for not having ‘learnt’, tend to base their performance on the mere acquired system. Little or no concern with grammar allows monitor under-users to enjoy fluency, which results from both speed of retrieval and concern with message delivery. On the third way, Krashen positions *optimal monitor users*. Such are performers who “use the monitor when it is appropriate and when it does not interfere with communication” (Krashen, 1982, p. 19). Accordingly, such learners suspend conscious grammar at times of conversation. Krashen considers that, in the written modality, the careful exploitation of the conscious grammar makes optimal users “produce the illusion of being native-like in their writing” (Krashen, 1982, p. 20). Truly, the monitor standpoint, which appears consistent with variables of attitude and personality, indicates that the performance of second language learners, no matter how ‘native-like’ it seems, arises, from a successful deployment of the monitor—though non-natives can hardly ‘conceal’ their refuge to the monitor.

The relative intrusion of the monitor, which sparks relative types and amounts of errors, seems to stand as the attribution of “variable competence”. This denotes that Krashen, unlike many non-variationists who considers external issues irrelevant to the description of idealized competence, seems to reject the pervasiveness of competence, but confines sources of its variation—or “chameleon” state to borrow Tarone’s (1979) words—either to change in comprehensible input or to the interplay between the learnt and acquired system, disparaging the role of contexts. Comprehensible input, in Krashen’s paradigm, positions as the driving force not only for interlanguage development, but for its dynamism across contexts. However, Tarone (1979, 1990)

and other variationists believe that change in learners' interlanguage is constantly related to participation in several contexts:

In the field of SLA research we have tended to err by divorcing the study of the internal development of IL [interlanguage] grammar from the study of the external social context in which the learner develops this grammar. *The social context of the learner is often viewed as unrelated to the internal cognitive processes of L2 acquisition, and so, unworthy of comment* [emphasis added] (Tarone & Liu, 1995, p, 108).

The Input Hypothesis

The input hypothesis marks the most important tenet as it sets to explain how acquisition occurs. The premise prompting Krashen's articulation resides in a challenge to a prevalent assumption: "Most adults second language teaching methods assume that adults do not acquire but depend wholly on conscious learning" (Krashen, 1976, p. 163), siding for a likelihood that "adults can acquire language at least to some extent" (Krashen 1976, p. 163). In effect, this standpoint runs in stark contrast with assertions of child superiority in learning languages on the premise of the "critical period". As evidential basis, Krashen leans on evidence of adults' ability to discriminate grammatical from anomalous utterances while having no metalanguage resources to explain the "well-formedness" of utterances (see Krashen, 1976).

The hypothesis, probably, comes to subside, and account for the assumption that mere exposure to L2 data does not suffice, and that learners need a kind of input suitable to their stage of development. Krashen, in essence, proposes a comprehension-based approach, central to which is the view of acquisition being a matter of an evolution learners make from a current stage in the development to another, or from "i" to "i+1", where "i" stands for "the rule we have acquired", while i+1 marks "the message which contains aspects of language we have not acquired" (Krashen 2013, p. 3). Acquiring "i+1" conditions comprehending the meaning expressed through this structure, partly through building on the previously acquired structure, and partly through inferring through context and knowledge of the world. Krashen (1982) hypothetically, explains the ability to perceive and make this shift in terms of a comparison acquirers make between the nature of "i" and that of "i+1". Comprehensible input embodies *intake*, or "that subset of linguistic input that helps the acquirer acquire language" (1981, p. 101). The 'essentiality' of a specific input state downplays the proclaimed causativeness of mere "heard language" as a factor to which acquisition might be focally attributed, bringing to the surface the learner's attitudinal and cognitive state as decisive of acquisition. This stance, as we shall see later, is compatible with the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which further advocates the the determinism of the learners' affective position. Figure 2 illustrates the input hypothesis.

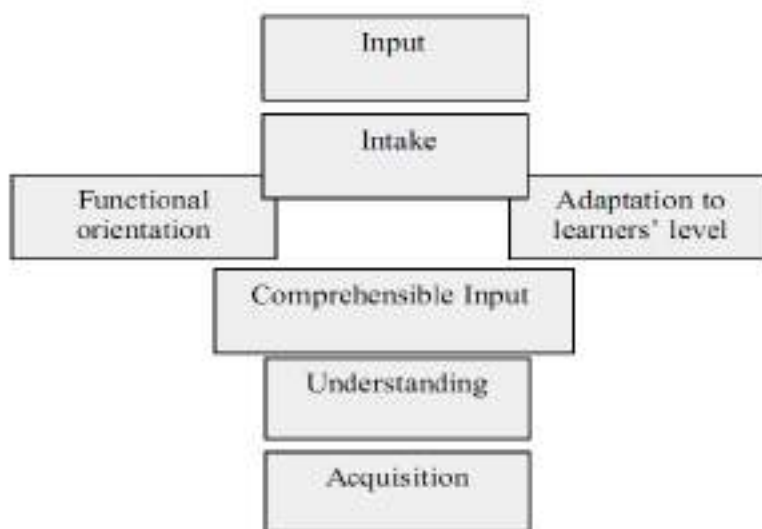


Figure 2: The Input Hypothesis (source: Original)

At the surface level of the input hypothesis—without indulgence in a talk about whether input alone suffices for acquisition—criticism arises from Krashen tending to confine acquisition in exposure to the comprehensible *kind* of input, a claim that seems to lack plausibility in the light of postulates for several types of input, each with a specific effect on learner's development of language competence. White (1987) argues that incomprehensible input enhances second language acquisition, for “the incomprehensibility of some aspects of the input to language learners draws their attention to some specific features to be acquired” (as cited in Bahrani, 2013, p. 39). In the same vein, Gass and Selinker (1994) opposes the view of input having to contain “ $i+1$ ” for acquisition to occur, and opts for one that advances the possibility for learners to notice the input in its initial state, where it does not necessarily have to be in the range of “ $i+1$ ”.

Viewing the input hypothesis from the lens of accountability reveals the limited scope of the theory in “what it tries to explain”. Primarily, there appear a need for an account of what mechanisms relegate learners' movement from one stage to another as a result of understanding input containing “ $i+1$ ”. For Long (1990), an SLA theory has to suggest mechanisms to account for change. Such are “devices that specify how cognitive functions operate on input to move the grammar at Time 1 to its new representation at Time 2” (as cited in Ellis, 1995, p.79). Krashen, too, does not explain how it is that “ $i+1$ ” is automatically provided without building on learners' “ i ”. This legitimates characterizing the model as property, not transitional theory, which casts doubt over its ‘potential’ for explaining acquisition. The demands for transitional description become mandatory if we think, as Skehan (1995) does, that system construction in SLA operates on cognitive mechanisms. Another way in which the model lacks accountability is that the type of interlanguage resultant is one that is limited to the generation of isolated sentences, discounting their contribution to the elaboration of discourse. The model, thereby, does not cater for a range of capacities underlying the negotiation of meaning in ongoing, real-time, or extempore communicative acts. Hence, “Krashen's theory turns to be a theory of learning

sentences....Although this is a basic component in language knowledge, it is unarguably a restricted goal for the vast majority of language teaching programs” (Spolsky, 1989, p. 30). The demand for the appropriateness criterion features in Hymes’ revolutionary ideation of what competence apart from grammar, the child—and thus the learner—reflects in the conduct of communication:

We have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not and as to what to talk about with whom....This competence, however, is integral with attitudes, values and motivations, concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes for the interrelation of language with the other codes of communicative conducts (Hymes, 1972, p. 277).

A core measure of the acquisition of language is the learners’ ability to exploit the resources afforded by the linguistic types to formulate the indexical, culturally encoded meaning characteristic of tangible communication. The kind of language resultant from comprehensible input is not only restricted to a semantic-only generation of meaning, but is self-sufficient, monologic, and thus, intangible, for communication is dominantly dialogic, and for, as Bakhtin (1981) implies, the meaning of an utterance lies in its dialogic, interactional nature. The Monitor Model ensures the sufficiency of language knowledge for the communicative conduct, confining the act of meaning in language per se, and disregarding the likelihood of communication in terms of “what the speaker wants language to mean”, presenting a discount of pragmatic competence. On this basis, the Monitor Model exposes one example among many of pedagogy-driven and, therefore, distorting idealizations of language acquisition. It is pertinent, too, to note that Krashen’s treatment is empty of cultural consideration given the absence of accounts on the acquisition of sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic elements.

Krashen contends that “we acquire language by understanding messages” (2013, p. 03). This, however, warrants restatements, especially in the light of strong evidence for positive correlation between noticing, or “experiential attendance”, and the retain of intake (see Schmidt, 1990). In other words, acquisition seems to require a relative degree of attendance. This possible gap in Krashen’s paradigm features in Schmidt’s (1990) notion of *the incidental learning question*: Whether conscious awareness at the level of noticing is necessary for language learning [encompassing both ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’]” (Schmidt, 1990, p. 129).

Krashen’s position towards what significance to allocate to both input and the learner displays might be held inadequate. In fact, to state that intake is the “subset of input that helps learners acquire language” (Krashen, 1981, p. 12), is to lend ‘acquisition’ to the mere ‘quality’ of input. An alternative treatment of intake posits that not all input used in comprehension becomes intake, and that intake construction does not occur in such an abrupt manner. Then, that Krashen sees the comprehensibility of input as a causative factor in acquisition raises the impression that factors gauging acquisition are more external than they are internal. Conversely, Gass and Selinker (1994) state that, on its path towards becoming output, input has to ‘climb’ several stages. The learner initially apperceives, or notices the input thanks to frequency and attention, and then

makes sense of it. Comprehension is followed by a stage of internalization where the input is captured as intake, then integrated in the learner's repertoire, embodying a prior knowledge stored in long term memory and reflected in written or spoken output (Figure. 3).



Figure 3: Gass and Selinker's (1994) Model for Second Language Acquisition

A flaw in Krashen's conception of resources for acquisition resides in a disregard of output, or "practicing" in the process. Swain (1995) writes: "It has been argued that nothing more than a sign for the acquisition that has been taken place, and that it serves no useful role in second language acquisition except as self-input" (p. 125). The output hypothesis (see Swain 1993, 1995) suggests that producing language enhances fluency. This "seems not controversial, particularly if it is not confused with the adage that practice makes perfect" (Swain, 1995, p. 125). It is hypothesized that output, too, fosters the angle of accuracy in language acquisition through the activation of *noticing*, meaning that in producing language, learners notice, and perhaps inspect the functioning of both their output and themselves as they generate it. This implies that a conscious knowledge of, whose sources Krashen confines in the input found in formal instruction, may stem from the activity of producing a language. Adding to this, output, particularly erroneous one, is qualified an indicator that the learner has formulated a hypothesis identified with a particular stage of interlanguage development. It is my contention that learners, in producing language, intend to display their state in the language for possible feedback more than the intention to use language for communication. Later, however, Krashen denies output any potential for acquisition:

According to the Comprehension Hypothesis, we acquire language by input, and not by output. Thus, more output, more speaking will not result in more acquisition. If you speak French to yourself out loud every morning, while driving to work, your French will not improve. Rather, the ability to speak is the result of acquisition, not the cause (Krashen, 2013, p. 03).

Again, the assumption that speaking emerges, and that output serves nothing than a kind of self-input presupposes that competence and use are not that distinct that the latter warrants no specification. Widdowson (1989), however, asserts that the availability of competence is not a guarantee for the act of communication, for differentiating between knowledge about language and *capacity*, which he regards as the ability to exploit the available knowledge in actual use,

which leads to consider performance as governed by operational requirements. Another variable held to be central to determining the link between input and output is that which advances the need for a stage of processing, or the ability to retrieve stored input. The determination of retrieval is illustrated in Bialystok's *library metaphor*: "Learners may know an interlanguage form because they have studied it or learnt it, but under communicative pressure they fail to find it. In terms of the library metaphor, one might say that the book is in the library but they do not have enough time to find it" (cited in Maria & Lopez, 1997, p. 317).

Another way in which the notion of listening-based learning might be refutable comes from looking at the suspension, or the peripheral role of syntactic 'skills' in comprehension. In effect, "if comprehension draws on effective strategy use and on the capacity to relate input to context, it may partly be an autonomous skill whose development may not transfer to other areas [speaking]" (Skehan, 1990, p. 15). To say that production predicates on listening is, indirectly, to advocate that there is no room for consciousness in interlanguage development and change. This stems from the fact that, if learners have the impression that they have to rely on input for production, they will pay more attention to the norms by which the message is constructed, and will use that knowledge as basis for their future input (Skehan, 1995, p. 17).

Another variable proclaimed to be central for acquisition, but one that is missing from the treatments of Krashen, is that of interaction. Long (1985) while subsidizes the notion of input being the major explanatory variable for SLA, sharply differs from Krashen in conceiving what is it that renders input comprehensible. Paradoxically, the making of input comprehensible and adaptive to learners' current competence is, more reliably, achieved through the negotiation of meaning. The rationale for this claim is that good quality input is ensured by the learner, by means of signaling miscomprehension through clarification requests, confirmation checks and comprehension checks. This would render input comprehensible on the pace of the learner and with respect to the state of his linguistic repertoire. This feature may not be prevalent in case of reliance on ready-made input, whose quality is uncertain not only for the unlikelihood of its harmonization with the learner, but for "one have to rely on good luck or the sensitivity of one's interlocutor, and neither of which is dependable" (Skehan, 1990, p. 17).

Interaction, too, matters is the collaborative discourse wherein learners, depending on talk exchange, build on previously occurring utterances and draw on structures, either by adding to them or by substituting some of their parts, given that conversation is, in its very nature, jointly constructed.. To participate in conversations is, for (Widdowson, 1989), not only to learn how to use complete and well-formed sentences, but to learn how to make well-judged interventions with one's interlocutor. Well-judged interventions include appropriate decisions on turn-taking and on the language form required in the exchange of talk whose circulation endangers the acquisition of ellipsis. Interaction, too, provides ready-made chunks of language that would later be used by the learner as automated, rather than controlled speech. The formulaic, or "canned" speech "contributes indirectly to the route of learners' interlanguage by providing raw material to the learner's internal mechanisms to work on" (Ellis 1985, p. 155).

The Natural Order Hypothesis

Seemingly, one among many possible convictions overriding the natural order hypothesis is to validate the input hypothesis. An assumption of a sequence of development is, in fact, a predication on an apparent commonness of difficulty reported to be undergone by second language learners with varying language backgrounds (see Bailey, Madden & Krashen, 1974; Dulay & Burt, 1974). The notion is that the path towards proficiency is identifiably predictable not only as certain structures appear to be acquired before others, but as the errors demonstrated in the route of acquisition are developmental, that is, common to all acquirers for being predetermined by innate universal mechanism. This sequence of development, as claimed, though being distinct from that in first language acquisition, is common to all second language acquirers (see Figure 4).

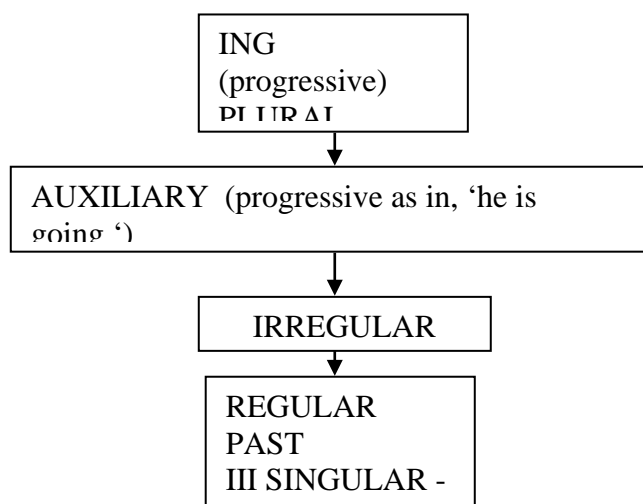


Figure 4: Average Order of Acquisition of Grammatical Morphemes for English as a Second Language (children and adults) (Krashen, 1977, 1981 1982,).

The proposal for a natural sequence seems incomplete, and thus, unconvincing, for Krashen offers no mechanism to explain why learners appear to acquire certain grammatical properties before others. Findings of the natural sequence studies, for Tarone, Bigelow and Hansen (2009), lack reliability, for the population such studies target is deceptive of the ideal language learner. The 'distortion' lies in discounting illiterate learners, and confining sources of data in literate learners only:

Can we base an SLA theory of universal cognitive processes on data drawn from literate learners only? What about illiterate learners who do not participate in the social practice of print literacy at all?...Such learners exist in large number throughout the world, but we know next to nothing about the processes of oral second language acquisition. (Tarone et al., 2009. p. x).

In fact, the natural order claim stands in stark contrast with the notion of *interlanguage*, according to which the approximation of the L2 system is marked by the fusion of learners' mother tongue and target language. Thus, the idea disparages the potential L1 influence has in second language learning. This influence may not be limited to the prevalence of negative

transfer errors, but, as Zafar (2009) indicates, may extend to override the order in which language is acquired. It should be noted that the order is limited to the acquisition of grammatical morphemes that the natural order, in case valid, may stand as a mere peripheral property not decisive of acquisition. Such observation conforms to Gregg (1984), who points to the fallacy of generalizing the acquisition of limited functors to the entire outcome of acquisition.

The Affective Filter

For acquisition to take place, Krashen maintains, acquires, alongside receiving comprehensible input, have to occupy a low-filter position, jointly prompted by low anxiety, higher motivation and self-confidence. If these are to be assigned a causative status, a more complete treatment would have to account for how this state or the otherwise hinders or fosters acquisition. This claim gains more plausibility in the light of the affective filter seeming to be implicated more in production (Figure 5).

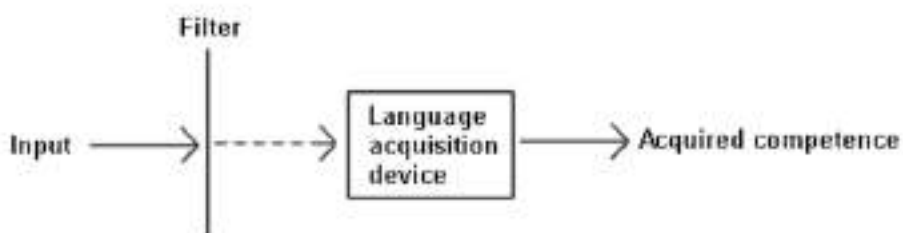


Figure 5: Operation of Affective Filter (1977, 1981, 1982)

A main attraction in Krashen's model is his third path he pursues in conceiving SLA. In fact, to say that 'acquisition' is a variable constantly manipulated by the affective position the learner occupies is to recognize the significance of external factors, instead of expressing allegiance to a particular perceptive angle. In other words, if SLA is the outcome of the mere LAD, the learner's syllabus is immune to external influences Ellis (1985). The affective filter hypothesis, thus, represents a getaway for the whole model to escape the criticism that "nativist theories do not have a learner in mind" and that they see language "as something which takes care of itself" (Dodigovic, 2005, p.4). Irrespective of its merits, the affective filter notion reveals a paradox in Krashen's model: If high affective filter, which deteriorates 'acquisition', is caused by interaction, the latter should have been allocated a weight in the enhancement of this process.

CONCEPTUAL EVALUATION IN RELATION TO LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

In generating pedagogical principles from the Monitor Model, Krashen talks of 'the best method' as one that supplying comprehensible input in low-anxiety situations, and one that does not force early production, but allows students to produce when they are ready. Improvement, as Krashen (2013) contends, rather than thought of as lent to correction, results from the provision of comprehensible input, instead of a deliberate focus on certain forms of grammar. "Comprehensible input-based" syllabuses are designed around activities and discussions with input that is not only comprehensible, but "compelling" as well (see Krashen & Bland, 2014). Similarly, students' errors are not corrected, for "grammatical accuracy is the result of comprehensible input, and not output" (Krashen, 2013, p. 06). Grammar is included only to

satisfy students' 'curiosity' about language structure, or to fill the gap left by 'acquisition', Krashen notes that the rules learnt in grammar lessons—which should be done as homework—are not expected to share the spontaneous generation of utterances.

It is contended that the goal of language classes is to enhance students' understanding of input given that understanding is said to effect 'acquisition'. For this, Krashen advocates that subject-matter teaching is, for focus on message, language teaching. A possible way of rendering input comprehensible is the teacher providing contextual clues or modeling the acts of utterances. Students, Krashen maintains, "are not asked to speak, only to understand" (2013, p. 05). It is recommended that both free and in-school reading subside acquisition, especially when the content of reading and listening is "narrow", or specialized (see Krashen, 2007, 2009).

Indeed, while some principles the Monitor Model offers enjoy sound relevance and harmonization with classrooms, others, however, might lack a "sense of plausibility". Generally, Krashen resorting to the notion of caretaker to render the Monitor Model justifiable, makes deciding whether this notion is compatible with the teacher fundamental in gauging the pedagogical uptake of the theory. The analogy features in the claim that the most interesting aspect of the caretaker speech is that it is not a deliberate attempt to teach language (Krashen, 1982, p. 22). It is, however, advanced that a theory of learning must take account of the human predisposition to teach Lemke (1984). In fact, while drawing on such a notion for theorizing SLA displays respectability, assuming its transferability to language classrooms might not have been an adequate practice.

An interesting feature of the caretaker speech that Krashen highlights, and that perhaps fails against the forces of pedagogical reality, is that the caretaker speaks about the immediate environment, or what the child can perceive. Such properties can hardly be said to apply to language classes, partly because the motivation guiding the language teacher is distinct from that exerting a great deal of influence on the caretaker speech, and partly because the capacity for pedagogy to simulate this authenticity is by no means limited. Supposing that the caretaker approach is more useful for the child compared to unmodified speech, the question that rises is whether the same thing applies to adults learning a second language. Too, a salient feature of the caretaker speech is that mothers pay little attention to the formal correctness of their children's speech, but instead attend to the appropriateness of their utterances. Further mismatch features in the fact that the estimate of a child's language state might differ from that upon which the supply of language to a learner is made. Parents, self-evidently, modify their speech on sound basis, for they know not only their children's state of linguistic repertoire but the contextual reference underlying that knowledge (see Rowe, 2008).

On another scale framework, while interaction appears core to language classes—either as a manner of generating talk or as a skill comprising norms of conversation management—the Monitor Model implies that it is not important to engage learners in interaction whose service Krashen qualifies as a mere "way to obtain comprehensible input". Whereas the class turns around goals and objectives, standing as reference for both teachers' steps and learners' performance, the Monitor Model maintains that it is not important to get learners to speak as

speaking would emerge, nor is it necessary to provide corrective feedback. It might, then, be difficult to show the relevance of the central claims of the Monitor Model to teachers, especially that what is implied is a hard move from judgmental intents, forced partly by pressures of assessments, and partly by the need for teachers to examine learners' progress while teaching.

The mismatch, however, goes not to the extent that the goals of the Monitor Model and those of pedagogy are incompatible. Just as theories may lack the sense of plausibility, it might be argued that pedagogy discounts the particularities of language acquisition by compelling the adaptation of theories. In this sense, Krashen (1982, p.27) argues that "adults and children in formal language classes, are usually not allowed a silent period, they are often asked to produce early in a second language before they have acquired enough competence". Another pedagogy-related deviance is that, while curriculum designers present rules in line with the structural difficulty criterion, the acquisitional difficulty criterion suggests that some structures, which appear basic, are acquired late, and vice versa. For this, Krashen states:

Research has come up with surprising facts about the natural order. First, it is not true that simple rules are acquired early and complicated rules later. Some rules that look simple (e.g. the third person singular) are acquired late. Others that appear to linguists as complex are acquired early. This presents a problem to curriculum designers, who present rules to students from "simple" to "complex". A rule may be very easy for a grammarian, but may actually be acquired late (Krashen, 2013, p. 2).

It is true that Krashen provides evidential basis for the effectiveness of the proposed method. In effect, the above criticism does not prove the otherwise, but casts some doubt over the persistence of these experiments in classrooms, for the latter *might* not provide the same adequate environment granted by improvised research conditions. In other words, it is application, and not empirical assessment that gauges Krashen's proposal.

CONCLUSION

From a theoretical angle, not only does Krashen's theory appear well-supported—at least compared to other SLA theories—but coherent as well: For acquisition to occur, low affective filter has to be subsided with input that is comprehensible and matching to learners' stage in the natural order of acquisition, making available an acquired competence discharged with the generation of utterances, combined with a learnt competence used as a monitor for the accuracy of the generated utterances. This comprehensiveness is, in fact, a double-edged sword, for while it indicates the unity of the theory, gives the impression that Krashen advances certain tenets not out of a conviction of validity, but out of the need to draw a scheme for acquisition. Such move, alongside some waves of assertiveness that Krashen could have avoided, triggers arrows of criticism, questioning the sufficiency of input for acquisition, in addition to the functioning assigned to 'learning' and 'acquisition'. Yet, it is this multitude of tenets—let alone the paradigm shift exerted by the claims—that marks the elegance and uniqueness of the Monitor Model. As for pedagogical relevance, the property-oriented character of some aspects of the model renders limited its direct applicability and compatibility to classrooms. However, the acquisition-learning

distinction along with the monitor hypothesis, enjoy a potential relevance to ESL pedagogy, especially in terms of characterizing both learners and language performance. In fact, it is true that the model has been taking subsequent ‘revisions’, but as Krashen comments, “the changes are additions and expansions...I cannot think of any place in which any of the original hypotheses were wrong Mehdi et al., 2013, p. 227).

Indeed, the Monitor Model did mark a turning point in the field of second language acquisition as it has been influencing all aspects of second language teaching and research, by highlighting the significance of several variables in several processes. Limitations on the model, and perhaps on any other theory attempting to account for language acquisition, are in primacy, lent to the complexity of language, and thereby to the natural unlikelihood of a hegemonic theory to prevail or persist. Accordingly, Ellis (1995, p.78) asserts that “the dangers behind attempting to explain everything about a complex phenomenon are recognizable”. Krashen’s theory represents one among many modes of ideation which should be viewed as complementary rather than rivals. Then, “the main factors involved in determining the uptake of a theory are less its internal qualities than the extent to which it is perceived as purposeful by consumers of the theory” (Ellis, 1995, p. 74) , which entails that our attempt had done very little to either refute or confirm the theory.

REFERENCES

- Bahrani, T. (2013). Comprehensible or incomprehensible language input. *International Journal of Applied Language Learning and Applied Linguistic World*, 4, 34-42.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. M. Holquist (Ed.), trans. C. Emerson & M. Holquist. Austin: Texas University Press.
- Balley, N., Madden, C., & Krashen, S. D. (1974). Is there a natural sequence for adult second language learning? *Language Learning*, 21, 235-243.
- Bialystok, E. (1979). Explicit and implicit judgments about L2 grammaticality. *Language Learning*, 29, 81-103.
- Bialystok, E. (1981a). The role of conscious strategies in second language proficiency. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 35, 372-394.
- Bialystok, E. (1981b). The role of linguistic knowledge in second language use. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 4, 31-45.
- Bialystok, E. (Ed.). (2001). *Bilingualism in development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bialystok, E., & Sharwood-Smith, M. (1985). Interlanguage is not a state of mind: An evaluation of the construct for second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 101-117.
- Dulay, H., & Burt, M. (1974). Natural sequence in child second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 24, 37-53.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1995). Appraising second language acquisition theory in relation to language pedagogy. In Cook, G. & Seidelhofer, B (Eds), *Practice and principle in applied Linguistics* (pp. 73-89).

- Dorynei, Z. (2009). *The psychology of second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gass, S., & Selinker, L. (1994). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. Hildale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, Associates.
- Gregg, K. (1985). Krashen's monitor and Ocean's razor. *Applied Linguistics*, 5, 79-100.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269–293). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Krashen, S. D. (1976). Formal and informal language learning environments in language acquisition and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10, 5-16.
- Krashen, S. D. (1977). Some issues relating to the monitor model. In H. D. Brown, C. Yorio & R. Crymes (Eds.), *Teaching and learning English as a second language* (pp. 144-158). Washington: TESOL.
- Krashen, S. D. (1979). Age, rate and eventual attainment in second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 13, 576-582.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language learning and acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (2004). *The Power of reading*. Engelwood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Krashen, S. D. (2007). Extensive reading in English as a foreign language for adolescents and adults: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3, 23-29.
- Krashen, S. D. (2009). Does intensive reading contribute to reading comprehension? *Knowledge Quest*, 37, 72-74.
- Krashen, S. D. (2013). *Second language acquisition theory: Theory, application and some conjunctures*. Mexico, Mexico City: Cambridge University Press.
- Krashen, S. D., & Bland, J. (2014). Compelling comprehensible input, academic language and school libraries. *CLELE Journal*, 2, 1-12.
- Krashen, S. D. & Seliger, H. (1975). The essential contribution of formal instructions in adult second language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 173-185.
- Lemke, J. L. (1984). Towards a model of the instructional process and the formal analysis of instruction. In J. L. Lemke (Ed.), *Semiotics and education*. (pp.23-62). Toronto, Canada: Toronto Semiotic Circle.
- Long, M. (1985). Input and second language acquisition theory. In S. Gass & C. Maddenn (Eds.), *Input and second language acquisition*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- Long, M., & Porter, P. (1985). Group work, interlanguage talk, and second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 207-225.
- Maria, A., & Lopez, R. (1997). Bialystok's processing continuum model: A cognitive model of patterned variation in SLA. *Cuaderanos de Filologia Inglesia*, 6, 365-395.
- Mclaughlin, B. (1978). The monitor model: Some methodological consideration. *Language Learning*, 28, 309-332.
- Mclaughlin, B. (1990). "Conscious" versus "unconscious" learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 617-638.

- Rowe, M. (2008). Child-directed speech: Relation to socioeconomic status, knowledge of child development and child vocabulary skills. *Child Language*, 35, 185-205.
- Schmidt, R. (1990) The role of consciousness in second language learning, *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 129-157.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schouten, M. (1979). The missing data in second language acquisition research. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 4, 3-14.
- Skehan, P. (1995). Analyzability, accessibility, and ability for Use. In G. Cook. & B. Seidelhofer (Eds.), *Practice and principle in applied linguistics* (pp. 91-106). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spolsky, B. (1989). *Conditions for language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, M. (1993). The output hypothesis: Just speaking and writing aren't enough. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 50, 158-164.
- Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidelhofer (Eds), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics* (pp, 125-144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tarone, E. 1979). Interlanguage as chameleon. *Language Learning*, 29, 181-191.
- Tarone, E. (1990). On variation in interlanguage: A response to Gregg. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 392-400.
- Tarone, E., Bigelow, M., & Hansen, K. (2009). *Literacy and second language oracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tarone, E., & Liu, G. Q. (1995). Situational context, variation and second language acquisition. In G. Cook & B. Seidelhofer (Eds), *Practice and principles in applied linguistics*, (pp. 107- 124). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Learning purpose and language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Widdowson, H. G. (1989). Knowledge of language and ability for use. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, 128-139.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- White, L. (1987). Against comprehensible input: The input hypothesis and the development of competence. *Applied Linguistics*, 8, 95-110.
- White, P. (1982). Beliefs about conscious experience. In G. Underwood (Ed.), *Aspects of consciousness* (pp. 1-25). London: Academic Press.
- Zafar, M. (2009). Monitoring the monitor: A Critique of Krashen's five hypothesis. *The Dhaka University Journal of Linguistics*, 3, 139-146.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I owe the motivation behind this article to my teacher, Bel Abbes Neddar, Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics, University of Mostaganem – Algeria.

THE EFFECT OF INTEGRATED LISTENING ACTIVITIES ON EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING ACCURACY

Masooome Heidari Tajan*

Bahador Sadeghi

Ramin Rahmany

Department of English, Faculty of humanities, Takestan Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Takestan, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the effect of integrated listening activities on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking accuracy within the framework of task-based activities in the hope of improving their competence. A total number of 30 female students from Safir English Institute in Lahijan, Iran participated in this study as a control and an experimental group. Traditional teaching methods of listening were applied for the control group, whereas in the experimental group integrated listening tasks were applied. A standard sample of IELTS speaking test was administered as the pre-test. At the end of the semester, a post-test was given to the students to determine the influence of the treatment on the experimental group. The data analysis using SPSS (version 19.0) revealed that the subjects in the experimental group performed better on the post-test than the control group. The results of the study confirm the strong effects of integrated technique compared to the traditional approach in teaching language skills to Iranian learners. On the other hand it has an incredible effect which could help the students to be motivated in learning correct English from high school or even lower levels. Implementing such a method can provide much of the input and data that learners receive in language learning.

KEYWORDS: Integrated listening activities, EFL learners' speaking accuracy.

INTRODUCTION

The process of listening skill is not given sufficient attention in the classroom and is undervalued globally, specially in Iran. Many of the EFL learners, specially Iranian learners, are shocked and disappointed when they use foreign language in a real interaction for the first time. Lack of listening skill closes the door to full participation in discussions with native speakers. In other words, they are not prepared for spontaneous communication. When learners are in a real discussion among native speakers, they sometimes are at a loss for words and may even feel disappointment in that situation because of an unsatisfactory level and knowledge of listening skill. Listening skills are described as crucial for survival as well as for access to wider and richer experiences in the foreign environment (Littlewood, 1981). For instance, learners need to improve the listening skill in order to expand or share their experiences and views through English. Bently and Bacon (1996) believe that, listeners create meaning from oral input because listening, as an active process, is a critical part of language learning generally and particularly for the second language learning process. On the other hand, Rost (1994) points out that, listening is

vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input, learning would not be occurred. Listening is thus fundamental to speaking.

Listening is the receptive use of language, and since the goal is to make sense of the speech, the focus is on meaning rather than language. Actually the major aim of listening is to improve the ability of speaking and communicating. Bidabadi (2012) believes that, all the learners prefer to be communicative, that is, they desire to work in pairs and in groups. Lines (2005) also considers the teaching of listening skills as fundamental the development of other language skills.

Rivers (1996) in Osada (2004,55) says “ speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is being said is comprehended by another person.” Osada (2004,56) says that in order to understand spoken messages, students need to integrate information from a range of sources: phonetic, phonological prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantics and pragmatic. The fact that we achieve all this in real time as the message unfolds makes listening complex, dynamic, and fragile (Celce_Murica,1995,366).

Listening is assuming greater and greater importance in the foreign language classroom. Rost (2005) points out that listening comprehension involves the following phases: attention, perception, word recognition, syntactic parsing, comprehension and interpretation. Importantly there should be meaningful practices that will help learners reach goals in each part and be more automatic in processing listening (Fang, 2005). For learners who are studying English in a non-English setting, it is very important to expose real communicative situations in which they will learn how to express their opinions and to develop their oral fluency and accuracy. Thus listening is helpful. Integrating different skill will help learners get experience such a situation in which they can interact with each other.

The difficulty which faces the EFL students is few opportunities to speak English outside classroom (Littlewood, 1992). Most learners gain the language skills but they cannot communicate fluently and accurately (Hinkle, 2001). Researchers now agree that there is no solution but changing the way that English is taught. (Chang, 2000; Elli,2002). A reasonable solution is to present an integrated approach which usually follows the rules of the communicative approach (Fink, 2003; Canale & Swain, 1980).

There is an increased value on integrated multiskill instructional approaches which focus on developing learners communicative competence. For instance, teaching reading can be integrated with writing and vocabulary. Pronunciation and speaking can be tied to listening, and cultural features of communication (Hinkle, 2001; Lazaraton, 2001; Kasper & Rover, 2005).

The current research presents an overview of the development of teaching English and the importance of integrated approach.

RESEARCH QUESTION?

The main research question in this study is:

Do integrated listening activities affect EFL learners' speaking accuracy?

METHODOLOGY

This study aims at focusing on integrated listening activities which lead to a better result of learners' performance.

Participants

A total number of 30 female students out of 50 students, from Safir English Institute in Lahijan, Iran participated in this research. All of the participants were aged between 15_20 at the Intermediate level. They were all native speakers of Farsi. The students were divided into two groups; the one which received the treatment was called experimental group and the other group which received different treatment was named control group, each group consisted of 15 students. First of all both groups took pre-test. A sample of International English Language Teaching System (IELTS) test which consisted of a three-part speaking test was used as a pre-test and post-test. The students were evaluated according to IELTS speaking band description.

Instrument

30 subjects were recruited using two kinds of proficiency tests which consisted of speaking ; as pre-test and post-test. The aim of pre-test was to know about the current level of students' performance and the aim of post-test was to check if the treatment was appropriate and had a positive and effective influence on learners' performance or not.

The students speaking pre-test contains three parts including different topics. At the first part, there are some information questions about family, job, and study. The second part is concerned with describing somebody or something. And finally, the last part includes discussion about a general topic.

As mentioned before 30 students have been chosen to be the members of this study as experimental group and control group. In experimental group, the students had the opportunity to expose to different short audio conversations at least 4 hours a week (1 hour in the class and 3 hours at home). Then they were asked to write down whatever they have heard and finally practice with a partner, give their opinions, try to imitate the native speakers' intonation and pronunciation and communicate in a native like way. But in control group, the students only listen to audio materials of the current teaching book for at least 30 _ 40 minutes a week.

Post-test was administrated after 20 sessions teaching English accompanied by listening activities for experimental group. A sample of IELTS as a post-test was administrated to check if the treatment was suitable and if there was any changes in learners' speaking accuracy and fluency. Again the test contained three parts as mentioned in pre-test relating to evaluation of the students learning quality during one semester.

Material

Considering 20 sessions for each classes in Safir English Institute, Lahijan, Iran, the teacher was able to play different short audio conversations in classroom which took about 45 minutes each session. During the term, 3 units of Top Notch book intermediate level were taught which their topics were consisted of fashion, shopping, and famous artists. According to these topics, the researcher selected the relevant aural input to play in the class. The selected listening materials

had to meet some criteria. The first criterion was the useful input such as vocabulary frequency, phrases and new information and also the variety in the topic. The second criterion was the learners' interest in the topic. And finally, the selected materials should be appropriate to the learners' culture and religious norms. Therefore the researcher decide to select the listening materials from the book "Impact Values" by Richard R.Day, Junko Yamanaka, and Joseph Shaules and check the relatedness of them before playing in the classroom.

Procedure

This study was conducted in Safir English Institute of Lahijan, Iran. The first step was to make sure of the students' current level of speaking proficiency. To do so, at first the researcher selected 50 students and then administrated a pre-test among them to measure the learners' speaking proficiency. After administrating the pre-test, 30 students were selected and were put in two groups of 15 students as experimental and control group, then the instruction phase started. One group was required to listen to different aural materials while the other one the audio CDs of the present teaching book which only took about 30 _ 40 minutes once a week. For experimental group, the treatment lasted 20 sessions, 1 hour a session, once a week and 3 hours listening practice at home. During the treatment, in each session, the researcher devoted times to listening to different aural materials for about 30 minutes, and students taking note of whatever they have heard then asking and answering about them, having students participated in a communicative situation and asking about their ideas, feelings, and opinion. During these phase, four types of techniques including note taking, question and answer, discussion, and description were used to work on.

Most of the students took notes while listening then they were asked some questions in order to discover students' comprehension. In addition, the students discussed with each other and gave their opinion. The control group was only conducted the limited number of audio CDs of related book. After the treatment period, a post-test covered all the materials were administered to two groups. Finally, the results of the tests were compared to each other to know the importance of the listening input.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Investigation of the Research Question

The research question of this study sought to find out whether integrated listening activities affect EFL learners' speaking accuracy. In order to answer this research question, independent sample *t*-test was used. Before discussing the results of *t*-test, the related descriptive statistics are represented in Table 1. Table1 shows that the mean and standard deviation of the experimental ($\bar{x} = 12.20$, $SD = 1.02$) and control ($\bar{x} = 12.39$, $SD = 1.14$) groups accuracy scores are not far from each other on pre-test of. On the other hand the results in Table1, indicates that the students in the experimental group ($\bar{x} = 14.11$, $SD = 1.54$) have acted better than those in the control group ($\bar{x} = 12.96$, $SD = 1.13$) on post-test regarding accuracy. Besides, Table1, shows that Skewness and Kurtosis of the four sets of speaking accuracy scores are not beyond +/- 1.96 and therefore are normally distributed. Four assumptions of interval data, independence of subjects, normality and homogeneity of variances should be met before one decides to run parametric tests (Field, 2009).

The first assumption is met because the present data are measured on an interval scale. Bachman (2005, p. 236) believes that the assumption of independence of subjects is met when —the performance of any given individual is independent of the performance of other individual. The other assumption – homogeneity of variances – will be discussed when reporting the results of the inferential statistics.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Two Group's Accuracy Scores on the Pre-test and Post-test

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Pre-test	Experimental	15	12.209	1.024	-.561	1.432
	Control	15	12.398	1.140	-.039	-.376
Post-test	Experimental	15	14.112	1.545	-.471	-.860
	Control	15	12.961	1.136	.183	-.732

Table 2 contains the results of independent t-test that was used to compare control and experimental groups' accuracy scores on the pre-test of speaking. Table 2 shows that the assumption of equal of variances is not violated ($p = .38, p > .05$).

Table 2: Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Accuracy Scores on Speaking Pre-test

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
Factor	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Equal variances assumed	.777	.386	-.478	28	.636	-.189
Equal variances not assumed			-.478	27.67	.636	-.189

Independent *t*-test results, as appeared in Table 2 above, indicated that there is not any statistically significant differences in accuracy scores for experimental ($\bar{x} = 12.20$) and control ($\bar{x} = 12.39$) groups on pre-test of speaking ($t(28) = .47, p = .63, p > .05$), in which the *t*-observed (.47) is lower than the *t*-critical (2.04). So, we conclude that the students in the two groups have the same speaking accuracy level before facing any special instruction.

Further, the results of independent *t*-test that was used to compare control and experimental groups' accuracy scores on the post-test of speaking are given in Table 3. A quick look at Table 3 reveals that the assumption of equal of variances is met ($p = .22, p > .05$).

Table 3: Independent Samples Test to Compare Two Groups' Accuracy Scores on Speaking Post-test

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
Factor	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Equal variances assumed	1.539	.225	2.323	28	.028	1.150
Equal variances not assumed			2.323	25.72	.028	1.150

Independent *t*-test (Table 3 above) detected a statistically significant difference in accuracy scores for experimental ($\bar{x} = 14.11$) and control ($\bar{x} = 12.96$) groups on post-test of speaking ($t(28) = 2.32$, $p = .02$, $p < .05$), in which the *t*-observed (2.32) is higher than the *t*-critical (2.04). Therefore we reject the first null hypothesis and claim that integrated listening activities develop EFL learners' speaking accuracy. In fact, the students in the experimental group have performed better than the control group with the mean difference of 1.15.

Figure 1 below is a bar graph that graphically illustrates the results. A quick look at Figure 1 reveals that the students in the experimental group have acted significantly better than those in the control group considering accuracy in speaking.

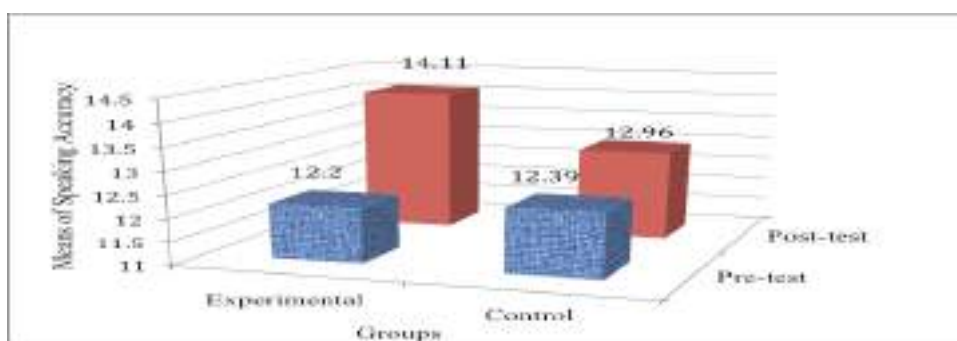


Figure 1: Bar graph of two groups' accuracy means on speaking pre-test and post-test

Discussion

In the past several decades, much evidence has emerged that, in order for learners to attain language competence, teaching needs to integrate linguistic and communicative skills. The overarching goal of integrated instruction is to advance learners' language proficiency required for communication in various contexts. Today, after decades of research in language teaching and learning, it seems clear that, in many cases and for many purposes, the separation of the four macro skills is likely to be less effective than integrated instruction simply because, in reality, communication does not take place in terms of discrete linguistic skills.

The current models of integrated teaching of the four language skills have the objective of developing learners' accuracy, as well as their sociocultural communicative competence requiring adapting the language from context to context and from genre to genre. In light of the fact that at the present time English is widely employed as the medium of international communication, it seems easy to predict that integrated language teaching will continue to dominate among the various types of pedagogical models. Within the framework of this study, it was realized that the students were willing to participate in the tasks as the two skills were presented in integration through different activities, which created real life situations in the classroom.

As a whole the study showed that the listening materials are effective in improving EFL learners' development of speaking skill at the Intermediate level of English. This result can be more approved by this evidence that there were significance differences between the means of pre-tests and post-tests. The means of the post-tests were higher than pre-tests.

One possible explanation of such result is that correct use of listening materials in classroom may help students to enhance their learning and speaking. This explanation is supported by Katchen (2003) who discovered that audio-visual materials can be used as a major course material.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding, creating a meaningful environment may encourage students to speak. According to Ardriyati (2010) listening materials can make students become more motivated to learn and communicate in the language. The finding of the study conducted by Istanto (2009) support the use of listening input in class and thus is consistent with the outcome of the current study.

In conclusion, it is seen that the results of the test show that students' success increases when these two skills are taught in integration. Moreover practicing the skills through different activities carry up student involvement and motivation mainly because these kinds of tasks are related to real life and thus leads to communication.

Suggestions for further research

Further research could involve different audio aids of diversified content such as news broadcast, documentary films, academic lectures, or movies. Investigating the recall success rate after a long time laps would be a good topic for further research. Some of the experts believe that delayed post-tests are meaningful if implemented in a 3_4 week range, and they are much less likely to be meaningful beyond a four-week delay.

Finally the present study indicates the following as in need for further investigations:

1. Learn more about the various ways to integrate language skills in the classroom.
2. Examine potential research on the effects of integration on particular skill development such as reading and writing; relate such research findings to error analysis of particular skill errors in EFL learners.

3. Explore the incorporation of literature teaching in an integrated skill instructional methodology for developing language skills.
4. Extend culture teaching to integrated skill introduction in the EFL classroom.

REFERENCES

- Ardriyati, W.(2010). Using an authentic and selected film for teaching listening and speaking. *Journal Ilmiah Dinamika Bahasa dan Budaya*, 4(2), 54-65.
- Bachman, L. F. (2005). Statistical analysis for language assessment. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. NY.
- Bentley, S., & Bacon, S. E. (1996). The all new, state-of-the-art ILA definition of listening: Now that we have it, what do we do with it? *Listening post*, 56, 1_5.
- Bidabadi, F., & Yamat H. (2012). The relationship between English Proficiency Level and Learning Style. *GEMA online Journal of Language Studies*, 12(4).
- Canale, M., & Swain. (1980). Theoretical basis of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*1, 1-47.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (1995). Discourse analysis and the teaching of listening. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics: Studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson* (pp. 363–377). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chang, S-J. (2000). No more English-savvy dummies or fluent fools: communicative approach of teaching English conversation. *English Teaching and Learning*, 25(1), 40-59.
- Elli, R. (2002). The place of grammar instruction in the second/foreign language curriculum. In Fotos, Sandra and Eli Hinkle(Eds.) *New Perspective on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classroom*(pp. 17-34) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc Kaoshinung Normal University, Kaoshiung.
- Fang, Yew-Jin. (2005). Designing Online Listening Comprehension Tasks for Learners of Mandarin Chinese as a Second/Foreign Language. *16th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia*.
- Field., J.(2009). *Bricks or mortar: Which parts of the input does a second language listener rely on? TESOL Quarterly*.
- Fink, L.De. (2003). *Creating Significant Learning Experience: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*. San Francisco: Jossey –Bass.
- Hinkle, E.(2001). Building awareness and practical skills for cross-cultural communication in ESL/EFL. In M.Celce-Murica (Ed.), *teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (3rd ed., pp.443-458) Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Istanto, J. (2009). The use of films as an innovative way to enhance language learning and cultural understanding. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 6(1), 278-290.
- Katchen, J. (2003). Teaching a listening and speaking course with DVD films: Can it be done?, In H. C. Liou, J. E. Katchen, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Lingua Tsing Hua* (pp. 221-236) Taipei: Crane, 2003.
- Kasper, G., & Rover, C. (2005). Pragmatics in second language learning. In E. Hinkle (Ed.) *Handbook of research on second language teaching and learning* (pp.317-334) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

- Lazaraton, A. (2001). Teaching oral skills. In M. Celce-Murica (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. (3rd ed., pp.103-115) Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Lines, C. T. (2005). *Practical English language teaching: young learners*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching*. London: C.U.P.
- Littlewood, W. (1992). *Teaching Oral Communication: A Methodological Framework*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Osada, N.(2004). *Listening Comprehension Research : A brief Review of the Past Thirty Years*. *Dialogue*, 2004, 3, 53-66, ISSN 1349 - 5135
- Rost, M. (1994). *Listening in language learning*. London: Longman.
- Rost, M. (2005). L2 listening. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research on second language teaching and learning* (pp. 503–528). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

NEUTRALITY OR DIRECTEDNESS: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONAL ELT TEXTBOOKS

Mehrnush Ebrahimi

*Department of TEFL, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
E-mail: m.ebrahimi_job@yahoo.com*

Vahid Ghahraman

*Assistant Professor at Iranian Institute for Encyclopedia Research, Tehran, Iran
E-mail: ghahraman@iecf.ir*

ABSTRACT

The issue of biasedness of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks has been examined through qualitative and quantitative analyses based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairleigh, 1989, 2003; Van Dijk, 1993, 2001; Wodak et al., 1990). The present study aimed to examine aspects of meaning as represented in two of the currently used English language textbooks, namely, Summit2B and Passages2 from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective. These textbooks are widely used for advanced adult language learners in numerous language institutes in Bandar Abbas where the study was implemented and many other cities all over Iran based on the high number of circulation and reprints of these books in major Iranian ELT language publishing houses such as Rahnama, Zabankadeh, and Jungle. In effect, the study analyzed the textbooks in terms of three major aspects of meaning including relations, positions, and content. For this purpose, Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model, as a well-established CDA model, which emphasizes the importance of language/power relationship, was adopted in order to extract the ideologies consisting the foundation of these textbooks. The findings revealed that the textbooks were apparently following the ideology of neo-liberalism and free market, selected English textbook writers did not have any activity to make English as a Foreign Language(EFL) learners aware of or equip them with strategies to deal with different forms of infringement. Furthermore, the results of data analysis suggested that occupational position with 64% of occurrences was the most frequently occurring position in the textbooks under investigation. English textbook writers did not adopt unequal subject relations in their textbooks. The findings of the present study could be beneficial for language teachers, language learners, textbook designers, and textbook publishers because suggest that a good language teacher needs to adopt a critical outlook towards the sociolinguistic studies. In effect, s/he may discuss related issues with the students with a critical point of view, a point that is ignored by many teachers.

KEYWORDS:discourse, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, ideology, linguistic imperialism, fairclough'sframework for CDA

INTRODUCTION

As Fairclough (1989) expressed" language use- discourse -is not just a matter of performing tasks, it is also a matter of expressing, constituting and reproducing social identities and social relations" (p. 196).

The spread of English throughout the world, over the past sixty years or so, has become one of the undeniable facts of education (Giaschi, 2000). Many, however, have been critical of this widespread use of English and are concerned about it (Canagarajah, 1999; Pennycook, 1994, 2002; Phillipson, 1992, 2003; Phillipson & Skuttnab-Kangas, 1996). These scholars have consistently argued that it is not fortuitous that English has risen to be the world's most important language and there have been some hidden hands operating behind the scene (Baleghizadeh & Jamali Motahed, 2010). Phillipson (2003), for example, observed that the diffusion of English has been, and still is, substantially orchestrated, facilitated and led by what he referred to as the Centre, that is, USA and Britain, whose commercial and political interests such diffusion serves. Phillipson (1992) in the same vein, has talked of what he called "English linguistic imperialism", which he defined in the following way: "The dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (47).

A very important aspect of the politics and economics of English today is ELT (Bourne, 1996; Phillipson, 1992). ELT has become a global activity and to a large extent a business and industry, which can be dated to the 1950s (Dua, 1994; Pennycook, 1994).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is the uncovering of implicit ideologies embedded in the texts (Widdowson, 2000). It explores the underlying ideological bias and therefore the exercise of power in texts. In other words, critical discourse analysis and critical language education are concerned with the interests and ideologies underlying the construction and interpretation of textbooks. The purpose of CDA is to analyze "opaque as well as transparent structural relationship of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" (Wodak, 1995: 204).

Originally, the theoretical foundations and descriptive recourses of the framework known as critical discourse analysis, or CDA for short has been applied to ELT textbooks to understand whether ELT textbooks content are neutral or they are ideologically oriented based on Western Society and its ELT market. This has been examined through qualitative and quantitative based on CDA (Fairclough, 1989, 1995, 2003; Van Dijk, 1993, 2001; Wodak et al., 1990).

The global spread of English, as well as its causes and consequences, has long been a focus of critical discussions (Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006). A number of research studies have been conducted to find out whether or not the spread of English follows an ideological path. Since ELT stands in the forefront when the spread of English and its ideological effects are addressed, some researchers have tried to spearhead their analysis on ELT textbooks to see if any type of ideology is inspired through them.

Some Iranian researchers have applied critical discourse analysis on both internationally-developed and locally-produced ELT text books which widely used in Iran to examine if these ELT text books including *Spectrum 6*, *New Interchange 3*, *American Cutting-edge 4*, *True to Life: Upper-intermediate*, *New Headway: Upper-intermediate* follow a particular ideology or not.

So far, none of Iranian researchers has applied critical discourse analysis on ELT text books such as Summit2B and Passages2. Therefore, this study aims to investigate if the mentioned text books follow the particular ideology as well by applying Critical Discourse Analysis on some ELT textbooks and determining social relations, subject positions and content included in the selected textbooks.

The findings of this research could be useful for material designers of English courses whose learners are pursuing their experience of a new language by controlling the ideological subtleties which are contained in their texts and often go unnoticed by both language learners and syllabus designers. The findings of the present study can remind material designers that, texts are carriers of ideologies and they should be aware of this point and act responsibly in presenting healthy discourses compatible with the cultures that their materials will be consumed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The History of Critical Discourse Analysis

The 1970s saw the emergence of a form of discourse and text analysis that recognized the role of language in structuring power relations in society. At that time, much linguistic research elsewhere was focused on formal aspects of language which constituted the linguistic competence of speakers and which could theoretically be isolated from specific instances of language use (Chomsky, 1957).

Much sociolinguistic research at the time was aimed at describing and explaining language variation, language change and the structures of communicative interaction, with limited attention to issues of social hierarchy and power (Labov, 1972; Hymes, 1972). In such a context, attention to texts, their production and interpretation and their relation to societal impulses and structures, signaled a very different kind of interest (Beaugrande/ Dressler, 1981; Titscher et al. 2000).

The work of Kress/ Hodge (1979), Van Dijk (1985) Fairclough (1989) and Wodak (1989) served to explain and illustrate the main assumptions, principles and procedures of what had then become known as CL.

Initially, Fairclough (1989) identified his approach to a study of language as ‘critical language study’ and reviewed a range of mainstream approaches, including linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence, conversation analysis and discourse analysis. Fairclough(1989) argued that, although all of these areas had something to offer language study, they also presented limitations for a critical perspective.

Kress (1990, 84-97) gave an account of the theoretical foundations and sources of Critical Linguistics. He indicated that the term CL was “quite self-consciously adapted” (1990, 88) from its social-philosophical counterpart, as a label by the group of scholars working at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s. By the 1990s the label CDA came to be used more consistently to describe this particular approach to linguistic analysis. Kress (1990, 94) showed how CDA was by that time “emerging as a distinct theory of language, a radically different kind of linguistics.”

He listed the criteria that characterize work in the Critical Discourse Analysis paradigm, illustrating how these distinguish such work from other politically engaged types of discourse analysis.

Based on Fairclough and Wodak (1997), Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a quickly developing area of language study. It considers discourse as 'a form of social practice' and takes consideration of the context of language use to be crucial to discourse. It takes particular interest in the relation between language and power.

Since the 1960s, there has been a dispute on the themes and fundamental methodologies in social sciences. A lot of social scholars stated that it is dangerous to limit social science to objective description and representation of facts, without noticing that human beings have their own opinions, interests, and ideologies.

Habermas (1973) summarized a scientific theoretical framework, from which people can seek critical social sciences.

CDA was put forward by Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Tony in the work titled *Language and Control* in 1979.

CDA is also named as critical linguistics (CL) and critical language study (CLS). Discourse analysis is more interested in observing actually occurring languages with a view to discovering and describing regularities in language use rather than rules of grammar only. Critical studies aim to reveal the relationship between language, ideology, power, and society, and reveal the link between listeners and speakers.

CDA may be described as neo-Marxist; claiming that cultural and economic dimensions are crucial in the creation and maintenance of power relations. The key figures in this area include Fairclough (1989, 1995, 2003), van Dijk (1993, 2001), Gee (1999), van Leeuwen (1993, 1995, 1996), Wodak (1996) and Scollon (2001). It is generally agreed that CDA cannot be classified as a single method but is rather viewed as an approach, which includes different perspectives and different methods for studying the relationship between the use of language and social context (Wang, 2006).

Discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis

Discourse analysis emerged as a field of study in reaction to structural and formal approaches to language which considered the sentence as the ultimate unit of analysis. Discourse analysis is concerned with stretches of language consisting of more than one sentence and has led to the realization that language cannot be studied in isolation from the communicative intentions of language users and the context within which they use language (Stern, 1983:133).

CDA adopts a social definition of discourse and also uses discourse as a countable noun, so that the competing discursive practices of a society can be spoken of as different discourses. Discourse is both constitutive and creative with regard to social conventions and hierarchies, and much of

the creativity arises from the competition between discourses in various social fields and their novel recombinations (Riches, 1999).

Fairclough (1995:131) advocated the adoption of Halliday's (1985) systemic-functional grammar as the proper linguistic theory for CDA to be based on. This theory incorporates the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language into the interpretation of texts and sentence constituents. Halliday described it thus:

One of the things that distinguish systemic grammar is that it gives priority to paradigmatic relations: it interprets language not as a set of structures but as a network of systems, or interrelated sets of options forming meaning. Such options are not defined by reference to structure; they are purely abstract features, and structure comes in as the means whereby they are put into effect or realized (Halliday 1985:15-16).

CDA and the ELT textbook

The accepted theory and practices in ELT are evident in ELT textbooks. One may begin by asking if questions of inequality and power are evident concerns of textbook writers, or if there is only the traditional concern with describing discourse.

Conley and O'Barr (1998), noted:

The great strength of conversation analysis has been its attention to ordinary people speaking in everyday contexts... External factors, such as status inequalities or pre-existing relationships among the parties, have rarely been taken into account... This focus... has resulted in interactions between people who are (or are assumed to be) of roughly equal social status... Nonetheless, the fact is that there are few conversations in which status and power are not relevant.... Far from being the norm, relationships of true equality are so rare as to be treasured (Conley & O'Barr, 1998:13).

An important element of CDA is that the dominant discourse of one time is not static and unalterable. Foucault wrote, "Discourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it" but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to neutralize it" (Foucault, 1978: 101).

This makes it clear that textbook choices are highly restricted. The market leverage enjoyed by large publishers gives them easy advantage with consumers who uncritically place faith in the 'state of the art' textbooks published in the U.K. and the U.S.A. Where alternatives might emerge, it is almost impossible for localized and innovative projects to be deemed economically feasible.

This problem has received little attention, perhaps because many of the books and journals of applied linguistics are published by the same corporations which produce ELT textbooks. One could question, for example, whether there is a conflict of interest in David Nunan's and Jack Richards' pursuit of dual careers as applied linguists and as mass market ELT textbook writers with publishing firms that are also active in both fields.

The question of a potential conflict of interest seems to draw little comment in the literature, and the authors appear not to be volunteering information on the influence their royalty checks on their theory.

Bolitho and Jolly (1998:111) noted the successes of mass-market publishers in Central Europe after the fall of communism, but they then add that "...the initial enthusiasm was quick to wear off and a number of them are now involved in producing their own school textbooks." The logic is unavoidable. However, a logical conclusion which they failed to state explicitly, (but which they may be making implicitly) is that the mass-market textbook is itself bad pedagogical practice.

Bell and Gower (1998:129), speaking of "the great compromise" involved in designing textbooks for the world, claim that it "...is not only inevitable but beneficial." Yet this comment appears in a globally distributed applied linguistics textbook, by a publisher with interests in ELT textbooks. Unexamined are the authors' and the publisher's motives for wanting, in the first place, to design textbooks for the world.

This is not to suggest that there is conscious censorship in all the literature. Longman, for example, has published the "Language in Social Life" series which includes Fairclough (1989, 1995,) Pennycook (1994) and Tollefson (1991). There is evidence of criticism in the field, although it seems to exist only at the margins of discussion (Riches, 1999).

Prodromou (1988) described a "black-and-white cardboard cut-out world" portrayed by ELT textbooks. Brown (1990:13) noted the attempts of many publishers to sell a concept of English as a neutral, culturally nondescript international language.

He asserted "...the new cosmopolitan English reflects a materialistic set of values in which international travel, not being bored, positively being entertained, having leisure, and, above all, spending money casually and without consideration of the sum involved in the pursuit of these ends, are the norm."

Phillipson (1992) and Pennycook (1994) applied critical language studies to ELT. They adopted the same view that language is not a politically neutral tool of communication. Their work gave a broad overview, with a historical and political perspective, of the emergence of English as a global language. Both writers stressed that it is no accident that English has raised to prominence in the world.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Are selected English textbooks neutral in terms of ideology?
- 2) Do selected English textbook writers make EFL learners aware of or equip them with strategies to deal with different forms of infringement of their wishes in the real interactions?
- 3) Are EFL learners placed in a societal position or are they placed in occupational and commercial positions?

4) Do English textbook writers adopt unequal subject relations in their textbooks?

METHODOLOGY

Corpus

The corpora of this study were based on advanced student's book of two series of ELT textbooks recently used in Iran Institutions. The selected textbooks included *Summit 2B* (Second Edition) and *Passages 2* (Second edition). The *Summit 2B* is a multiple-skills general English textbook authored by John Saslow and Allen Ascher, which was published by Pearson Education in 2012. The *Passages 2B* is also a multiple-skills general English textbook authored by Jack C. Richards and Chuck Sandy, which was published by Cambridge University Press in 2008.

Instrument

For the purpose of data collection, Norman Fairclough's (1989) Theoretical Framework was applied. As Norman Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model of CDA is supposed to be an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse, the researchers laid the foundation of the current study on this sociolinguist and poststructuralist CDA model. This model views language as a "form of social practice" (Fairclough, 1989: 20) and focuses on the ways social and political domination is reproduced by text and talk. This more socially focused conception of texts is considered as comprising of a rather large group of structural properties among which, to mention the most significant ones, one can find aspects of vocabulary, grammar and textual structures as well as non-linguistic textual features. Those features might carry three types of socially originating value: experiential, relational and expressive as defined below (1989, p.112): *Experiential* value presents "a trace of and a cue to the way in which the textproducer's experience of the natural or social world is represented. Experiential value is to do with contents and knowledge and beliefs.

Relational value means a trace of and a cue to the social relationships which are enacted via the text in the discourse. Relational value is (transparently!) to do with relations and social relations. *Expressive* value accounts for "a trace of and a cue to the producer's evaluation (in the widest sense) of the bit of the reality it relates to. Expressive value is to do with subjects and social identities, though only one dimension of latter concepts is to do with subjective values.

Table1: Formal features: Experiential, relational and expressive values Fairclough (1989).

Dimensions of meaning	Values of Features	Structural Effects
Contents	Experiential	Knowledge /beliefs
Relations	Relational	Social relations
Subjects	Expressive	Social identities

In particular, the above-mentioned framework was adopted here as a model of analysis of the selected ELT textbooks because Fairclough specifically invited such projects, and it is amenable to varied applications. According to the model, the conventional use of linguistic features imposes and reflects constraints on the three categories of structural effects.

Design

Although the current study employed some statistical quantification as the data were presented in chapter four, the nature and the overall design of the study is definitely descriptive–analytic.

Procedure

1-The conversations, listening, reading, writing, sections as well as pictures of each unit of selected textbooks were scrutinized to find out different features and aspects of Fairclough model.

2-Aspects and dimensions of meaning including content, relation and position were classified into comprehensible sets of data. In other words, the number of occurrences of each aspect of meaning, i.e. content, relations and subject positions was counted in each textbook, then the data obtained was tabulated to get a clear picture of the dominant pattern of occurrences of these dimensions of meaning.

3-Frequency of aspects and dimension of meaning were tallied.

4-To ensure objectiveness of data collection procedure, the results of the model analysis were double checked with advisor and another expert introduced by him.

5-Relevant data analysis was implemented on data.

Classification of content

Following Taki (2008), five major categories including a) Cultural contrast, festivals and customs, b) Entertainment, human interest stories, discussion starters ranging from trivial matters to social issues, c) Occupational, d) consumer-oriented, e) Interpersonal, introspective and interactional regarding individuals and institutions, for the analysis of content were adopted. Classification of contents proved to be the most challenging of all since they simply defy easy classification and, therefore managing all the data was difficult.

Classification of relations

Relation refers to the social relationships represented via the text like husband-wife or teacher-student or friends. In order to classify social relations, each textbook was reviewed page by page and relations were counted anytime the characters in the conversations were in verbal communication. They were represented either in two words divided by a hyphen such as husband-wife, or the relationship was shown by one word in plural form as in colleagues. In some cases a singular noun appeared in conversations and this indicated that the relation existed with an unseen audience, such as a newspaper reader, TV news audience, and so forth.

Classification of subject positions

Following Taki (2008), the researchers used the following three categories: a) societal, b) occupational, and c) commercial. Subject position refers to the social identity of interlocutors like customer and employer. Subject position occurrences were counted throughout both textbooks every time it appeared in a unit of a textbook under investigation. Then, following Taki (2008), the researchers employed categorized subject positions into three groups: societal, occupational and commercial. In cases where an individual or technically speaking an interlocutor appeared to be functioning in more than one subject position, for example an airline passenger travelling on business, the function that seemed most salient in the context from the view point of the researcher was selected. Even

though there is some kind of confusion in distinguishing subject positions from relations, as Fairclough (1989) declared “all three (relation, subjects, contents) overlap and co-occur in practice, but it is helpful to be able to distinguish them” (p.46).

Data analysis

The obtained data was tabulated to get a clear picture of the dominant pattern of occurrences of these dimensions of meaning. The rationale for examining these dimensions was to see which aspects of the meaning were emphasized or de-emphasized, since these choices reflect the ideological stance on the part of the textbook writer. Descriptive statistics consisted frequency table and percent. The subcategories were compared across each category of content, relations and subject positions by running chi-square analyses to see whether they were significantly different in terms of their frequency. Moreover, in order to make sure about the reliability of the findings, all the data were categorized by two raters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics encompassed frequency table and percent related to Content as a whole, Relations as a whole and Positions as a whole.

Content as a whole

Table 2 shows the patterns of content in all the textbooks as a whole. The first category, i.e., interpersonal and introspective and the second category, i.e., entertainment and human interests with 126 number of occurrences make up the most frequently occurring content in the textbooks under investigation. The findings indicated that most characters tended to talk about themselves and their personal experiences.

Table 2: Content as a whole

Category	Number of occurrences	Percentage
1. Interpersonal, introspective	126	38.1
2. Entertainment, human interest stories, discussion starter	126	38.1
3. Consumer-oriented	38	11.5
4. Occupational	34	10.3
5. Cultural contrasts, festivals and customs	6	1.8
Total	330	99.8

The third category, i.e., consumer oriented and the fourth one with 11.5% and 10.3% of occurrences respectively fall next in the above table. It indicates, as a matter of fact, the propensity to position learners within consumer and occupational domains and shows there is an emphasis on market economy and putting the learners in economic positions to talk about market related contents. This is followed by the fifth category with 1.8% of occurrences. The number of occurrences of this category suggests that the textbooks have allocated little amount of their content to the issue of cultural contrasts. This is rather odd as these textbooks are studied by a large number of EFL learners from various countries with different cultural backgrounds. Other

categories such as advertisement, Law enforcement, politics and education had no occurrences in the selected textbooks. This indicates these categories did not play any significant roles in the general trend that the textbooks were following.

Relations as a whole

Table 3 shows the pattern of relations in all the textbooks as a whole. It is clear that the category of speaker-audience is the most common relation presented with 40 occurrences, which makes up 30% of the relations in the textbooks, which appeared mainly in the books. To put it another way, an individual describes an event, his/her life story, describes his/her feeling or attitudes toward something or tells a story. The second most common relation, as presented in table 4.2 below, is friend with 18% of occurrences. This emphasizes that dialogues put on interactions between social equals, which appear to, as (Fairclough, 1989: 10) puts it, “describe discourse as it might be in a better world rather than discourse as it is”

Table 3: Relations as a whole

Row	Category	Number of occurrences	Percentage
1	Speaker-audience	40	30
2	Friends	24	18
3	Colleagues	16	12
4	Citizen	10	8
5	Interviewer-interviewee	10	8
6	Reporter-audience	7	5.2
7	Husband-wife	7	5.2
8	Parent-Child	5	4
9	Consumer-seller	3	2.2
10	Consumer-service provider	2	1.5
11	Airline Passenger-airline clerk	2	1.5
12	Teacher-parent	2	1.5
13	Nurse-Patient	2	1.5
14	Consultant-Client	1	0.75
15	Lawyer-Client	1	0.75
16	Professor-Student	1	0.75
	Total	133	100

The category of colleagues, with 12% of occurrences falls next in the tabulation process. Similarly, in this relation the emphasis is placed on the social equal characters, indicating a very friendly relationship between workers. The category of citizen, with 8% is the fourth frequently occurring relation. Similarly, in this relation the emphasis is placed on the social equal characters, indicating a very friendly relationship between citizens. The interviewer– interviewee relation, with 8% of occurrences, same as citizen is the fifth frequently occurring relation. Apparently, this relation, compared to the previous categories, has little basis as in reality that interviews are held in order to take a job or a position, no instance of which was observed in the textbooks. Based on evidence, there is also a great deal of exercise of power in the interviews in real life situations, though it sounds strange that no instances of this behavior were found in the interviews presented in the given textbooks. The type of relation presented in these textbooks simulates common

interviews on TV and radio news. This finding suggests that individuals are positioned to accept certain relations by the fact that they are presented as normal occurrences. In this case the individual accepts the premise that one willingly offers frank opinions on almost any subject to anyone who asks for them; this is in fact another instance of indicating world in a distorted fashion. The category of reporter-audience, the sixth one with 5.2% of occurrences, resembles what individuals observe on TV, i.e., someone is reporting an event to the audience. The seventh and eighth categories, i.e., family members and wife-husband, with 5.2% and 4% of occurrences respectively, again are examples of interactions between social equals. The category of consumer-service provider is the ninth category with 2.2% of occurrences. This relation indicates the importance placed upon the service industry and social skills training. As with the category of friends, this relation is idealized to be free of struggles and divergences. With customer-service provider, individuals are also being positioned as playing a fruitful role in the economy.

The tenth category, consumer-seller, with 1.5% of occurrences is similar to customer-service provider, but it is fascinating to consider how less frequently these two relations occur. The eleventh category, i.e., Airline Passenger-airline clerk, with 1.5% of occurrences adds a spice of inequality to the relations in the corpus gathered, but the relations portrayed were so friendly that no instance of exercise of power by more powerful individuals could be detected in the conversations. Finally, the categories of Teacher-parent, Nurse-Patient with 1.5%, and Consultant-Client, Lawyer-Client, and Professor-Student all with 0.75% of occurrences, represent unequal encounters, though, similarly no exercise of power was observed. In other words, being friendly was portrayed as a natural process, which is of course not necessarily the same in real life situations.

Considering all categories in this dimension of meaning, it can be suggested that inequality is rarely addressed in the interactions portrayed in these ELT textbooks, and this supports the argument in regard with the tendency to conceal inequality in discourse. Fairclough's (1989) studies of actual micro-discourses between doctors and interns, police and citizens, and so on, revealed how powerful participants exercise power through the conventions of discourse. Once relations, subjects and contents are established, there are observable constraints on such things as turn taking, who can ask questions, who can interrupt, and forms of address, among many other possibilities. However, in ELT textbooks, particularly the ones under investigation in the present study, apparently little attempt is made to make EFL learners aware of such real life issues as dialogue management strategies like turn taking or to even equip them with the verbal self-defense skills required to deal with numerous forms of infringement of their needs, hopes and wishes. What appears to be absent is an explicit teaching of such skills rather than simply exposing them to certain non-authentic forms of language use.

Positions as a whole

Table 4 shows the pattern of subject positions in all the textbooks as a whole. As it is presented in the table, occupational aspect with 64% of occurrences dominates the positions in both ELT textbooks under investigation. This position along with the third category, i.e., commercial position with 10% of occurrences in the analyzed textbooks mainly engage learners in business and economic activities.

The second position belongs to the societal position with 24% of occurrences. Throughout the textbooks, interactants were placed in a position to talk about themselves, to have a friendly chat with friends, to tell an interesting story and other similar positions. In fact, throughout the textbooks individuals were positioned in an ideal way that people take in a very idealized and friendly setting.

Table 4: Positions as a whole

Category	Number of occurrences	Total percentage
Occupational	160	64
Societal	62	24
Commercial	25	10
Total	249	98

Inferential statistics

With inferential statistics, we try to reach conclusions that extend beyond the immediate data alone. Statistical decisions based on evidence observed in samples always involve the possibility of error. Therefore, Statisticians do not deal with decisions based on certainty. They merely estimate the probability or improbability of occurrences of events. The purpose of inferential statistics is to make inferences regarding outcomes, based on a sample. This study used inferential statistics to make decisions to reject or not reject a null hypothesis. Level of significance 0.05 was chosen in the calculations.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for the Frequency of subcategories of content as a whole

χ^2	df	p
191/03	4	0/001**

According to Table 5, there is a statistically significant difference among the subcategories of content. Since, *Chi-Square Test* affected by the most frequency, therefore, the first and second categories constituted the great part of content as whole ($\chi^2=191.03$, $p=0.001$, $df=4$). Therefore, based on results extracted from tables 4.1 and 4.6 it is concluded that this study rejects the first null hypothesis which was mentioned earlier in chapter one, in other words, the normality of the distribution is not confirmed in the samples of this study.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test for the Frequency of subcategories of relations as a whole

χ^2	df	p
201/79	15	0/001**

According to Table 6, there is a statistically significant difference among the subcategories of relations. Since, *Chi-Square Test* affected by the most frequency, therefore, the first and second categories constitute the great part of relations as whole ($\chi^2=201.79$, $p=0.001$, $df=15$). Therefore, based on results extracted from tables 4.2 and 4.7, it is concluded that this study confirms the second and fourth null hypotheses which were mentioned earlier in chapter one, in other words, the normality of the distribution is confirmed in the samples of this study.

Table 7: Chi-Square Test for the Frequency of subcategories of positions as a whole

χ^2	df	p
118/21	2	0/001**

According to Table 7, there is a statistically significant difference among the subcategories of relations. Since, *Chi-Square Test* affected by the most frequency, therefore, the first category (occupational) constituted the great part of relations as whole ($\chi^2=118.21$, $p=0.001$, $df=2$). Therefore, based on results extracted from tables 4.3 and 4.8, it is concluded that this study rejects the third null hypothesis which was mentioned earlier in chapter one, in other words, the normality of the distribution is not confirmed in the samples of this study.

Discussion

As the findings of the present study showed, the mentioned internationally English textbooks are not ideologically biased as they are apparently following the ideology of neo-liberalism and free market which is an attempt to make individuals ready to engage in the world market, while having no other option to challenge the setting.

The researchers examined all analyzed relations and found out that inequality is rarely addressed in these interactions, and this signals to the point in regard with the tendency to conceal inequality in discourse. Since most of the relations in the textbooks are equal encounters, in the examined ELT textbooks apparently little attempt is made to make EFL learners aware of such issues as dialogue management strategies like turn taking or to even equip them with the verbal self-defense skills needed to deal with various forms of infringement of their wishes.

The results of data analysis suggested that occupational position with 64% of occurrences is the most frequently occurring position in the textbooks under investigation. The results of data analysis indicated that the categories of Speaker-audience and Friends relations are the most frequently occurring relation which is an equal relation between the interactants. There was not any exercise of power by any of the participants in the dialogues.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study also agreed with those of Riches (1999) who examined a selection of ELT textbooks which were marketed globally by five of the largest publishers in this field. The analysis of relations, roles and content showed that globally marketed textbooks emphasized the market and occupational aspects of these three categories. Even though actual place names, historical figures, dialects and settings were often avoided, it was still apparent that these ELT textbooks reflected the discourses of developed free market Western economies - a very specific cultural context. The analysis also revealed the strong influence of the neoclassical approach in textbook design.

The findings of the present study could be beneficial for language teachers, language learners, textbook designers, and textbook publishers because suggest that a good language teacher needs

to adopt acritical outlook towards the sociolinguistic studies. In effect, s/he may discuss related issues with the students with a critical point of view, a point that is ignored by many teachers. The findings of this study may also be of interest to policy makers since the effects of market ideology and the norms and values inculcated through textbooks should be considered in order to prevent cultural misunderstanding.

Limitations of the study

This research like all education researches included some limitations and delimitations. CDA is likely to remain more akin to literary criticism than a verifiable theory. The process of establishing frameworks and collecting data involves many subjective interpretations, and the conclusions drawn from such a process do not convince everyone. Categorizing the relations, subjects and contents of the ELT textbooks involves much subjective interpretation. No two people would classify the data in the same way. This is a fundamental problem in any textual analysis. It was not feasible for the researcher to apply CDA on all ELT text books; therefore, this study was delimited to advanced student's book of Summit2B and Passage2 which are currently taught in Iranian institutions.

REFERENCES

- Baleghizadeh, S., & Motahed, J. (2010). An analysis of the ideological content of internationally-developed British and American ELT textbooks. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 2 (2), 1-27.
- Bell, J., & Gower, R. (1998). Writing course materials for the world: A great compromise. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching* (pp. 116–129). Cambridge: Language Teaching Library, Cambridge University Press.
- Bolitho, R., & Jolly, D. (1998). A framework for materials writing. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching* (pp. 90–115). Cambridge: Cambridge Language Teaching Library, Cambridge University Press, 111.
- Bourne, J. (1996). English for speakers of other languages. In Mercer, N. and Swann, J. (Eds.), *Learning English: Development and diversity*, London: Routledge, 243-270.
- Beaugrande, R., & Dressler, W. (1981). *Introduction to Text Linguistics*. Harlow: Longman.
- Brown, G. (1990). Cultural values: the interpretation of discourse. *ELT Journal*, 44(1), 13
- Canagarajah, S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structures*. Den Haag: Mouton.
- Conley, J., & O'Barr, M. (1998). *Just Words: Language, Law and Power*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dua, H. (1994). *Hegemony of English*. Mysore: Yashoda Publication.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. London & New York: Longman, 131
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge.

- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). *Critical discourse analysis*. In vanDijk, T. A. (Ed.), *Discourse as social interaction: A multidisciplinary introduction*, London: Sage Publications Ltd. 2, 258-84.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality* (R. Hurley, Trans. Vol. I: An introduction). London, UK: Allen Lane.
- Gee, J.P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. London: Routledge.
- Giaschi, P. (2000). Gender positioning in education: A critical image analysis of ESL textbooks. *TESL Canada Journal*, 18, 32-46.
- Habermas, J. (1973). Systematically distorted communication. *Critical Sociology*. Ed. P. Connerton. Penguin.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). Spoken and written language. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 15-16.
- Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In Gurnperz, J. and Hymes, D. (eds.) *Directions in sociolinguistics*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, pp. 35-71.
- Kress, G. (1990). "Critical Discourse Analysis". In: *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 11: 84-97.
- Kress, G., & Hodge, B. (1979) *Language as ideology*. London/Boston/Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Labov, W. (1972) 'The study of language in its social context', in W. Labov (ed.), *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp. 183-259
- Pennycook, A. (1994). *The Cultural politics of English as an International Language*. London: Longman. 126-141, 159
- Pennycook, A. (2002). Critical applied linguistics. In Davies, A. and Elder, C. (Eds.), *Handbook of applied linguistics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 112-132.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Phillipson R. (2003). *English only Europe? Challenging language policy*. London: Routledge.
- Phillipson, R., & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1996). English only worldwide or language ecology. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 429-452.
- Prodromou, L. (1988). 'English as cultural action'. *ELT Journal*, 42 (2), 73-83
- Riches, D. (1999). *Problems of content specificity in ELT Textbooks: A critical discourse analytic study of ELT textbooks designed for the world market*. MA Thesis. The University of Surrey. June 30th.
- Rubdy R., & Saraceni, M. (2006). *English in the world: Global rules, global roles*. London: Continuum.
- Scollon, R. (2001). *Mediated discourse as social interaction*. London: Longman.
- Stern, H. (1983). *Fundamental Concept of language Teaching*. Oxford: OUP. P133
- Taki S. (2008). International and local curricula: The question of ideology. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 127-142.
- Tollefson, J. W. (1991). *Planning Language, Planning Inequality: language Policy in the Community*. London: Longman, 26, 28, 32
- Titscher, S. et al. (2000). *Methods of text and discourse analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T. (1985). Prejudice in Discourse. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4 (2), 249-283.

- Van Dijk, T. A. (2001). Critical discourse analysis. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis*, (pp.1-43). Malden, Mass: Blackwell.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (1993). Genre and field in critical discourse analysis, *Discourse & Society*, 4(2): 193-223.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (1995). The representation of social actors. In C. R. Caldas-Coulthard & M. Coulthard (Eds.), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis* (pp. 32-70). London: Routledge.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (1996). The representation of social actors in discourse. In Caldas-Coulthard, C. R., & Coulthard, M. (Eds.), *Texts and practices: Readings in critical discourse analysis*. London: Routledge, 32-70.
- Wang, W. (2006). Newspaper commentaries on terrorism in China and Australia: contrastive genre study (PhD thesis, university of Sydney, Sydney, Australia). Retrieved from <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au>.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2000). Critical practices: on the representation and interpretation of text. In Sarangi, S. and Coulthard, M. (Eds.), *Discourse and social life*, Harlow: Longman, 59-77.
- Wodak, R. (1989). Language, power and ideology. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, Philadelphia.
- Wodak, R. (1995). Critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis. In Verschuren, J., Ola-Osman, J. and Blommaert, J. (Eds.), *Handbook of pragmatics*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 204-210.
- Wodak, R. (1996). *Disorders of Discourse*. London: Longman.
- Wodak, et al. (1990). *Discourse and Racism: European Perspectives*. In: *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.*, 28, 175-199.

THE EFFECTS OF REFERENTIAL QUESTIONS ON CLASSROOM INTERACTYION OF INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS IN CONVERSATION CLASSES

Maryam Salariyan

Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch
Department of English, Bandar Abass Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
Corresponding author email: mariamsalarian65@gmail.com

Behzad Moridi Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of referential questions on classroom interaction of intermediate learners in conversation classes. The data was collected via self observation. Five EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers observed their own classes over five one hour-and-thirty minute session period in Pooyesh Language House Institute in Bandar Lengeh, Iran. Students were asked both display and referential questions and the number of students and responses were calculated for both question types to collect quantitative data. The analysis of quantitative data indicated that intermediate students participated more when asked a referential question. Furthermore referential questions engendered more responses compared to the responses given to display questions. The results suggested that teachers involved in teaching intermediate conversation classes should ask more referential questions to create more classroom interaction. However, display questions shouldn't be missed for checking students' comprehension and progress. It seemed that referential questions create more opportunities for language development and enable students to express their feelings and opinions, so they are believed to be efficient techniques in language classrooms.

KEYWORDS: Referential Questions, Display Questions, Classroom Interaction.

INTRODUCTION

So far teaching English has seen lots of movements starting from teaching grammar and vocabulary in schools to teaching English in a communicative way, which is the most used method in most institutes nowadays. Recently Language educators and language experts have been concerned more about interaction between teachers and students and among students themselves and how to improve it. They believe it is the most effective way in learning how to speak English especially in EFL settings, in which students have fewer opportunities to practice language. Since learners in EFL settings do not have enough ability to start an English conversation, it is believed teachers have to initiate that via asking learners questions. English language teaching has undergone many fluctuations over the years (Mirsharifi, 2007). Although the primary concern of language pedagogy until the mid-1980s was to find more effective "methods" of language teaching, this trend has now been replaced by a new movement, which focuses much more on language pedagogy that involves various aspects of teaching and learning processes and the contributions of the individual teachers to the profession (Widdowson, 1990).

“In the recent years the interactive features of classroom behavior, such as turn-taking, questioning and answering, negotiation of meaning and feedback have taken a great role in EFL programs” (Chaudron, 1988, p.10). “The background of this lies in the fact that second language learning is a highly interactive process” (Richard & Lockhart, 1994, p. 138). and the quality of this interaction is thought to have a considerable influence on learning (Ellis, 1994). “Teacher-student interaction plays an important role in learning since it provides learners with authentic input and feedback viewed influential in building inter language and producing comprehensible input” (Mirsharifi, 2007). This teacher-student interaction gains more importance in EFL settings since learners have fewer opportunities to use their foreign language to ask questions and provide feedback. (Farooq, 1998). Since then teachers' questioning has been the target of investigation for researchers working in the field of classroom second language learning (Banbrook & Skehan, 1990; Brock, 1986; Oberli, 2003). The most important factor within an effective EFL course is student participation. Students need to be stimulated. One of the most common methods and appealing activities in facilitating student participation is asking questions by teachers (Özcan, 2010). Teachers ask lots of questions with different classifications. Thompson (1997) classifies questions in terms of their form, content and purpose. The first category includes Yes/no questions and wh questions. The second category is about the information that the question seeks; whether it asks about information not directly related to the learner, which is called "outside facts" or it asks about "personal facts and opinions". The third category relates to the purpose of the question; whether it is asked to display knowledge or for communication. According to Ellis (1994), these two types are classified as display and referential questions. EFL teachers tend to ask display questions most of the time (Long & Sato, 1983; Thornbury, 1996). Display questions are questions which teachers already know their answers (Thompson, 1997; Thornbury, 1996). However, some researchers believe these questions produce less communication in classrooms (Kumaravadivelu, 1993), since they have only one correct answer. On the other hand, referential questions have more than one answer. They enable students to express their opinions and share information (Ellis, 1994; Thompson, 1997; Thornbury, 1996).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous literature on the effects of referential questions on the classroom interaction of students has shown that teachers use display questions more than referential questions to check the students' comprehension and progress. However it has been revealed that referential questions increase the classroom interaction of the students. Many researchers studied the effects of referential questions on the classroom interaction of learners like Long and Sato (1983), Brock (1986), Lynch (1991), Allwright and Bailey (1991), Sulter (2001, 2002), Shomoossi (2004), Liu (2005), Gung Eng Ho (2005), McGrew (2005), Y, Lee (2006), Yang (2006), Tan (2007), Fakeye (2007), and Behnam and Pouriran (2009). To begin with Long and Sato (1983) who studied the questions teachers use in ESL classrooms and compared them with the ones native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) use outside the classroom. They found that language teachers ask significantly more display questions in the classroom. While NS and NNS ask more referential questions outside the classroom. Shomoossi (2004) studied the effects of asking referential questions on the students' interaction and the frequency of display and referential questions in EFL classrooms. The findings showed that teachers used display questions more than referential

questions. He justified the high frequency of display questions to the low language ability of the students. He explained that in reading classes teachers need to check students' comprehension. It was also found that referential questions create more interaction in the classroom than display questions do, especially in higher-level language classes. Mirsharifi (2007) introduced a study about effective and less effective teacher questioning and corrective feedback behavior in an EFL context. The results revealed that effective teachers ask significantly more questions than less effective ones and provide more corrective feedback than their less effective counterparts. Moreover the study revealed that effective teachers ask referential questions far more often than they ask display questions. Fakeye (2007) studied teacher's questioning behavior and ESL classroom interaction pattern. He used classroom interaction observation schedule which comprised a checklist on the teacher's use of questions in ESL lessons. The researcher carried out observation on teachers questioning behavior in ESL classroom. The researcher took note of teacher questions, their number, and their function. Moreover he took note of the amount and frequency of teacher-student and student-teacher interaction. Furthermore he took note of the length of students' responses to different questions types. In addition the number of referential questions and display questions were asked and their results were recorded. The study revealed that display questions are used more than referential questions in ESL classes for checking what has been taught previously. Behnam and Pouriran (2009) studied classroom discourse; analyzing teacher/ learner interaction in ESL task-based classrooms in Iran. The results illustrated that display questions are used more than referential questions; however referential questions produce more classroom interaction. Özcan (2010) studied the effect of asking referential questions on the participation and oral production of lower level language learners in reading classes. The results showed that although display questions do not have much effect on students' language development, they should not be dismissed. They are necessary to check students' comprehension and progress. On the other hand, referential questions enable students express their opinions and feelings. They are effective in promoting more student-talk and interaction in the classroom. However, although referential questions can be used for both higher and lower level language classes; they engender better results in higher level ones. Van Lier (1988) points out: "If the keys to learning are exposure to input and meaningful interaction with other speakers, we must find out what input and interaction the classroom can provide... we must study in detail the use of language in the classroom in order to see if and how learning comes about through the different ways of interaction in the classroom". He also pointed out that interaction is essential for language learning which occurs in and through participation in speech events, which is talking to others, or making conversation (Van Lier, 1988:77-78). Seliger's (1983) paper, "Does practice make perfect?: a study of Interaction patterns and L2 competence", was about a practical pedagogic issue. He studied classroom interaction and two types of learners, high-input generators (HIGs) and low input generators (LIGs). He concluded that learners, due to some cognitive factors, are divided to two types; HIGs who generate more interaction and LIGs who generate less interaction and, so, need more practice.

Krashen (1985) attributes the progress in language acquisition to comprehensible input, saying that output is possible as a result of acquired competence. In other words, when performers speak, they encourage input. In contrast, Long (1983) proposed a model in which the role of conversation (interaction) in getting comprehensible input and its primacy are emphasized.

Fillmore (Ellis, 1985:160) has investigated how classroom interaction affects the rate of SLA. He concluded that pupils will learn most successfully when they are given ample opportunities to interact in conversation. So in this sense, we can say how a lesson progresses and whether it is successful largely depend on the interaction between the students and the teacher. Seliger (1983) considered interaction as practicing what has been taught during the lesson. He considered whatever students say even a simple yes/ no as interaction on the part of student. Students' replies vary from a word to several sentences according the questions they are asked.

RESEARSH QUESTIONS

- 1- Does use of referential questions facilitates classroom interaction in intermediate classes?
- 2- Do referential questions engender more responses from the students?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Subjects who took part in this study were five EFL teachers from Pooyesh Language House and fifty three intermediate-level- learners. Three teachers were female and two were male. Two teachers had M.A in TEFL. The others had B.A in TEFL. The teachers were within different age range and with different experience. A simple random sampling as well as a convenience sampling was used in selecting the participants according to the project conditions.

Instruments

The data was collected through self-observation. This procedure required participants to observe their own internal cognitive or emotional states. The observers, who were five EFL teachers, filled in observation schedule (tally sheets), which was adopted from Seda Özcan, 2010. Two types of tally sheets were used. The first observed teachers' use of questions; what types of questions did they use in the classroom. And how many questions of each type. The second tally sheet identified the number of students who responded to each question and the number of responses.

Procedure

This study was quantitative. The data for this study was collected via quantitative data collection instrument. The data was provided by numerical results in tally sheets to mark the number of questions were asked in each session, the number of students who participated after each question was asked and the number of responses supplied by students. Five teachers observed their own classes. It took 5 one hour-and-thirty minute sessions. The classes were video and audio taped, and the teachers filled tally sheets to state their observation. It took about twenty minutes to complete the tally sheets. They were immediately transcribed, coded and audio taped.

Data analysis

Five teachers observed what kind of question they used, referential or display. The questions were transcribed in both tally sheets. The transcription was done in a written way. Referential questions got one point; display questions got zero point. The number of referential questions and

display questions that were used in each session were calculated. Moreover the total number of questions (referential and display) that were asked each session were calculated. The data collected from first tally sheet was imported and analyzed using the statistical package for the social science (SPSS package). In order to answer the first research question, in the second tally sheet the number of students who responded after each question (referential or display) was asked were calculated. For the second research question, the number of responses after each question was asked was calculated. The data collected from the second tally sheet was imported and analyzed using SPSS package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher 1

Table 1: Number of Questions, Students and Responses in Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher1's class

	Display question	Student responding (Display)	Response (Display)	Referential question	Student responding (Referential)	Response (Referential)
Session 1	3	4	4	3	11	11
Session 2	3	5	5	3	12	13
Session 3	3	8	10	3	12	18
Session 4	3	5	5	3	12	20
Session 5	3	3	3	3	12	19
Total	15	25	27	15	59	81

When display questions were asked, in session 1 26.6% (4 out of 15) of the total students who participated during the 90-minute instruction took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number is 73.3% (11 out of 15) for the referential questions. Likewise, 73.3% (11 out of 15) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 26.6% (4 out of 15). In session 2, when display questions were asked 29.4% (5 out of 17) of the total number of students who participated took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number was 70.5% (12 out of 17) for the referential questions.. Likewise, 72.2% (13 out of 18) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 27.7% (5 out of 18). In session 3, when display questions were asked 40% (8 out of 20) of the total students who participated took part in the lesson, while this number is 60% (12 out of 20) for the referential questions. Likewise, 69% (18 out of 26) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 38.4% (10 out of 26). In session 4, 29.4% (5 out of 17) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while this number is 70.5% (12 out of 17) for the referential questions. Likewise, 80% (20 out of 25) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 20% (5 out of 25). In session 5, 20% (3 out of 15) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while 80% (12 out of 15) took part in the lesson when referential questions

were asked.. Likewise, 86.3% (19 out of 22) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 13.6% (3 out of 22). Figure 1 is a bar chart that illustrates the frequency of the students responding to each question type and the frequency of the responses supplied to each question type in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. As obvious in the figure, the students who interacted in the referential question-and-answer exchanges outnumbered those who interacted in the display question-and-answer exchanges. Furthermore the responses supplied to referential questions outnumbered the ones supplied to display questions.

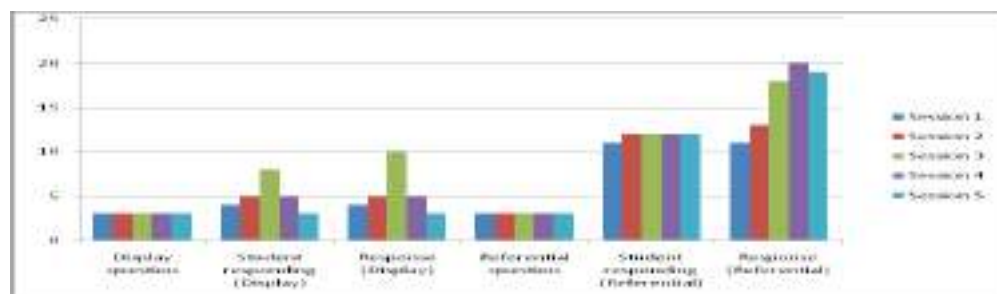


Figure 1: Frequency of students responding and the responses in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 1's class

The justification why there are more responses than the number of students was that some of the questions had for more than one correct response; thus, some students supplied more than one answer. In fact, the remarkable difference in partaking that each question type generates was due to the broad range of probable answers that students could produce when a referential question was inquired.

Teacher 2

The number of students who participated when both types of question were inquired and the number of responses given to those questions in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 are provided in Table 4.2 below.

Table 2: Number of Questions, Students and Responses in Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 2's class

	Display question	Student responding (Display)	Response (Display)	Referential question	Student responding (Referential)	Response (Referential)
Session 1	3	5	6	3	21	23
Session 2	3	16	17	3	53	53
Session 3	3	3	3	3	25	26
Session 4	3	4	4	3	23	23
Session 5	3	5	5	3	24	26
Total	15	33	35	15	146	151

When display questions were asked, in session 1 19.2% (45out of 26) of the total students who participated during the 90-minute instruction took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number is 80.7% (21out of 26) for the referential questions. Likewise, 79.3% (23out of

29) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 20.6% (6 out of 29). In session 2, when display questions were asked 23.1 % (16 out of 60) of the total number of students who participated took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number was 76.8% (53 out of 69) for the referential questions.. Likewise, 75.7% (53 out of 70) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 24.2% (17 out of 70). In session 3, when display questions were asked 10.7% (3 out of 28) of the total students who participated took part in the lesson, while this number is 89.2% (25 out of 28) for the referential questions. Likewise, 89.6% (26 out of 29) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 10.3 % (3 out of 29). In session 4, 14.8% (4 out of 27) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while this number is 85.1% (23 out of 27) for the referential questions. Likewise, 85.1% (23 out of 27) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 14.8% (4 out of 27). In session 5, 17.2% (5 out of 29) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while 82.7% (24 out of 29) took part in the lesson when referential questions were asked. . Likewise, 83.8% (26 out of 31) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 16.1% (5 out of 31). Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of the students responding to each question type and the frequency of the responses supplied to each question type in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. As obvious in the figure, the students who interacted in the referential question-and-answer exchanges outnumbered those who interacted in the display question-and-answer exchanges. Furthermore the responses supplied to referential questions outnumbered the ones supplied to display questions.

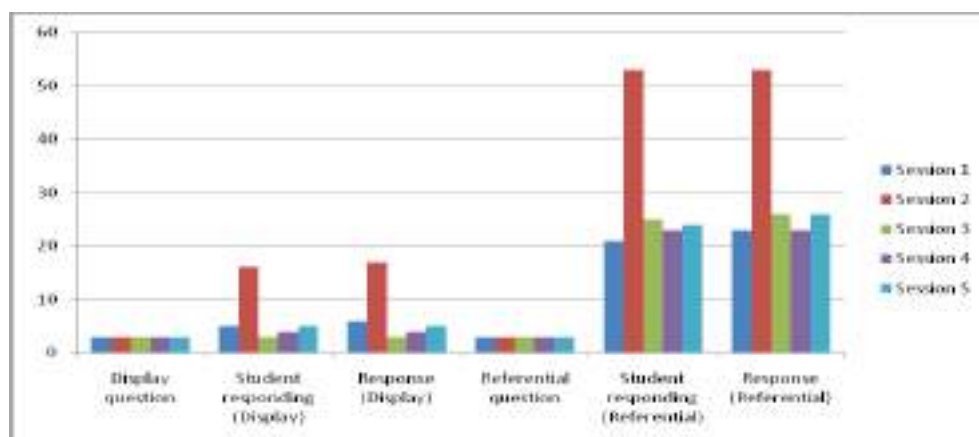


Figure 2: Frequency of students responding and the responses in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 2's class

Teacher 3

Table 3: Number of Questions, Students and Responses in Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 3's class

	Display question	Student responding (Display)	Response (Display)	Referential question	Student responding (Referential)	Response (Referential)
Session 1	3	4	4	3	29	41
Session 2	3	4	4	3	24	27
Session 3	3	3	3	3	21	23
Session 4	3	3	3	3	9	9
Session 5	3	3	3	3	16	16
Total	15	17	17	15	99	116

In session 1 when display questions were asked, 12.1% (4 out of 33) of the total students participated in the question-and-answer exchanges, nevertheless this number is 87.8% (29 out of 33) for the referential questions. In the same way, 91.1% (41 out of 45) of the total responses were given to referential questions, yet the percentage of responses supplied to display questions was only 8.8% (4 out of 45). In session 2, when display questions were asked 14.2 % (4 out of 28) of the total number of students who participated took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number was 85.7% (24 out of 28) for the referential questions. Likewise, 87% (27 out of 31) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 12.9% (4 out of 31). In session 3, when display questions were asked 12.5% (3 out of 24) of the total students who participated took part in the lesson, while this number is 87.5% (21 out of 24) for the referential questions. Likewise, 88.4% (23 out of 26) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 11.5 % (3 out of 26). In session 4, 25% (3 out of 12) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while this number is 75 % (9 out of 12) for the referential questions. Likewise, 75% (9 out of 12) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 25% (3 out of 12). In session 5, 15.7% (3 out of 19) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while 84.2% (16 out of 19) took part in the lesson when referential questions were asked. . Likewise, 84.2% (16 out of 19) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 15.7% (3 out of 19). Figure 3 illustrates the frequency of the students responding to each question type and the frequency of the responses supplied to each question type in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. As obvious in the figure, the students who interacted in the referential question-and-answer exchanges outnumbered those who interacted in the display question-and-answer exchanges. Furthermore the responses supplied to referential questions outnumbered the ones supplied to display questions.

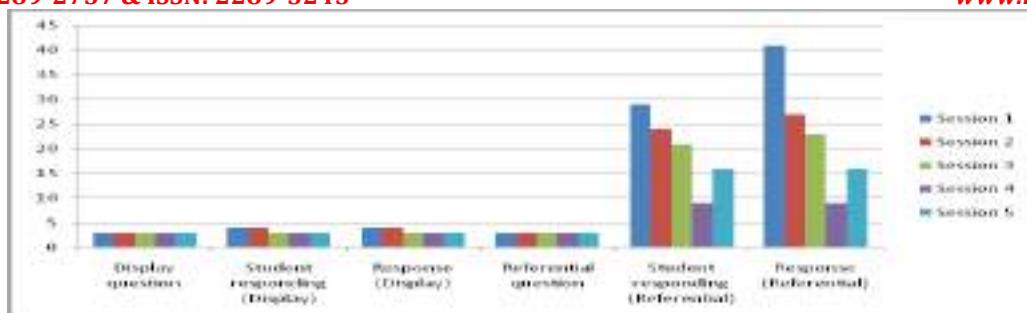


Figure 3: Frequency of students responding and the responses in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 3's class

Teacher 4

Table 4: Number of Questions, Students and Responses in Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 4's class

	Display question	Student responding (Display)	Response (Display)	Referential question	Student responding (Referential)	Response (Referential)
Session 1	3	8	8	3	22	25
Session 2	3	4	6	3	18	22
Session 3	3	6	7	3	27	29
Session 4	3	14	16	3	19	22
Session 5	3	7	7	3	21	40
Total	15	39	44	15	107	140

26.6% (8 out of 30) of the total students participated in the question-and-answer exchanges when display questions were asked, on the other hand, this number is 73.3% (22 out of 30) for the referential questions. Correspondingly, 75.7% (26 out of 33) of the total responses were provided for referential questions, however the percentage of responses supplied to display questions was just 24.2% (8 out of 33). In session 2, when display questions were asked 18.1% (4 out of 22) of the total number of students who participated took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number was 81.8% (18 out of 22) for the referential questions.. Likewise, 78.5% (22 out of 28) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 21.4% (6 out of 28). In session 3, when display questions were asked 18.1% (6 out of 33) of the total students who participated took part in the lesson, while this number is 81.8% (27 out of 33) for the referential questions. Likewise, 80.5% (29 out of 36) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 19.4% (7 out of 36). In session 4, 42.4% (14 out of 33) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while this number is 57.5% (19 out of 33) for the referential questions. Likewise, 57.8% (22 out of 38) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 42.1% (16 out of 38). In session 5, 25% (7 out of 28) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while 75% (21 out of 28) took part in the lesson when referential questions were asked. . Likewise, 85.1% (40 out of 47) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of

responses were given to display questions was only 14.8 % (7 out of 47). The illustration of the frequency of the students responding to each question type and the frequency of the responses supplied to each question type in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 is shown in Figure 4. As the figure depicts, the number of students who interacted in the referential question-and-answer conversations was larger than those who took part in the display question-and-answer exchanges.

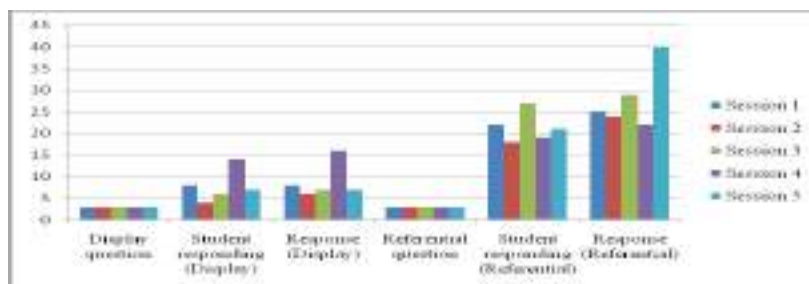


Figure 4: Frequency of students responding and the responses in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 4's class

Teacher 5

Table 5: Number of Questions, Students and Responses in Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 5's class

	Display question	Student responding (Display)	Response (Display)	Referential question	Student responding (Referential)	Response (Referential)
Session 1	3	3	3	3	20	20
Session 2	3	4	4	3	24	24
Session 3	3	3	3	3	20	20
Session 4	3	5	5	3	15	15
Session 5	3	5	5	3	17	17
Total	15	20	20	15	96	96

In session 1 13 % (3 out of 23) of the total students took part in the question-and-answer exchanges when display questions were asked, in contrast, this number is 86.9% (20 out of 23) for the referential questions. Also, 86.9 % (20 out of 23) of the total responses were supplied for referential questions, still the percentage of responses provided to display questions was only 13 % (3 out of 23). In session 2, when display questions were asked 14.2 % (4 out of 28) of the total number of students who participated took part in the question-and-answer exchanges, while this number was 85.7 % (24 out of 28) for the referential questions. Likewise, 85.7 % (24 out of 28) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 14.2 % (4 out of 28). In session 3, when display questions were asked 13% (3 out of 23) of the total students who participated took part in the lesson, while this number is 86.9 % (20 out of 23) for the referential questions. Likewise, 86.9 % (20 out of 23) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 13 % (3 out of 23). In session 5, 25 % (5 out of 20) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while this number is 75 % (15 out of 20) for the referential questions. Likewise, 75 % (15 out of 20) of the total responses

supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 25 % (5 out of 20). In session 5, 22.7 % (5 out of 22) of the total number of students participated when display questions were asked, while 77.2 % (17 out of 22) took part in the lesson when referential questions were asked. . Likewise, 77.2 % (17 out of 22) of the total responses supplied to referential questions, however the percentage of responses were given to display questions was only 22.7 % (5 out of 22). Figure 5 is a bar chart that displays the frequency of the students responding to each question type and the frequency of the responses supplied to each question type in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The figure illustrates that the students who took part in the referential question-and-answer exchanges outnumbered those who interacted in the display question-and-answer conversations.

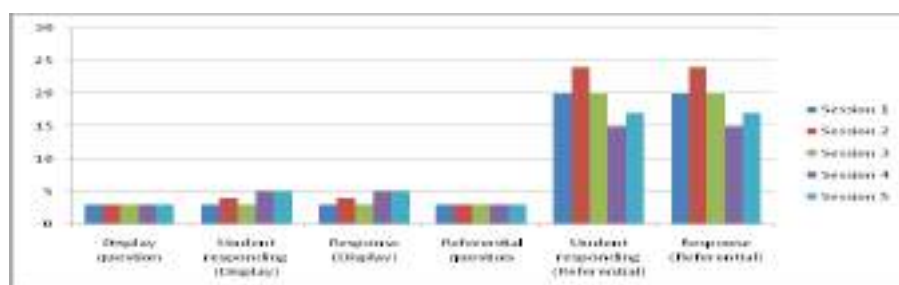


Figure 5: Frequency of students responding and the responses in sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in teacher 5's class

Discussion

The results of the study showed that referential questions produced more classroom interaction in intermediate classes than display questions did. When students were asked about their opinions/ experiences, all of them participated, explaining what did they think/ what happened to them. Some students mentioned more than one experience. Most of the students justified their beliefs and their opinions. They also interrupted each other, expressing their agreement/disagreement. In fact the students were free to say whatever they want/ believe. The communication between students and teacher was much natural and look like the one that may occur outside the classroom. A noticeable point in here was the amount of teacher talk, which was reduced. Therefore it was evidenced during the observation that referential questions engendered more responses from students. It seemed that referential questions create more opportunity for language development and enable the students to express their feelings and opinions. Moreover referential questions seemed to create more realistic situations in language classrooms.

Since referential questions increase the amount of learner output which leads to more language development, then they are believed to be efficient techniques in language classrooms, especially in those contexts where the classroom provides the only opportunity to produce the target language i.e. EFL contexts.

On the other hand, when teachers wanted to check students' comprehension, they asked display questions. Most of the time one or two students could participate, giving the correct answer. In fact the two students were giving the same answer, say, in different words. Sometimes one of the students gave the correct answer; the other supplied an example for what his/her peer said. Usually a silence followed supplying the correct answer in the case of display questions. However, display questions were good opportunities for less proficient students to participate.

Furthermore, it was noticed that in the case of display questions the amount of teacher talk increased; teachers usually extended on the given information.

So it was inferred from the obtained data that display questions, require short answers, which contain small pieces of information e.g. antonyms and synonyms, word pronunciation and meaning, comprehension checks, etc. Thus it is believed that this kind of questions do not produce much classroom interaction. However, it seems that the use of display questions can encourage language learners especially the poor ones to get interested. It may also help teachers provide comprehensible input for learners. While, referential questions usually require long answers which contain interpretation, elaboration, giving opinions, etc. When students were asked about the meaning/the synonym/ the antonym of a word, just one or two students could participate, even the other student could add nothing, just repeating what his classmate said in different words. However, it would be dangerous to generalize that referential questions are more useful for language learning, or display ones are useless. Each context requires an appropriate strategy for itself. Allwright and Bailey (1990) maintain that it is a wrong belief on the part of teachers to aim at just increasing the amount of interaction in the class. Rather they have to adjust their teaching style to learners' strategies (pp. 144-5).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study allowed the author to draw some conclusions.

Firstly, it seems that referential questions produce more classroom interaction. In fact, students tended to participate more and express their feelings and opinions when they asked a referential question. This finding is in line with Özcan (2010) and Shomossi's (1997) findings who concluded that referential questions enhance students' participation in the classroom. Moreover, the findings confirmed that referential questions engender more responses from students. In fact, this kind of questions gets the students to become more interested to participate (e.g. the students did like to participate and supply more than one answer when they were asked about their experiences and opinions.). This finding is, also, in line with Özcan (2010) and Shomossi's (1997) findings and other researchers' findings (e.g. Behnam and Pouriran (2009), and Qashoa (2013).) who found the students in their studies tend to participate more when asked about their opinions. On the other hand, the findings suggested that teachers use display questions to check students' understanding. (e.g. meaning, antonyms and synonyms, word pronunciation ,and comprehension checks.). This finding is also in line with Özcan (2010) and Shomossi's (1997) findings and other researchers' findings (e.g. Mirsharifi, 2007; Xiao-yan, 2006).

Furthermore, the findings evidenced that display questions produce less classroom interaction. The reason for that is that display questions have limited answers. When a student gets the correct answer, others have nothing to add. This finding is in line with Özcan (2010), Shomossi (1997), and Temiz's (2012) findings. Finally, the results showed that although display questions do not have much effect on students' language development, they should not be dismissed, since they are needed to check students' progress, understanding and comprehension. In addition, display questions are effective tools that enable teachers to elicit language and concepts. On the other hand, referential questions create realistic situations in the classroom enabling students to

express ideas, opinions and feelings. They are effective in generating more responses and promoting more student-talk and interaction in the classroom. However the study was concerned about the effects of referential questions, not the effects of display questions. Moreover it investigated the effects of referential questions on intermediate students' participation, not on other levels' participation. Furthermore the number of intermediate learners who participated in the study was limited which affected the generalizability of the study results.

REFERENCES

- Allwright, D., & Bailey K. M. (1990). *Focus on the language classroom: an introduction to classroom*
- Allwright, D., & Bailey, K.M. (1991). *Focus on the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge
- Banbrook, L., & Skehan, P. (1990). Classroom and Display Questions. In Brumfit, C. and Mitchell, R. (eds). *Research in language classroom Modern English Publications and the British Council*. 150
- Behnam, B., & Pouriran, Y. (2009). Classroom discourse: Analyzing teacher/learner interaction in Iranian EFL task-based classrooms. *Porta Linguarum*, 117-13
- Chaudron, D. (1988). *Second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- David, F. (2007). Teacher's questioning behavior and ESL classroom interaction pattern. *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal*, 2, 127-31.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- Fakeye, D. O. (2007) Teacher's Questioning Behavior and ESL Classroom Interaction Pattern, *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal*, 2(2), 127-131
- Farooq, M. (1998). Analyzing teacher's questioning strategies, feedback and learners' outcomes Retrieved. December 25, 2005, from <http://www.cels.bham.ac.uk/resources/essays>
- Krashen, S.D. (1985). *Input Hypothesis: issues and implications*. London: Longman
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The postmethod condition: Emerging strategies for second/foreign Language Teacher Education (pp. 118-131).
- Lee, Y.A. (2006). Respecifying display questions: Instructional resources for language teaching. *Tesol Quarterly*, 40(4), 691- 713.
- Liao, X, Q. (2001). Information gaps in communicative classroom. <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/39> (4), 38.htm Retrieved on September 5, 2006.
- Liu, W. (2005). Design of Text-based Questions from the Study of Typology of Questions. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 2(5), 16-24.
- Long, M., & Sato, C. (1983). Classroom Foreigner Talk Discourse: Forms and Functions of Teachers' questions. In Seliger and Long (eds.) *Classroom Oriented Research in Second Language Acquisition*. Newbury House.
- Long, M. (1983). Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation in the second language
- Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction and second language acquisition. In H. Winitz (ed.)
- Long, M. H., & Sato, C. J. (1983). Classroom foreigner talk discourse: forms and functions of teacher's questions. In Seliger M. H. and Long M. H. (eds). *Classroom- oriented research in second language acquisition*. (pp. 268-285). Rowley, M.A: Newbury House.
- Lynch, T. (1991). Questioning roles in the classroom. *ELT Journal*, 45, 201-210.

- McGrew, S. (2005). Student questions in an intermediate modern Hebrew Classroom. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 21(1), 61-78
- Mirsharifi, F. (2007). Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji, No. 41, Special Issue, English, 2008, 5-23
- Özcan, S. (2010). The effects of asking referential questions on the participation and oral production of lower level language learners in reading classes. Retrieved Jan, 2010 from <http://www.metu.academia.edu/sedaozcan/papers>. Publisher: etd.lib.metu.edu.tr.
- Plato. (2008b). The republic (B. Jowett, Trans.). The Project Gutenberg. Retrieved from http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1497/1497-h/1497-h.htm#link2H_4_0003
- Pour jafarian, N., & Rashidi, N. (2013). Retrieved May, 2013 from <http://portal.farseedu.in/Portal/channels/FckUploaded/Files/fa/4876>
- Qashoa, S. (2013). The effects of teacher question types and syntactic structures on EFL classroom interaction. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 2305-455
- Seliger, H. W. (1983). Learner interaction in the classroom and its effect on language acquisition. In
- Shomoossi, N. (2004). The effect of teacher's questioning behaviour on EFL classroom interaction: A classroom research study. *The Reading Matrix*, 4, 96-104.
- Suter, C. (2001). «Exploring teachers' questions and feedback». Retrieved on September 10, 2004, from <http://www.cels.bham.ac.uk/resources/essays/suter1.pdf>. Longman dictionary
- Suter, C. (2002). Analyzing spoken discourse in the EFL classroom. Retrieved on September 20, 2009, from <http://www.cels.bham.ac.uk/resources/essays/suter2.pdf>.
- Tan, Z. (2007). Questioning in Chinese University EL Classrooms. *RELC Journal*, 38(1), 87-103.
- Temiz, G. (2012). The impact of teacher questions on student learning in EFL. *The Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 2(2), 2146-7463
- Thombury, S. (1996). Teachers research teacher talk. *ELT Journal*, 50, 279-289.
- Thompson, G. (1997). Training teachers to ask questions. *ELT Journal*, 51, 99-105.
- Van Lier, L. (1988). *The Classroom and the Language Learner*. London: Longman
- Widowson, H. G. (1990). Aspects of language teaching. Oxford University Press. language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly* 28(1), 27-48.
- Xiao-Yan. (2006). Teacher Talk and EFL in university classrooms. Retrieved from <http://www.Wenku.baidu.com/view/808402d67a20029bd642doc.htm/>
- Yang, H. (2006). A report of an ESL classroom observation in two language schools in Auckland. *TESL Canada Journal/Revue TESL DU Canada*, 23 (2), 1-11.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL TEACHER'S SELF- EFFICACY WITH THEIR STUDENT'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SPEAKING ANXIETY

Masuomeh Ebadi

Department of English ,Urmia Branch, Islamic Azad University,Urmia,Iran
E-mail: Saba.ebadi79@gmail.com

Farahnaz Rimani Nikou (corresponding author)

Department of English ,Urmia Branch, Islamic Azad University, Urmia,Iran
E-mail:Ni.kou@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present study tried to investigate the relationship between Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' self-efficacy with their students' Emotional intelligence and speaking anxiety. The participants of present research consisted of 2 groups. The first group consisted of 100 EFL students (male and female) who were selected from among the senior learners of the Islamic Azad Universities of Rodehen and south branch of Tehran. The second group of participants consisted of 30 Iranian EFL teachers. To this end, three questionnaires were used: The first questionnaire was students' speaking anxiety, a self-reporting questionnaire with a five Likert-type scale mainly on the basis of FLCAS developed by Horwitz, et al (1986). The second questionnaire was students' EI inventory developed by Bar-On (1997), and the third questionnaire was teacher's self-efficacy scale. Then, two statistical procedures were used to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables of the study. Through the use of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and Multiple Regression all the null hypotheses were tested. The result of the Pearson correlation showed that there was a significant negative relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' self-efficacy and learners' speaking anxiety. It also proved that there was a significant positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence. The result of Multiple Regressions indicated that students' gender had no effect on their speaking anxiety and emotional intelligence.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Quotient, Intelligence Quotient, Anxiety, Foreign Language Anxiety, Self-Efficacy, Teachers' Self-Efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who has ever taken a foreign language course in school or university can testify to the fact that it is not always an easy task. One interesting question in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is why some learners successfully learn or speak a second language while other learners do not (Tallon, 2004). Several reasons have been posited for this, including individual factors such as cognitive abilities, personality characteristics, aptitude, and affective factors. This study will focus on one of the most important affective variables, namely anxiety.

There is no doubt that this construct has been a matter of discussion in the last three decades and this is due to its pervasive effects on foreign language learning (FLL) (Idri, 2012). According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), foreign language anxiety is “a distinct complex of self perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 31). The major aim of any academic institution is to focus on education and excellence of its students. The access to this reality depends on how to recognize individual’s emotions and cognition of psychological factors such as anxiety which might act as a barrier and inhibits foreign language learning (Mohammadi & Mosalou, 2012; Behjat, 2012). This research is an attempt to deal with the issues and problems such as anxiety, which might hinder the process via which one can learn English language efficiently. Teachers play significant role in reducing anxiety. Thus, they should care about speaking anxiety in the class. In order to decrease anxiety, teachers with high self-efficacy belief can help their student control oral speech anxiety. Thus, they have to provide relaxed and any easy setting for language learners to control anxiety. There is a general feeling that the role of emotions has not been well studied yet in SLA and, as a consequence, there is a growing interest to include the role of emotions as a new source to measure the students’ Individual Differences (ID) in the research agenda (Rodriguez, as cited in Mohammadi & Mosalou, 2012). Recently many studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between EI and success in learning English as a foreign language academic (Elias & Arnold, 2006; Fahim & Pishgadam, 2007; Motallebzadeh, 2009). Therefore, EI should be considered as an important factor in the field of language education so that language learners can improve their language knowledge and performance through application of their EI skills (Karaman, 2012). Since, among foreign language learning skills, speaking is the most problematic and anxiety provoking area for language learners, the aim of this research is to investigate the ways to overcome foreign language learners’ speech anxiety. Many students feel unpleasant and uneasy when asked them to speak in English in front of others and try to avoid speaking. Most of the time, they feel anxious when they give an oral presentation or speaking in English in classroom activities (Mohammadi & Mosalou, 2012). Moreover, students’ feelings of discomfort and anxiety in English class can’t be over looked. So, teacher’s efficacy is an important factor in confronting this problem. According to Bandura (1997), teachers who believe they will be successful set higher goals for themselves and their students try harder to achieve those goals, and persist through obstacles. Teachers should pay attention to students’ speaking anxiety as a barrier in foreign language learning and to EI as an important factor that affects the language learning process and give learners an opportunity to improve the capacity for English learning design effective teaching methods that can help to reduce language anxiety and to create less stressful learning atmosphere.

The study has significance for universities and language institutions that support students and train them in the area of EQ and language anxiety. The findings from this research also can be used to help students find suitable strategies to overcome their anxiety problem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is based on research about relationship between teacher self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), learners' emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On, 1997, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990), and speaking anxiety.

A Brief History and Definition of Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1995), as a science journalist, formulated emotional intelligence (EI) in terms of a theory of performance through his book *Emotional Intelligence*. He adds that an emotional intelligence theory of performance has direct applicability to the domain of work and organizational effectiveness, particularly in predicting and developing excellence in every kind of job and at every level, from sales to leadership. He defined emotional intelligence "as an ability being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping; the ability to think; to empathize and to hope" (p. 34).

Another leading researcher of the emotional intelligence is Reuven Bar-on, the originator of the term emotional quotient (EQ). While Goleman's name is exactly corresponded with the popularization of EI, equally has been influenced on the work of Bar-On (1997, 2000), who has developed the first operational index for the assessment of emotional intelligence. Notably, Bar-On's definition of EI is not that far removed from Goleman's in that he seems to use personality traits (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002). Salovey and Mayer (1990) had published the seminal article emotional intelligence, the most influential statement of EI theory in its current form. Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, manage and regulate emotion to promote intellectual growth. Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, understand and use the knowledge originated from our emotions to reduce impulses and enhance relationship among people (Motallebzadeh, 2009).

Models of Emotional Intelligence

Since its emergence in 1990's, the concept of Emotional Intelligence was introduced in popular media and scientific field, leading to several definitions and two competing models of EQ (Motallebzadeh, 2009). Roohani (2009) mentioned that emotional intelligence can be investigated in two ways: ability models and mixed models. Ability model refers to emotional intelligence as a pure form of mental ability and also as a pure intelligence. On the other hand, the proponents of mixed model expanded the meaning of EQ by combining cognitive ability with personality traits.

Mayer and Salovey (1990) proposed an ability model with a two part form, speaking first of the general processing of emotional information, and secondly specifying the skills involved in such processing (Motallebzadeh, 2009).

Two mixed models of EI were introduced by Goleman and Bar-on. They defined emotional intelligence in different term. Goleman (1998) described a mixed model in terms of performance, individual abilities and competencies, integrating personality trait and employing their similar effects on performance in the work place. While Bar-on's model provided personality basis,

emphasizing the co-dependence of the ability aspects of emotional intelligence with personality traits and their application to personal wellbeing (Nassimi, 2009).

Self-efficacy

Bandura (1977) introduced the theory of self-efficacy beliefs as an assessment of individual's abilities to attain a desired level of performance in a given endeavor.

What is self-efficacy? Linguistics and educators provide us with different definitions of self-efficacy as followed:

Okorodudu (2012) stated that self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to perform a given task. Self-efficacy is about "learning how to persevere when one does not succeed" (Pajares, 2005, p. 345). Self-efficacy is the beliefs about one's capabilities to manage and complete a future action required to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1997). It refers to "students' sense of ability to perform an activity influences their success, which in turn contributes to increased effort and persistence" (Aliegro, 2006, p.18). As it can be drawn from the definitions of the concept 'self-efficacy', all of the definitions share a common core: individuals' beliefs have a significant role in their life learning journey. Individuals' self-efficacy beliefs have an important effect on how they think, feel, motivate themselves and take actions. These beliefs can heighten or decrease their success in every field of their lives. In other words, individuals design their own future by their sense of self-efficacy (Tilfarlioglu & Ciftci, 2011). The task of creating learning environments conducive to the development of cognitive competencies focuses on teachers' talents and self-efficacy beliefs. Some evidence demonstrates that teacher's beliefs in their instructional capabilities determine how they organize academic tasks in their class and form student's evaluations of their intellectual abilities. Teachers who have a high self-efficacy belief make sustained effort and use proper techniques on the belief that stubborn students are teachable and flexible. In contrast, teachers with low sense of efficacy spend more time on nonacademic activities, make little effort and there is nothing to do in the classroom for motivating and supporting students (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997, 1977), teacher self-efficacy is a cluster of personal efficacy beliefs that refer to the specific domain of the teacher's professional behavior. Teacher efficacy is about a teacher's expectation that he or she bring about student learning. Teacher efficacy is of interest to school improvement researchers because teacher efficacy consistently predicts willingness to try out new teaching ideas. Teacher efficacy contributes to achievement because high efficacy teachers try harder, use management strategies that stimulate student autonomy, attend more closely to low ability student needs, and modify students' ability perceptions. Teachers' self-efficacy has been shown to predict student motivation and achievement (Ross, 1992; 1998). In addition, teachers' efficacy beliefs also relate to their behavior in the classroom. Efficacy affects the effort they invest in teaching, the goals they set, and their level of aspiration. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy tend to exhibit greater levels of planning and organization (Allinder, 1994).

Structure of Self-efficacy Scales

Bandura (1997) stated that efficacy belief differ in level, generality, and strength as following:

Level: when tasks are ordered in level of difficulty, the efficacy expectations of different individuals may be limited to the simple activities, extend to moderately difficult ones, or include the most taxing performance demands within a certain range of functioning.

Generality: Efficacy expectations also differ in generality. Individuals may judge themselves efficacious across a wide range of tasks or only in particular domain of functioning. Generality vary on different aspects, including the degree of similarity of tasks, the qualities in which abilities are expressed (behavioral, cognitive and affective) traits of situations, and people characteristics toward which the behavior is directed.

Some experiences create limited mastery expectations. Others have a more generalized efficacy belief that ranges well beyond the specified treatment situation.

Strength: expectancies vary in strength. Weak expectations are easily extinguishable by disconfirming experiences, whereas individuals who have a strong efficacy belief in their abilities will persevere in their making efforts disconfirming experiences and problems. The stronger personal efficacy belief, however, the more perseverance and the higher success will be achieved.

Language Anxiety

Language anxiety is complex and multidimensional issue. Different researchers define notion of anxiety with various perspectives. As Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) have noted that foreign language anxiety should not be considered as “fear transferred to foreign language anxiety rather ,we need to conceive foreign language anxiety as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behavior related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128). Horwitz et al. (1986) have also concluded that foreign language anxiety should be identified as a conceptuality distinct variable, well characterized by uniqueness of dynamic traits of language learning in the classroom.

According to Ferdous (2012), anxiety is a kind of troubled state of mind and as an important factor in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Anxiety represents physically and emotionally uncomfortable experience for many students in the EFL classroom. So, it has become one of the current challenges in foreign language teaching to provide students with a low-anxiety classroom environment.

Chiang (2012) defined anxiety as feelings of worry; uneasiness, frustration, and unquiet. It happens when people encounter uncertainty, unknown and other situations that people cannot control. When individuals get anxious, they make wrong decision, perform badly. Anxiety is a subjective feeling which is experienced by both foreign and second language learners (MacIntyre & Gardener, 1991). Numerous research (Aida, 1994; Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Horwitz & Young, 1991; MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre & Gardener, 1989, 1991, 1994; Price, 1991; Worde, 1998; Young, 1990, 1991, 1992;) have revealed that anxiety can impede foreign language production and achievement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To be able to investigate the postulations set forth in the current study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' speaking anxiety across gender?
2. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' Emotional intelligence across gender?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The population of this study involved two groups. The first group consisted of junior students of Islamic Azad Universities of Rodehen and South Branch of Tehran, majoring in English translation and literature. Simple sampling was used to select 100 EFL learners of two universities. The subjects were made up of 60 females and 40 males. Their ages ranged from 23 years to 26 years, the second group of participants consisted of 30 Iranian EFL teachers with 10 to 15 years of experience teaching English. Their ages ranged from 30 years to 52 years. The teachers were both 20 male and 10 female. 26 hold a Master's degree in TEFL.

Instrument

For the purpose of the study three sets of questionnaire were used : 1) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), 2) teacher self-efficacy questionnaire, and 3) students emotional intelligence questionnaire.

1-Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cop (1986), assessed students' anxiety about target language learning. This questionnaire contains 33 items Likert-type scale with five possible responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The possible range is 33 to 165; the higher the number, the higher the level of foreign language anxiety.

2- Teacher self-efficacy questionnaire, developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001). This questionnaire includes 24 items which examined the teacher's idea about his/her effective control over Instructional Strategies, Classroom management, and Student Engagement. It used a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1(Nothing) to 5(A great deal), to rank the teachers' level of self-efficacy.

3-In order to measure the students' emotional intelligence, Bar-On's EQ-i was administered. Due to the fact that some questions were found irrelevant to Iranian context, Samouei (2003) developed a modified and translated version of the questionnaire which encompassed only 90 questions.

Procedure

To pave the way for this study, four steps were successively taken:

In the first step, 30 Iranian EFL teachers teaching in Islamic Azad university of Rodehen and South Tehran Branch were selected in this present study. In the second step, 100 Iranian EFL learners were selected at two Islamic Azad university of Rodehen and south Tehran branch, majoring in English translation and literature. In the third step, questionnaires were administered 2

weeks after starting new semester. In the forth step, the questionnaires were collected for data analysis.

Statistical Data Analysis

In order to test the null hypotheses, the collected data were put in tables and analyzed with the aid of SPSS 19. 2 the statistical procedures were used: Pearson product correlation and the Multiple Regressions. Multiple Regressions was used to find out the combined and relative contributions of the independent variable (self-efficacy) to the prediction of speaking anxiety and EQ. To ensure the normality of the distribution, inferential descriptive statistics were employed. Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to understand any positive, negative or zero relationship between the speech anxiety, EI and teacher's self- efficacy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, first the findings for each of the two research questions of the study will be presented and then a brief discussion of the gained upshots will follow.

Findings Obtained for Research Question One

Q1: Is there any significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' speaking anxiety across gender?

The report on the analysis of research question 1 is divided into three sections:

Firstly, in section A, independent variable and dependent variable are normally distributed.

Secondly, in section B, the correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' speaking anxiety are presented. Finally, the correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' speaking anxiety across gender are presented.

A. Teachers' self-efficacy (independent variable) and Learners' speaking anxiety (dependent variable) are normally distributed

Table 1: Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
		Anxiety	Self-efficacy
N		30	30
Normal Parameters	Mean	2.35	7.15
	Std. Deviation	0.65	1.023
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		0.44	1.08
Asymp.Sig. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.98	0.19

According to the results in Table 1 from the Kolmogorov – Smirnov we can conclude that teachers' self-efficacy and learners' speaking anxiety have the most significant level ($P > 0.05$).

B. The relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' speaking anxiety A Pearson Correlation was computed to assess the relationship between self-efficacy and speaking

anxiety. Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between the two variables ($p < 0.05$). This relationship is at the confidence level of 0.95 and the degree of relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' speaking anxiety is 47% and reverse. It is seen that (r) between two variables, is ($r = -0.462$) with the level of significant ($p = 0.10$). As $p < 0.05$, so there exists a negative correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and students' speaking anxiety. This indicates that speaking anxiety and self-efficacy are related to each other. So, the results show that the higher teachers' self-efficacy, the fewer students were anxious in speaking. The negative correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety reject the null hypotheses which stated that: There is no significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' speaking anxiety across gender.

Table 2 The Relationship between Teachers' Self-efficacy and Learners' Speaking Anxiety

Correlations			
		Anxiety	Self efficacy
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.462*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	30	30
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

C. The relationship between Teachers' self-efficacy and Learners' speaking anxiety across gender

Table 3: Multiple Regressions of Speaking Anxiety

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	ANOVA	
				F	Sig.
Enter	0.47	0.23	0.56	4.13	0.027

According to table 3 the index of R Square is 0.23 which means that 23 percent of learners' speaking anxiety is under influence of teachers' self-efficacy (independent variable) and learners' gender (moderating variable). As Table 3 the ANOVA table, shows this prediction is meaningful at the 0.027 level of significance.

In order to determine the effect of gender on speaking anxiety, Standardized and non-standardized coefficients table has been drawn.

Table 4: Regression coefficients, Standardized and Unstandardized prediction

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.342	0.811		6.585	.000
	Self- efficacy	-0.275	0.102	-.455	-2.699	.012
	sex	0.176	0.205	0.145	0.859	0.398
a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety						

As shown in Table 4 the direct effect of teachers' self-efficacy and learners' gender on speaking anxiety is statistically significance. The absolute value of the standardized Beta coefficients shows the relative importance of each independent variable on the dependent variable. According to table 4 teachers' self-efficacy ($\beta = .455$ $p < .05$) is significant predictor of learners' speaking anxiety. Accordingly, Teacher's self-efficacy accounts for %45 the variation in the learners' speaking anxiety. This finding demonstrates that teacher's self-efficacy is observed to predict significantly learners' speaking anxiety. Nevertheless, teachers' self-efficacy has a direct effect on the degree of learners' speaking anxiety. Thus, we can conclude, gender doesn't act as an important determiner of learners' speaking anxiety.

Findings Obtained for Research Question Two

Q2: Is there any significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' emotional intelligence across gender?

To see whether a significant relationship existed between the teachers' self-efficacy and their students' emotional intelligence across gender Pearson Correlation Coefficient had to be run. Prior to this, of course, the assumptions for running this parametric test had to be checked in three sections: Firstly, in section A, independent variable and dependent variable are normally distributed. Secondly, the correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence are presented in section B. Finally, the correlations between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence across gender are presented.

A. Teachers' self-efficacy (independent variable) and learners' emotional intelligence (dependent variable) are normally distributed.

To inspect normality, the researcher used Kolmogorov – Smirnov Test to know to what extent independent and dependent variables are normally distributed. According to the results in Table 5 from the Kolmogorov – Smirnov, we can conclude that teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence have the most significant level ($P > 0.05$). So each of the variables was normally distributed. Therefore, they involve the condition of correlation and regression analysis in the assumption.

Table 5: Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		EQ	Self-efficacy
N		30	30
Normal Parameters	Mean	3.4	7.15
	Std. Deviation	0.24	1.023
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		0.81	1.08
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.51	0.19

B. The relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence

As demonstrated by Table 6, it is seen that (r) between two variables, is ($r = 0.531$) with the level of significant ($p = 0.003$). As $p < 0.05$, there exists a positive correlation between teachers' self-

efficacy and students' emotional intelligence. This indicates that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are related to each other. So, the results show that the higher teachers' self-efficacy, the fewer students were anxious in speaking. The purpose of the running correlation procedure was to check to what extent teacher's self-efficacy had predictability for EFL learner's emotional intelligence. The result proved that for all subjects of this study, self-efficacy had significant predictability for EQ ($p < 0.01$). The positive correlation between self-efficacy and EQ rejects the null hypothesis which stated that: There is no significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' emotional intelligence across gender.

Table 6: The relationship between Teachers' Self-efficacy and Learners' Emotional Intelligence

Correlations			
EQ		EQ	Self efficacy
	Pearson Correlation	1	.531**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	30	30

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

C. The relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and learners' emotional intelligence across gender

Multiple regressions analysis was carried out to evaluate the effect of gender on learners' emotional intelligence. As shown in, Table 7, the index of R Square is 0.28 which means that 28 percent of learners' emotional intelligence is under influence of teachers' self-efficacy (independent variable) and learners' gender (moderating variable). As Table 7, the ANOVA table shows this prediction is meaningful at the 0.028 level of significance. ANOVA ($F = 5.32$, $p = 0.011 < 0.05$) table of regression shows the suitability of fit and predictive significance level is less than 0.05, The results indicate that gender has no effect on EFL students' emotional intelligence .

Table 7: Multiple Regression of Emotional Intelligence

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	ANOVA	
				F	Sig.
Enter	0.53	0.28	0.54	5.32	0.011

As demonstrated in Table 7 above, there is a significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their students' EI ($P < 0.05$). Thus, the second null hypothesis is rejected and it is confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and students' emotional intelligence.

Table 8 demonstrates the standardized Beta coefficient which reveals that the direct effect of teachers' self-efficacy and learners' gender on emotional intelligence is statistically significant. According to table 4.8 teachers' self-efficacy ($\beta = .543$ $p < .05$) is significant predictor of learners' emotional intelligence. Accordingly, teacher's self-efficacy accounts for %54 the variation in the learners' emotional intelligence. Moreover, teachers' self-efficacy has a direct effect on the degree of learners' emotional intelligence. This means that the higher self-efficacy teachers are,

the more emotionally intelligent learners are in the process of learning a language. Thus, the gender doesn't act as an important determiner of learners' emotional intelligence.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients, Standardized and Unstandardized Prediction

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.024	1.440		-.711	.483
	Self_ efficacy	1.357	.438	.543	3.102	.004
	sex	-.041	.213	-.034	-.191	.850
a. Dependent Variable: EO						

CONCLUSION

A relaxed atmosphere is significant in alleviating anxiety. Students need a setting free from intimation and tension. So a low- stress learning environment is related to the quality of teachers and instructional methods. To this end, teachers with a sympathetic attitude towards the problems and fear of the students can create a positive setting within the classroom learning. According to the findings in this research, teachers with a higher level of self- efficacy try to change the students' attitude toward learning English and consider English as a favorite subject to students. Thus, we can hypothesize that teacher self-efficacy can influence students' emotional intelligence and speaking anxiety in different settings.

Pedagogical Implications

The present study may have some implications for EFL teachers and learners. As the results of the study suggest, there is a statistically significant correlation between teachers' self-efficacy, learners' speaking anxiety and emotional intelligence. These correlations indicate that it is teachers' duties to reduce anxiety and increase emotional intelligence in their class setting. It's hoped that these findings will help English teachers to be aware of anxious EFL learners and create a friendly and affective atmosphere so that learners would learn to communicate rather than fear the English language. It is important for EFL learners to know that speaking anxiety is a common problem in English class that every one may feel the same apprehension and discomfort. So they should devote themselves in the English setting to focus on language learning rather than being distracted by tension or worries.

Acknowledgments:

I Would like to like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Bonyadi, my respectful Advisor of Islamic Azad University of Urmia.

I Would also like to thank Dr. Alavinia my professor of Islamic Azad University of Urmia for sharing his knowledge throughout the procedure of this research.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to Dr.Mosallanejat , my proffessor of Islamic Azad University of South Branch Tehran.

REFERENCES

- Allinder, R. M. (1994). The relationship between efficacy and the instructional practices of special education teachers and consultants, *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 17, 86- 95.
- Aliegro, J. C. (2006). *The effect of self-assessment on the self-efficacy of students studying Spanish as a foreign language*. Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburg Graduate Faculty of School of Education, Pennsylvania.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1997). The role of self-efficacy in human functioning, Retrieved from <http://www.des.emory.edu/mfp/eff.html>.
- Bar-On, R. (1997). *Bar- on emotional quotient inventory (EQ-I): technical manual*. Toronto, Canada: Multi- Health System.
- Bar-On, R. (2000). Emotional and social intelligence: Insights from the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-I), In R. Bar-On and J. D. Parker (Eds.). *Handbook of Emotional Intelligence* (pp. 363–388). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Behjat, S. (2012) .Emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and diversity receptiveness of university students: A correlation study .*International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2 (4), 301-312. ISSN: 2222-6990.
- Chiang, M.C. (2012). *The relationship between foreign language anxiety and foreign language speaking proficiency among elementary school students in Taiwan*, Master of Arts dissertation, Taiwan: Ming Chuan University.
- Elias, M. J., & Arnold, J. (Eds.). (2006). *The educator's guide to emotional intelligence and academic achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Fahim, M., & Pishghadam, R. (2007).On the role of emotional, psychometric, and verbal intelligences in the academic achievement of university students majoring in English language .*Asian EFL Journal*, 9(4), 240-253.
- Ferdos, F. (2012).A case study of first year non-English undergraduate students' English learning anxiety in Bangladesh. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3 (9), 1-12.
- Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence: Issues in Paradigm Building .In C, Cherniss and D, Goleman (eds), *The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace* (pp, 16-26).San Francisco: Jossy - Bass.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1986). Preliminary evidence for the reliability and validity of a foreign language anxiety scale .*TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 559-564.
- Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., & Cope, J. (1986).Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70, 125-132.
- Horwitz, E.K., & Young, D.J. (Eds.). 1991. *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Idri, N. (2012). Foreign language anxiety among Algerian EFL students: The case of first year students of English at the University of Abderahmane Mira-Béjaia; LMD

- (Licence/Master/Doctorat) system group. *Universal Journal of Education and General Studies* 1(3), 055-064.
- Karaman, E. (2012). Turkish Undergraduate Students' Emotional Intelligence and Their Performance on English Language Test. Master of Arts dissertation, Eastern Mediterranean University, Gazimağusa, North Cyprus.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (1995). How does anxiety affect second language learning? A reply to Sparks and Ganschow. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 90-99.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning*, 39, 251-275.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991). Language anxiety: Its relationship to other anxieties and to processing in native and second languages. *Language Learning*, 41, 513-534.
- MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner, R.C. (1994). The effects of induced anxiety on three stages of cognitive processing in computerized vocabulary learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 1-17.
- Mohammadi, M., & Mousalou, R. (2012). Emotional intelligence, Linguistic intelligence, and their relevance to speaking anxiety of EFL learners. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 2(6), 11- 22.
- Mahmoudzadeh, H. (2008). The relationship between anxiety and oral proficiency of Iranian EFL learners, Unpublished Master of Arts dissertation, Tehran: Azad University, Central Branch.
- Mahmoodzadeh, M. (2012). Investigating Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety within the EFL Learner's Interlanguage System: The Case of Iranian Learners, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(3), 466-476.
- Matthews, G., Zeidner, M., & Roberts, R. (2002). *Emotional intelligence: Science and myth*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Motallebzadeh, Kh. (2009). The Relationship between emotional intelligence of Iranian EFL learners and their reading comprehension and structural ability. *The Journal of Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Literature*, 1(4), 39-55.
- Nassimi, A. (2009). *The relationship between EQ and the quality of children literature translation*, Unpublished Master of Arts dissertation, Tehran: Azad University, Central Branch.
- Okorodudu, G, N. (2012). The Relationship between parental motivation, self-efficacy and examination dishonesty among secondary school students in Delta State. *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, 4(4), 80-89.
- Pajares, F. (2005). Self-efficacy during childhood and adolescence: Implications for teachers and parents. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy and Adolescence* (pp.339-367), Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Price, M. L. (1991). The subjective experience of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with highly anxious students. *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*, (PP, 101-108).
- Roohani, A. (2009). The Study of Emotional Intelligence and Literature in Education: Gender and Major of Study. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 6(4), 39-66.
- Ross, J. A. (1992). Teacher efficacy and the effect of coaching on student achievement. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 17(1), 51-65.

- Ross, J. A. (1998). The antecedents and consequences of teacher efficacy. In J. Brophy (Ed.), *Research on Teaching*, 7, 49-74. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, cognition and personality*, 9(3), 185-211.
- Samouei, R. (2003). Emotional intelligence test (Bar-On's EQ-I). Tehran: Sina Research Center of Behavioral Sciences.
- Tallon, M. (2004). *A culture of caring: Reducing anxiety and increasing engagement in first-year foreign language courses*. University of the Incarnate Word.
- Tilfarlioglu, F.Y., & Ciftci, F.S. (2011). Supporting self-efficacy and learner autonomy in relation to academic success in EFL classrooms (A Case Study). *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(10), 1284-1294. doi:10.4304/tpls.1.10.1284-1294
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(7), 783-805. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(01\)00036-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(01)00036-1)
- Worde, R. (1998). An investigation of students' perspectives on foreign language anxiety. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia.
- Young, D.J. (1990). An investigation of students' perspective on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23(6), 539-553.
- Young, D.J. (1991). Creating a Low Anxiety Classroom Environment: What Does Language Anxiety Research Suggest? *Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426-438.
- Young, D. J. (1992). Language anxiety from the foreign language specialist's perspective: Interviews with Krashen, Omaggio Hadley, Terrell, and Rardin. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25(2), 157-172.

ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH SUBJECT PRONOUNS BY ARABIC-PERSIAN BILINGUALS AND PERSIAN MONOLINGUALS

Noorjahan Ghassemi

Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch, Bandar Abbas, Iran

ABSTRACT

This research intends to incorporate some insights to the new field of third language acquisition. So, it investigated the acquisition of subject pronoun of noun clauses in English by L2 and L3 learners within UG framework. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 82 elementary learners who included 45 monolinguals (25 females and 20 males) and 37 bilinguals (20 females and 17 males) were chosen after taking the Nelson Proficiency test. The instrument used in this study was a grammaticality judgment test administered to measure the subjects' performance on English subject pronouns of noun clauses. The participants' performance on this test was analyzed using one way parametric independent T-test and the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U Test. In spite of the fact that the structure of biclauses sentences was similar in Arabic and English, but different in Persian, the results showed no significant difference between the performance of monolinguals and bilinguals. Also, there wasn't a significant difference between the male and female learners. The finding, interpreted in terms of points of two current generative models of L2 A, namely, Full Access Full Transfer and the Failed Functional Feature Hypothesis revealed no dominant role for L2 setting in L3 inter-language grammar as the bilinguals did not significantly outperform their mono-lingual counterparts. Therefore, the findings of the research with respect to language transfer in third language acquisition give rise to the conclusion that the source of cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition is probably more of the learners' second language than their first language.

KEYWORDS: bilingual, monolingual, subject pronouns, UG

INTRODUCTION

The study of crosslinguistic influence or language transfer has generated much interest in the field of Second Language Acquisition (L2A) for a few decades (see Gass & Selinker, 1992; Odlin, 2003, amongst others). But the last couple of years have seen the line of inquiry branching out into the field of third language acquisition (L3A). Researchers working on L3A attempt to find out the source of transfer in cases of additional non-native or multilingual language acquisition by investigating different potential factors, such as second language (L2)/third language (L3) proficiency (Dewaele, 2001; Hammarberg, 2001), the privileged status of the first language (De Angelis & Selinker, 2001), age effects (Cenoz, 2001), typological proximity between languages (Cenoz, 2001; De Angelis & Selinker, 2001; Hammarberg, 2001), psychotypology (Bouvy, 2000).

Considering the large number of bilinguals in the world such as Iran, the importance of bilingualism in educational and professional opportunities of the bilinguals, the lack of consistency in studies result concerning the issues, the researcher aimed at investigating whether there is any difference between Persian-Arab bilinguals and Persian monolinguals in learning subject pronouns in noun clauses in English as a foreign language.

In this study, the effect of the language background acquired by Arabic-Persian bilingual learners of English will be explored through Full Access/Full Transfer (FAFT) and the Failed Functional Feature Hypothesis (FFFH). So, the performance of the Arabic-Persian bilinguals will be contrasted with that of Persian mono-lingual learners within this framework. This comparative study may help to show whether L3 acquisition is different from L2 acquisition or it is another case of L2 acquisition.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

Different theories of second language learning make different predictions with respect to both the role of transfer and the ultimate attainment (that is, whether or not the learning of the L2 syntactic properties, i.e., the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses, is possible for L2 learners). The transfer, is concerned with the question of to what extent the properties of the L1 grammar influence L2 acquisition (White, 2003). Two theories which posit L1 transfer are Full Transfer/Full Access theory (FT/FA) (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996) and the Representational Deficit Hypothesis (RDH), known as the Failed Functional Feature Hypothesis (FFFH) (Hawkins & Chan, 1997). Both theories consider the L1 grammar to be the starting point for the acquisition of L2. But, Direct Access theory (Epstein, Flynn, & Martohardjono, 1996) considers the Universal Grammar (UG) to be the starting point for the acquisition of L2.

Null subject Parameters

UG is "the system of principles and rules that are properties of all human languages" (Chomsky, 1976, p. 29). So, Chomsky (1981) differentiates these universals as composing of principles and parameters. Radford (1997) believes the language is composed of a group of „principles of universal grammar (UG)". Therefore, grammatical learning is not going to engage in learning those aspects of grammar which are established by universal grammatical principles. However, grammatical learning will be constrained to those parameters of grammar which are subject to language special variation. To express that in another way, grammatical learning will be limited to parameterized features of grammar. The useful way to distinguish just what features of the grammar of their first language children have to learn is to scrutinize the group of parametric variation appeared in the grammars of different languages.

The null subject parameter is one parameter of variation among languages– thus, in *null subject or prodrop* languages (on the other hand, [+null subject] languages), pronouns may be null, having the form of an empty category, pro. Some examples are Romance languages like Spanish and Italian, as well as Asian languages like Chinese, Korean and Persian. However, it doesn't mean that null subject languages require all pronouns to be null. both expressed and unexpressed

subject pronouns are possible. However, in Persian like Romance languages, when the subject of the main clause and the subject pronoun of the embedded clause are the same, so the subject pronoun in embedded clause may be unexpressed. The Persian example in (1c) shows this point.

- c. Jan goft ke ?ou - ra dide-ast
John said that him obj-marker saw
John said that (he) saw him.

As shown in this example, rich verbal agreement (formalized in terms of phi-features in Agr) lets unexpressed subjects to be identified in Persian like Romance languages such as Italian and Spanish.

While in Arabic and English the pronoun in embedded clauses should be expressed, that is pronouns are overt. In Arabic a clitic pronoun can be used in a noun clause, as in (1d).

- d. Jan qala beanna- hu ra'a- hu.
John said that – he saw-him.
John said that he saw him.

Therefore, the account of using subject pronouns in noun clauses in English, Persian and Arabic highlights differences and similarities among the three languages. As for English and Persian, the latter is a [+null subject] language, but English is [-null subject] language. On the other hand, Arabic turns to be like English in that the subjects must be expressed, with a few exceptions.

The Role of the L1 and UG in L2 Acquisition

UG-based L2 study has focused on the L2 initial state since the mid-1990s and in this case the most important question is whether L2 learners use all or parts of the 1st language grammar as their initial theory of the target language. Five hypotheses on the L2 initial state vary from each other regarding the influence they assign to L1 transfer and UG. Each of these hypotheses will be reviewed here.

Full Transfer/Full Access

According to this hypothesis, the L1 and L2 acquisition vary at their initial state but appear to be quite comparable with reference to the access of UG. In this hypothesis the beginning point is different because L1 learners do not know anything about another language by birth and can hardly even communicate. By contrast, L2 learners have a different point of origin and all features are transferred, considered to be significant and the U G is completely accessible to the learner. Moreover, the learner is not considered "to be stuck with L1 parameter setting; instead, parameter resetting to the L2 value is possible, on the basis of input from the L2 interacting with a still active UG". In this approach, the role of the first language Universal Grammar are important. Finally, the learner stage of acquisition looks to come close to a native-like proficiency, with the help of UG.

According to White (1988), both L1 learners and L2 learners have access to UG. During SLA, L2 learners start out with parameters set to their L1 values. This shows that full transfer takes place from the L1 to the L2. However, these transferred L1 parameter values merely constitute the

initial state of SLA, and are by no means the sum of the aspects of UG to which the L2 learners have access. On White's view, L2 learners have full access to UG.

But where the L1 and the L2 varies, parameter resetting needs to happen during SLA. This resetting will happen if the input to which the L2 learner is faced contains the relevant positive evidence, i.e. evidence that the target L2 instantiates a parameter value that varies from the value instantiated in the learner's L1. Where positive evidence is not enough to bring about the needed change from the L1 parameter value to the correct L2 parameter value, this change has to be brought about through facing with negative evidence, exposure to direct evidence in the form of corrective feedback or explicit instruction (ibid.).

Full Transfer/No Access

In full transfer/no access hypothesis, the L1 last state is the preliminary state of L2 acquisition. It means that there is access to Universal Grammar by the use of the L1, therefore if the UG is not accessible in the L1, it is not accessible in second language acquisition too. Bley-Vroman (1990) expressed that UG itself is not available during SLA, but it is available through the L2 learner's knowledge of his/her L1. The L2 learner constructs this surrogate UG from his/her L1 knowledge (Bley-Vroman, 1989). This indirect knowledge is not complete and provides the explanation for the success that adult L2 learners show in SLA.

In Bley-Vroman's view (1996, p. 718), *Fundamental Difference Hypothesis* "allows UG-like effects by the L1". On the other hands, the L2 learner does not have access to UG, but observes some aspects of UG instantiated in his/her L1 (aspects such as structure dependency). The L2 learner expects certain things from the L2 because of his/her L1 knowledge; these expected things contain a syntax, a lexicon, a phonological system with syllables, feet and phonological phrases, as well as the potential for a large number of sentences to be produced in the L2 (Bley-Vroman, 1989). The L2 learner makes use of these "expectations", as well as different general cognitive mechanisms (not specifically linguistic, according to Bley-Vroman (1996, p. 718) in the composition of the L2.

Partial Transfer/Full Access

According to this concept, Universal Grammar is completely accessible while only a few parts of L1 are transferred. Following this theory, L2 learners learn in a similar way as L1 learners. The different point is that they already know another language before starting to learn a second one. Second language learners continuously design functional categories in reply to the L2 input. L1 learners usually perform in the same way. They use parts of L1 with a complete UG to learn their target language. Therefore, it looks as if the learner could reach a complete achievement.

The partial transfer/full access theory was originally proposed by Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1996). In this theory, it is claimed that only lexical features are found in the initial L2 grammar. Functional categories are not transferred from L1 to L2 so that the initial state of L2 learners' grammar contains NP and VP (with L1 headedness). DP, TP and CP will generate at the next stage with interaction of the L2, in principle, L2 learners should converge on the L2 grammar. In this respect, the L2 learner's initial state is just like the initial state proposed by Radford (1990)

for children acquiring their L1. Also, according to Vainikka and Young-Scholten's (1994), pp. 267-268) Minimal Trees Hypothesis, L2 learners have direct, but initially limited, access to UG in SLA. What is meant by "initially limited access" is that L2 learners begin with only lexical categories (hence "Minimal Trees"), transferred from the L1, and then acquire functional categories gradually on the basis of the L2 input and with the help of UG. Like White, Vainikka and Young-Scholten (ibid.) claim that L2 learners begin with L1 parameters and then reset the parameters during SLA where necessary.

Partial Transfer/Partial Access

This concept could be explained as a combination of the essential factors of the role of UG, L1 and other acquisition faculties mentioned before. The role of UG is very important in L1 and L2 acquisition. In SLA it is likely to have a partial transfer of L1 features and partial access of UG. Moreover, according to this concept L2 learners use general learning strategies as well. White (1998) believes that Universal Grammar is only one component in the theory of language acquisition and interacts with a variety of others. Unsuccessful acquisition is the result of the other areas and not implicitly to non-operation of UG. In addition, Ellis terms this argument "dual access" and provides the explanation that adult L2 learners can only reach the ultimate attainment if they rely on UG. Since Universal Grammar is somewhat partially accessible for L2 learners, it looks like they will not be able to achieve a native-like competence. Only parts of the L1 grammar are available. Ultimate attainment of an L2 is not possible.

No Transfer/Full Access

This is the only model where there isn't transfer from L1 to L2. But, there is a full access to the UG. It is believed that the L2 grammar is learned via UG rules and strictures. The L2 initial state does not contain the L1 final state or any developmental phase. UG is assumed to constitute the initial state for L2 acquisition. So, it is fully available for L2 acquisition, including new parameter setting, functional categories and feature values. Therefore, L2 acquisition proceeds just like L1 acquisition.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Research Questions

This research intends to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any difference between Persian- Arab bilinguals (L1 Arabic, L2 Persian) and Persian monolinguals (L1 Persian) in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English?

Null hypotheses

1. There is no difference between Persian- Arab bilinguals (L1 Arabic, L2 Persian) and Persian monolinguals (L1 Persian) in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English?
2. There is no significant difference between male and female learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of this study were the junior students studying English as a foreign language at the language institute and public high schools of Bandar-e-Lenge in Iran. In total, 82 participants took part in this study. The first group consisted of 45 Persian monolinguals (L1 Persian). They started learning English as an L2 after puberty (about 13 years old). The second group of participants consisted of 37 Arab Persian bilinguals (L1 Arabic- L2 Persian). (see Table 1. for details).

Table 1: Overview of the subjects

	Mono-linguals	Mono-linguals	bilinguals	bilinguals
sex	female	male	female	male
Number of participants	25	20	20	17
Age range	14-18 (mean=16)	14-18 (mean=16)	14-18 (mean=16)	14-18 (mean=16)

It was essential to target a primary population from which the participants in this study were selected. This primary population was required to include bilingual and mono-lingual English learners. The bilingual learners use the Arabic dialect of Bandar Lengeh as their native language. Moreover, their first and most dominant language is Arabic.

Bilingual and mono-lingual learners were at elementary level. They all had studied English as a foreign language for 3 to 4 years. Most of the participants were in their second or third year of high school so that they had learned subject pronouns in noun clauses such as reported speech in English. In order to maintain the same level of English language proficiency for all the participants, the Nelson Test administered to the participants. Also, the researcher of this study used both male and female in the study and the age of the participants ranged from 14 to 18 years.

Instruments

The following instrumentations were utilized in this study:

First, to ascertain homogeneity of the participants of the study in terms of language proficiency, a standard Nelson test was used. The Nelson Placement Test was administered to 120 participants. Therefore those students whose Nelson score fell within one standard deviation, 7.05, below and above the mean of 31.38 were selected as homogeneous participants for this study. Thus 82 students whose score were between 24 and 38 were chosen. Also, a background questionnaire was used to elicit some personal information about participants' background.

The grammatically judgment and correction task was used in this study in order to examine how the participants use subject pronouns in noun clauses in English (See Appendix). The participants were presented with biclausal sentences with referential main-clause subjects and overt or null embedded pronoun subjects; they were asked to judge whether a given sentence was grammatical or ungrammatical in English. The correction task required subjects to correct those sentences which were judged to be ungrammatical in English. The grammatically judgment (GJT) had

around 32 items to be judged. 16 of these 32 items were ungrammatical and the other 16 items were grammatical. There were 8 fillers items among 32 items. Therefore, in total the test consisted of 40 items.

Procedure

The participants were selected randomly from among all the population studying English as a foreign language in public high school and an institute in Bandar-e-Lenge. Thus 82 students were chosen. Then a grammaticality judgment and correction task was presented. In this task, the participants judged a sentence as correct or incorrect with GJT (grammaticality judgment task); however, with the GCT (grammaticality correction task), they wrote the correct form of incorrect items. This kind of task was consisted of 32 two choice items, which 16 out of 32 items were grammaticality and the other 16 items were in ungrammaticality, as shown in examples 1 and 2.

1. * She thinks that is fat.
True False
.....
2. He said that he bought a book two weeks ago.
True False

Also, for doing this test the participants were told to observe the time limit and in order to increase the credibility of the responses, the researcher reminded the students that they should be sincere in their answers and they should not spend too much time on any of the items. Finally, the questionnaire was collected and the responses were entered into the computer for data analysis.

Data Analysis

After the data were collected, the researcher analyzed and compared the participants' performance on judging sentence structure based on UG principles and generative perspectives. In this study, the students' correct judgment of the items received one point, and in the case of incorrect judgment or not answering the items, they got no points.

The performance of the two groups of participants was compared by using quantitative, descriptive and inferential statistics. In order to determine the similarity or difference between the performances of the both mono-lingual and bilingual groups the parametric independent T-test was applied.

Design

This is a descriptive study based on a survey research conducted for the purpose of making descriptive information about some population.

In this study, quantitative data were collected. They were collected through a grammaticality judgment task (GJT) along with a correction task to examine the participants' syntactic knowledge. Therefore the quantitative data based on precise measurements using structured and validated data-collection instruments. The data displays comparisons means and statistical significance of findings.

In the current study as mentioned before the purpose was to investigate differences and similarities between the bilinguals and mono-linguals in acquisition of subject pronouns in noun clauses. So, the subject pronouns were dependent variable and the bilinguals and mono-linguals were independent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Homogeneity Process

The Nelson Proficiency Test was administered to 120 participants to assure the homogeneity of the participants. Table 2. below provides us with the descriptive statistics of the participant's scores on Nelson Test. So, the mean, median and mode of the Nelson scores are 31.37, 31, and 30 and these central parameters are not very different from each other signifying normal distribution.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Nelson Homogenizing Test

N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
120	31	15	46	31.37	31.00	30	7.059

The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of normality test results indicated that p value, .77 is more than .05. So they are normally distributed.

Therefore those students whose Nelson score fell within one standard deviation, 7.05, below and above the mean of 31.38 were selected as homogeneous advanced participants for this study. Thus 82 students whose score were between 24 and 38 were chosen.

Investigating the First Research Question

The first research question of this study asked whether there is any difference between Persian-Arab bilinguals (L1 Arabic, L2 Persian) and Persian monolinguals (L1 Persian) in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English. In order to analyze the data to answer this question, Independent Sample Test was utilized. To do so, first the monolinguals and bilinguals' performances on GJT were calculated, and the related results are presented in Table 3. According to the table, the average mean score in bilingual group was 22.08 with the standard deviation of 3.61, and the mean score in monolingual group was 20.82 with the standard deviation of 3.58. The mean score of the two groups are not far from each other.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Bilingual and Monolingual Groups' Subject Pronoun Scores

Group	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Mode	Median	SD
bilinguals	37	12	17	29	22.08	23	23.00	3.616
monolinguals	45	16	13	29	20.82	23	21.00	3.588

The graphical representation of the results is displayed in Figure 1. below as appeared in Table 3. As obvious in the figure, the two groups have not acted far from each other.

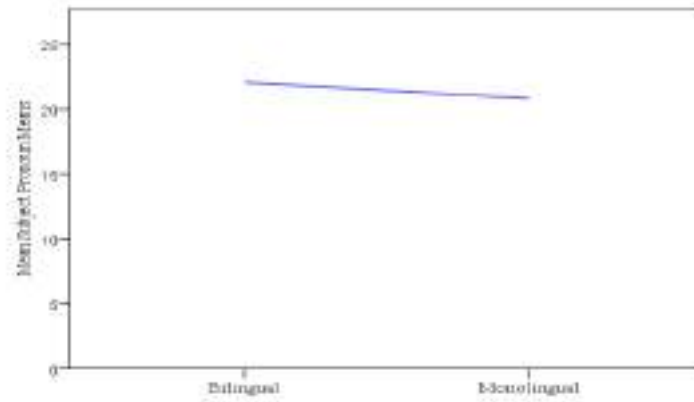


Figure 1: Bilingual and monolingual groups' subject pronoun means

The normality distribution of the subject pronouns scores was checked in order to decide whether to use parametric or nonparametric data analysis. So we used One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The results of this normality test in Table 4. revealed p values of .24 and .96 for bilingual and monolingual groups respectively. They have normal distribution since the p values for both of them were larger than selected significance level, .05. Therefore, we used parametric Independent Samples Test to compare the mean score of two groups obtained on GJT since we had two independent groups, and the scores of the two groups were normally distributed; otherwise the nonparametric Mann Whitney U Test would be used.

Table 4: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality for Subject Pronoun Scores in Bilingual and Monolingual Groups

Group	N	Mean	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Sig.
bilinguals	37	22.08	1.021	.248
monolinguals	45	20.82	.490	.960

The results of Independent Sample Test to compare the bilingual and monolingual learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English are laid out in Table 5.

Table 5. indicates that the hypothesis of equal of variances is proved because p value of Levene's Test, .74 is more than .05 ($p > .05$).

Table 5: Independent Samples Test to Compare Bilingual and Monolingual Groups' Subject Pronoun Scores

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	.104	.748	1.575	80	.119	1.259

T-test results in Table 5. indicates that there was not any statistically significant difference between bilingual and monolingual learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English with ($t = 1.575$, $p = .11$, $p > .05$), in which the t value, 1.57 was greater than the t critical, 2.02, and also the p value, .11 was larger than the selected significance level, .05. That means the two groups are not far from each other regarding the knowledge of subject pronouns. Therefore, the first null hypothesis as there is no statistically significant difference between bilingual and monolingual learners in the acquisition of subject+t pronouns of noun clauses in English is retained, and it can be claimed that there is no statistically significant difference between bilingual and monolingual learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English.

Investigating the Second Research Question

The second research question of the current study inquired whether there is any significant difference between male and female learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English. Independent Sample Test was used to answer this question. To do so, the monolinguals and bilinguals' performances on GJT were calculated, and the related results are provided in Table 6. The table shows that the average mean score in male group was 21.46 with the standard deviation of 3.54, and the mean score in female group was 21.33 with the standard deviation of 3.74. The mean score and standard deviation of the two groups are not dramatically different.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Male and Female Groups' Subject Pronoun Scores

Group	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Mode	Median	SD
Male	37	13	16	29	21.46	19	22.00	3.548
Female	45	16	13	29	21.33	23	21.00	3.742

Figure 2. below is a box plot illustrating the results as presented in Table 6. As can be seen clearly, the two male and female groups have not scored considerably different.

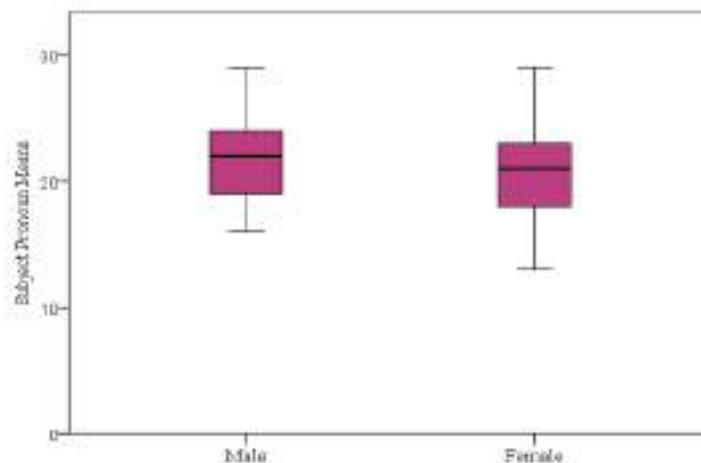


Figure 2: Male and female groups' subject pronoun means

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was employed to test the normality distribution of the subject pronouns scores. The results of this normality test in Table 7. showed that p values of .29 and .57 for male and female groups respectively. Since the p value for both of them was larger than selected significance level, .05, they were normally distributed. Accordingly, we utilized parametric Independent Samples Test to compare the mean score of two groups obtained on GJT since there were had two independent groups, and the scores of the two groups had normal distribution; or else the nonparametric Mann Whitney U Test could be applied.

Table 7: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality for Subject Pronoun Scores in Male and Female Groups

Group	N	Mean	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Sig.
Male	37	21.46	.981	.291
Female	45	21.33	.781	.575

Table 8. clarifies the results of Independent Sample Test for comparing male and female groups' subject pronoun scores.

It shows that the hypothesis of equal of variances is met since p value of Levene's Test, .88 was well above .05 ($p > .05$).

Table 8: Independent Samples Test to Compare Male and Female Groups' Subject Pronoun Scores

Levene's Test for Variances			T-test for Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.
Equal variance assumed	.021	.885	.155	80	.877	.126

T-test (see Table 8.) failed to find any statistically significant difference between male and female learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English with ($t = .155$, $p = .87$, $p > .05$), in which the t value was lower than the t critical, 2.02, and the p value, .87 was larger than the selected significance level, .05. That means the two groups have almost similar knowledge of subject pronouns. Therefore, the second null hypothesis as there is no statistically significant difference between male and female learners in the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English is retained, and it can be claimed that gender does not affect the acquisition of subject pronouns of noun clauses in English.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that mono-lingual participants' mean score turned out to be 20.82, and the bilingual participants' mean score was 22.08 on total judgment test. Furthermore the standard deviation of mono-lingual and bilingual groups reached 3.58 and 3.61 respectively, which are very close to each other signifying equal variance of scores around the mean. Their mean values were not far from each other suggesting that there is no significant difference between Persian-Arab bilinguals (L1 Arabic, L2 Persian) and Persian mono-linguals (L1 Persian) in the acquisition of subject pronoun of noun clauses in English.

The results of this research coincide with Schwartz and Sprouse's (1994; 1996) opinion that acquiring will fail if L1 and L2 parameter settings differ, i.e. parameter resetting in the L2 is not possible after the critical period for instantiation of these parametric values has ceased to operate. Consequently, the inter-language (IL) syntactic representations in post-childhood L2 acquisition would vary from the target grammar regardless of obvious native-like performance.

This research supports Leung's (2005, 2006) several studies on language transfer in the acquisition of L3 French by Cantonese (L1)–English (L2) learners. The findings of these researches revealed evidence of L2 interlanguage transfer in word order (i.e. adjective and adverb placement), verb morphology and articles (e.g. specific vs. non-specific and agreement with Determiner Phrase (DP)). Also, Leung's (2006) study on the acquisition of L2 vs. L3 Spanish past tense verb morphology showed that L2 interlanguage is the important source for language transfer in L3 acquisition. Leung (2006) reported that there was not difference between the English (L1)–Spanish (L2) and the Chinese (L1)–English (L2)–Spanish (L3) learners regarding the accuracy in providing the appropriate past tense marking in writing. In addition, the findings of the follow-up experiment on the L3 learners' English show that the Chinese (L1)–English (L2)–Spanish (L3) participants mark past tense in a similar pattern to native speakers, which suggests that L2 plays an important role in L3 acquisition. Moreover, the results of this study are in line with Sikogukira's (1993) findings about French- English cognates. The results of his study showed that the level of proficiency is a very important factor influencing the performance of the learners and the transfer in the language acquisition.

CONCLUSION

Considering to the effect of language background in L3 acquisition, the results of this research showed that bilingualism has no significant advantage in 3rd language acquisition. In other

words, Arab-Persian bilinguals could also benefit from the availability of the [-null subject] feature in their first language to increase their L3 inter-language grammar with regard to the overt pronoun feature of English language. However, the findings of the study made it clear that the L3 learners did not perform significantly higher than the mono-lingual learners in spite of the fact that their first language Arabic shared [-null subject] with English.

Also the finding of the study showed that there was no significant difference between the male and female participants' performance in the acquisition of using subject pronoun of noun clauses in English.

Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of this study is the learners' proficiency level. All of them are beginner EFL learners, because it is difficult to find a reasonable number of Arabic-Persian learners of L3 English at higher proficiency level. Secondly, this research only investigates the effects of bilingualism on subject pronouns in noun clauses. So, this study is restrictive only to investigating some statements and just subject pronouns. Finally, because of some educational constraints and problems it was not possible to involve a sample larger than 82 participants.

Implication

The findings of this research can benefit multi-lingualism and in particular, the L3A. In terms of cross-linguistic transfer, it was appeared that more of L2 was reflected in L3 inter-language grammar than their L1 as the finding of the study made it clear that the L3 and L2 learners' performance on English interrogative constructions were consistent. Moreover, third language learners constitute a big number of adult language learners around the world. The findings of this study showed that the theories of second language acquisition cannot be applied to these learners.

REFERENCES

- Bley-Vroman, R. (1989). What is the logical problem of foreign language learning? In S.M. Gass and J. Schachter (eds.) *Linguistic perspectives on second language acquisition*. Cambridge, New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. pp. 41-68.
- Bley-Vroman, R. (1990). The logical problem of foreign language learning. *Linguistic Analysis*, 20, 3-49.
- Bley-Vroman, R. (1996). What we have to explain in foreign language learning. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 19, 718.
- Bouvy, C. (2000). Towards the construction of a theory of crosslinguistic transfer. In J. Cenoz and U. Jessner (eds) *English in Europe: The Acquisition of a Third Language* (pp. 143–156). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cenoz, J. (2001). The effect of linguistic distance, L2 status and age on cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen and U. Jessner (eds) *Cross-linguistic Influence in Third Language Acquisition: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (pp. 8–20). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Chomsky, N. (1976). Conditions on rules of grammar. *Linguistic Analysis*, 2, 303-351.
- Chomsky, N. (1981). *Lectures on government and binding*. Dordrecht: Foris.

- De Angelis, O., & Selinker, L. (2001). Interlanguage transfer and competing linguistic systems in the multilingual mind. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen and U. Jessner (eds) *Cross-linguistic Influence in Third Language Acquisition: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (pp. 42–58). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Dewaele, J. (2001). Activation or inhibition? The interaction of L1, L2 and L3 on the language mode continuum. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen and U. Jessner (eds) *Cross-linguistic Influence in Third Language Acquisition: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (pp. 69–89). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Epstein, S., Flynn, S., & Martohardjono, G (1998). The strong continuity hypothesis: some evidence concerning functional categories in adult L2 acquisition. In S. Flynn, G. Martohardjono and W. O’Neil (eds.), *The generative study of second language acquisition* (pp. 61–77). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gass, S., & Selinker, L. (eds) (1992). *Language Transfer in Language Learning* (2nd edn). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hammarberg, B. (2001). Roles of L1 and L2 in L3 production and acquisition. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen and U. Jessner (eds) *Cross-linguistic Influence in Third Language Acquisition: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (pp. 21–41). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Hawkins, R., & Chan, Y.H.C. (1997). The partial availability of the Universal Grammar in second language acquisition: The ‘failed functional features hypothesis’. *Second Language Research*, 13, 187-226.
- Leung, Y, K.I. (2005). L2 vs. L3 initial state: A comparative study of the acquisition of French DPs by Vietnamese monolinguals and Cantonese–English bilinguals. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 8 (1), 39-61.
- Leung, Y-k.I. (2006). Full transfer vs. partial transfer in L2 and L3 acquisition. In R. Slabakova, S. Montrul and P. Prévost (eds) *Inquiries in Linguistic Development: In Honor of Lydia White* (pp. 157–187). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Odlin, T. (2003). Crosslinguistic influence. In C. Doughty and M. Long (eds) *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 436–486). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Radford, A. (1997). *Syntax: a minimalist introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schwartz, B.D., & Sprouse R. (1994). Word order and nominative case in nonnative language acquisition: A longitudinal study of (L1 Turkish) German interlanguage. In T. Hoekstra and B.D.Schwartz (eds) *Language Acquisition Studies in Generative Grammar* (pp. 317–368). Amsterdam John Benjamins.
- Schwartz, B.D., & Sprouse, R. (1996). L2 cognitive states and the full transfer/full access model. *Second Language Research*, 12, 40–72.
- Vanikka, A., & Young-Scholten, M. (1994). Direct access to X’-theory: Evidence from Korean and Turkish adults learnin German. In T. Hoekstra and B.D. Schwartz (eds) *Language Acquisition Studies in Generative Grammar* (pp. 265– 316). Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Vainikka, A., & Young-Scholten, M. (1996). Gradual development of L2 phrase structure. *Second Language research* 12, 7–39.
- White, L. (1988). Island effects in second language acquisition. In S. Flynn and W. O’Neil (Eds.), *Linguistic theory in second language acquisition*. Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 144-172.

White, L. (2003). *Second Language Acquisition and Universal Grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX. GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TEST (GJT)

Please read the sentences and circle "True" if you think these are possible sentences in English, otherwise circle "False". Please provide corrections in the given spaces for the randomly selected sentences if you think they are "False".

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------|-------|
| 1. | She thinks that is fat. | True | False |
| 2. | They said that saw a cat in the garden. | True | False |
| 3. | He said he bought a book two weeks ago. | True | False |
| 4. | Your brother thinks that he is a good pilot. | True | False |
| 5. | I don't have no money. | True | False |
| 6. | She said that didn't go to the museum. | True | False |
| 7. | He said he would help me. | True | False |
| 8. | Alex told me that he would come to the meeting. | True | False |
| 9. | He said that wasn't especially interested in green sea turtles. | True | False |
| 10. | The girl who drank the milk entered a room. | True | False |
| 11. | I replied that was drawing a picture. | True | False |
| 12. | Reza said that didn't understand the lesson. | True | False |
| 13. | You said that you should work harder. | True | False |
| 14. | Maryam said that bought a new grammar book. | True | False |
| 15. | The woman instructed the lawyer which the policeman called. | True | False |
| 16. | She said she expected us to be in class every day. | True | False |
| 17. | Mona said that was watching TV. | True | False |
| 18. | My friend said that didn't practice her lessons. | True | False |
| 19. | Amin believes that he is not smart. | True | False |
| 20. | She doesn't need any help. | True | False |
| 21. | She thinks she is an excellent nurse. | True | False |
| 22. | I explained that I was doing a research paper on sea turtles. | True | False |
| 23. | Who says that is going to stay home tomorrow? | True | False |
| 24. | I believe I will stay here for a long time. | True | False |
| 25. | I know the man who bicycle was stolen. | True | False |
| 26. | Maria has said that she reads the newspaper every morning. | True | False |
| 27. | My parents believe that are good parents. | True | False |
| 28. | Sam informed me that was late yesterday. | True | False |
| 29. | Why does she think she is beautiful? | True | False |
| 30. | Mahsa will can help you tomorrow. | True | False |

31. Ahmad says doesn't want to go with his family.	True	False
32. She will say that she travels.	True	False
33. Why does he say that he is the best in the company?	True	False
34. He says that likes his new car.	True	False
35. I go to the park once in a week.	True	False
36. Mina informed me that was going to move to Tehran.	True	False
37. I have said that I want a sandwich for lunch.	True	False
38. He said he saw him.	True	False
39. When does he say that needs some money?	True	False
40. She goes to school in Monday.	True	False

EFFECTS OF A BREAK IN INSTRUCTION ON VOCABULARY ATTRITION OF MALE AND FEMALE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS AT DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Rashin Amini

Department of English, Najafabad Branch, Islaminc Azad University, Najafabad, Iran
E-mail: Rashinamini2015@yahoo.com

Ehsan Rezvani (Corresponding author)

Sobhe Sadegh Institute of Higher Education, Isfahan, Iran
Email: rezvani_ehsan_1982@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at pursuing three objectives: first, to investigate the relationship between Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' gender and their vocabulary attrition rate; second, to examine the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency level and their vocabulary attrition rate; and lastly, to see if certain types of vocabulary are more susceptible to attrition. Using the Quick Placement Test (QPT), from among 100 EFL learners in Nahid Art and Cultural Institute in Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran, 60 male and female candidates were chosen as the participants of this study. In fact, the sample included 15 male high proficient learners, 15 male low proficient learners, 15 female high proficient learners, and 15 female low proficient learners. This classification was done according to the rubrics for scoring QPT, and the participants' gender. The participants aged between 18 and 25, and they were all native Iranian speakers of Persian. A vocabulary size test called the Vocabulary Levels Test which was originally developed by Nation (1990, 2004) was used to measure the size of the test-taker's vocabulary prior to and after the experiment. A series on one-way ANCOVA was used to find answers to the research questions of the study. The findings of the study revealed that gender did not affect the vocabulary attrition of Iranian EFL learners, but language proficiency did affect the process of vocabulary attrition. Moreover, it was found that some certain types of vocabulary like abstract words, polysyllabic words, and false cognates seemed to be more susceptible to attrition by Iranian EFL learners than other ones. The results of this study could come to ELT teachers' assistance since by knowing the barriers of learning, the teachers can organize their activities in class so as to lead to better understanding of the lesson. It should also be mentioned that the findings of this study could enrich the literature in the area of second language acquisition development, especially Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning competence.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary attrition, Break in instruction, Gender, Proficiency level

INTRODUCTION

Even though vocabulary is the sub-skill of a language, it plays a very important role in language learning and teaching. Vocabulary teaching and learning is considered one of the major challenges that face ESL/EFL teachers and learners. Most EFL learners have difficulties in communicating in English language because of their limited amount of vocabulary. In order to overcome these challenges, they should use effective strategies which enhance vocabulary achievement and retention (Al-Zahrani, 2011).

With regard to the importance of vocabulary learning, it has been claimed that “Without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (Wilkins 1972, p. 111). This is consistent with Ellis (1994) who affirms that lexical errors tend to obstruct comprehension more than grammatical errors. Besides, Harmer (1991) asserts that choosing words carefully in certain situations is more important than choosing grammatical structures because language learners cannot use structures correctly if they do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary is one of the important parts of language learning which has been neglected for several decades (Meara, 1980). Coady and Huckin (1997) claimed that after a long period of neglect "second language vocabulary acquisition has recently become an increasingly topic of discussion for researchers, teachers, curriculum designers, theorists, and others involved in second/ foreign language learning" (p. 1). Vocabulary learning has been changed to one of the important parts of language which shifted to the first stages of language learning, as a result of the increasing demands to increasing vocabulary knowledge. Generally speaking, vocabulary plays an undeniable role in the development of all language skills. Schmitt (2008) claims that “one thing that students, teachers, materials writers, and researchers can all agree upon is that learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second language” (p. 329). Hayati and Shahriari (2010) state “Vocabulary learning by far plays an important role in learning language, be it a first language, second language or a foreign language. It is, therefore, conceivable that the words are the building blocks upon which the second language learning is built” (p. 27). Due to the important of vocabulary knowledge, it is suggested learning a second or foreign language involves the acquisition of thousands of words (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

There are several problems facing learning English vocabulary. These include forgetting new vocabularies because learners do not use them in their daily life since they are not surrounded by English speakers (Lin, 2002, cited in Al-Zahrani 2011). This requires looking for effective methods and strategies in order to improve achievement level to acquire vocabulary and motivate learning. Richards and Renandya (2002) emphasize that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write. Vocabulary is an important factor in all language teaching (Allen & Valette, 1977).

Factors affecting language abilities have recently been observed and studied for some years. Some of these factors have led to attrition of some language abilities (Oxford, 1982). The term “attrition” means gradual reduction of something. In relation to language learning, it is used when some factors such as duration of the period of disuse, e.g., the summer vacation or the

interruption in instruction between two educational terms, attitude, motivation and the like lead to the gradual reduction of some language abilities (Gardner & Macintyre, 1993; Oxford, 1982). Language attrition refers to a constant overall regression of language ability with decreased or ceased language use. In fact, it is the inverse process of language ability acquisition so that language acquisition research is not complete without studying language attrition (Groot, 2000). Schmid (2002, p.5) defines language attrition as “gradual loss of a language by an individual”. According to Hansen, language attrition is “the gradual forgetting of a language by individual attracters, who are experiencing attrition” (Hansen, 2001, p. 61).

Break in instruction seems an influential factor on second language learning. By a break in instruction, it is meant the interval during which EFL students stop learning English and have no exposure to this language (Ghasemi Bagherabadi, 2005). In Iran, this break lasts for three months for both school and university students when the schools and universities are closed. Of course, this is a formal break known as “summer vacation” however there will be shorter break in instruction for both school and university students such as the holiday of two weeks known as “New Year’s Holiday” or a short stop in instruction between two educational terms in universities or English Teaching Centers within which the students have no exposure to language input.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Vocabulary or lexicon is often considered the basis of the language. Many difficulties in both receptive and productive use of the target language (TL) arise from learners’ inadequate vocabulary knowledge (Laufer, 1986; Meara, 1980; Nation, 1990). Wilkins (1972) states that “...without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p. 110). Hatch (1983) points out that “... when our first goal is communication...it is the lexicon that is crucial to make basic communication possible” (p. 74). According to recent research, the average size of English vocabulary that native English speaking university students know and use is more than 50,000 words (Aitchison, 1996). Vocabulary can be classified as potential vocabulary, which are new words to the learners, but can be understood upon first encountering them (Palmberg, 1987). Or, it can be active vocabulary that the learners have learned and can understand or use. Nation (1990) developed a list of the various types of vocabulary knowledge: (a) the spoken form of a word, (b) the written form of a word, (c) the grammatical behavior of the word, (d) the collocational behavior of the word, (e) the stylistic register constraints of a word, (f) the conceptual meaning of a word, (g) the associations a word has with other related words, and (h) how frequent the word is. When learners master all these types of knowledge, they are able to use a word in a fluent manner. Consequently, the main purpose of this section is to study and review the importance of vocabulary in language learning so as to look at what we know about English vocabulary as well as to reflect on how this has been applied in language teaching and learning. Words are the tools learners use to think, to express ideas and feelings, as well as to explore and analyze the world around them. A limited vocabulary keeps them from expressing their thoughts and feelings. On the other hand, a large, rich vocabulary gives them the right words to use at the right time. Kitajima (2001) affirms that without words that label objects, actions, and concepts, one cannot express intended meanings. “The more words one is able to use

correctly, the better one will be able to express oneself easily and with self-confidence and to understand the world one lives in” (Nandy, 1994, p. 1).

Language attrition is defined by Lambert and Freed (1982) in very broad terms as the following: “Language attrition may refer to the loss of any language or any portion of a language by an individual or a speech community. It may refer to the declining use of mother tongue skills by those in bilingual situations or among ethnic minorities in (some) language contact situations where one language, for political or social reasons comes to replace another.” (p.1) “Language attrition” is the most common term used for any “Loss of language skills” that occurs after some years of non-exposure (Moorcraft & Gardner, 1987, p. 327). “Attrition refers to the non-pathological loss of a language in bilinguals; generally speaking, changes in the linguistic environment and termination of an instructional program may lead to attrition” (Kopke & Schmid, 2004, cited in Marefat & Rohshad, 2007).

“Language attrition (language loss) is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which has been studied from a variety of perspectives e.g. psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and sociolinguistics” (Gurel, 2004, p.53).

L2 attrition may occur in students who learn a second language in school but do not use it once classes have been completed (de Bot & Weltens, 1995, p.154). Historically, the factors affecting attrition rates have been characterized in terms of student variables, institutional variables, or student-institution interactional variables, resulting in a wide spectrum of findings and interpretations, with different studies offering varying profiles of the attributes and factors associated with attrition (Andres & Carpenter, 1997; Drea, 2004; Grayson & Grayson, 2003; Parkin & Baldwin, 2009; Summers, 2003; Tinto, 1993). With respect to student variables, demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, parental education, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, finances, health, etc.) and psychological variables (such as attitudes, values, norms, expectations, goals, etc.) were found to explain differing proportions of the variance in attrition across three decades of research (Attinasi, 1986; Baxter, 2004; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Brussi re, 2006; Dietsche, 1990; Eccles, 1983; Etherington, 1990; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Gomme & Gilbert, 1984; Lambert & Bussi re, 2004; Ma & Frempong, 2008; Marinaccio, 1985; Thiessen, 2001; Tinto, 1993). For example, gender has long been studied as a factor affecting attrition, with varying results. Some studies have reported higher attrition rates for males (Baxter, 2004; Bussi re, 2006; Ma & Frempong, 2008; Parkin & Baldwin, 2009), females (Lenning, 1982; Looker & Lowe, 2001; Thiessen, 2001; Tinto, 1993), or no correlations with gender (Aquino, 1990; Fischbach, 1990; Mohammadi, 1994; Summers, 2000).

A small study by Cohen (1975) investigated L2 (Spanish) attrition among three immersion school children over a summer vacation. The children had little contact with the target language (Spanish) outside of the school environment. The results showed some support for the regression hypothesis in that certain vocabulary items that were last learned were the first to be forgotten “when learners are removed from the second language contact for a period of time”. Obler (1993: 189) argues, however, that “it is because these late-learned items had been used less, rather than they were learned late, that they appeared to have been forgotten first”.

Cohen (1989) also looked at loss of vocabulary (Portuguese) among two children (ages 10 and 14) who had spent one year in a Portuguese-speaking environment (Brazil). They were tested after 1, 3 and 9 months of non-use. A storytelling task was *Retention and attrition of Irish as a second language* used to elicit productive data. Cohen found evidence for loss in the productive lexicon, especially nouns.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following research questions:

- 1-Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' gender and their vocabulary attrition rate after a break in instruction for one month?
- 2-Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency level and their vocabulary attrition rate after a disuse period of one month?
- 3- Are certain types of vocabulary learned by Iranian EFL learners more susceptible to attrition?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Using the Quick Placement Test (QPT), from among 100 EFL learners, 60 male and female candidates were chosen as the sample participants of this study. In fact, the sample included 15 male high proficient learners, 15 male low proficient learners, 15 female high proficient learners, and 15 female low proficient learners. This classification was done according to the rubrics for scoring QPT. The participants were English language students studying English at Nahid Art and Cultural Institute in Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran. Their age range was between 18 and 25 and they were all native Iranian speakers of Persian. Since gender was one variable in this study, the number of male and female students were chosen equal so as to have reliable data.

Instruments

The following instruments were used to gather data in this research:

The QPT

To identify the proficiency level of the participants, Quick Placement Test (QPT) was used. This test consists of two parts; part one has 40 questions including multiple choice situations (5 questions), cloze passages– testing prepositions, grammar, pronouns, and vocabulary– (15 questions), and completion questions (20 questions). The second part contains 20 questions; 10 questions on cloze passages and 10 questions of completion type questions. All questions are multiple-choice items.

Vocabulary Pretest and Posttest

A vocabulary size test called the Vocabulary Levels Test which was originally developed by Nation (1990, 2004) and Laufer and Nation (1995) was used to measure the size of the participants' vocabulary knowledge both prior to and after the treatment. This test was used because it has been commonly used by other studies and it is easy to administer and score. The test has been accepted in terms of reliability and validity by a number of L2 researchers as an

appropriate measure of vocabulary size (Laufer, 1992, 1996; Yu, 1996). Likewise, in the current study, the KR-21 reliability indexes of the pretest and posttest were found to be .76 and .81 respectively.

Procedure

A total number of 60 EFL students studying at Nahid Art and Cultural Institute in Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran were chosen as the participants of the present study. First Quick Placement Test (QPT) was administered to the students in order to determine their language proficiency level. Based on their QPT scores, they were divided into two groups of low and high proficient students. Then, the vocabulary size test (Nation, 1983, complete test; Appendix B) was administered to the students two times. It was once administered, as a pre-test to determine their vocabulary knowledge at the outset of the study ,i.e., when the students were in contact with language instruction and the other time as a post-test to determine the attrition rate of students' vocabulary after a break in instruction. The duration of break in instruction in this study was 30 days.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study, as such, employed a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of a study break on vocabulary attrition of the EFL learners, and to uncover the role of gender as well as proficiency level in this regard. From among EFL learners at a Nahid Art and Cultural Institute in Shahreza, Isfahan, Iran, a sample of 60 participants out of 100 available EFL learners was chosen in the light of the administration of a Quick Placement Test (QPT). Based on the QPT scoring rubric and the learners' gender, they were categorized into four groups of equal size: Low Proficiency Male Group (LPMG), High Proficiency Male Group (HPMG), Low proficiency Female Group (LPFG), and High Proficiency Female Group (HPFG). Each group consisted of 15 EFL learners. The vocabulary pretest was given to the four groups of learners at the time of their study, and then the study break, which lasted for a month, began. After this lapse of time, the learners in the four groups sat for the vocabulary posttest, the results of which provided the answers to the research questions of the study.

Results of the first research question

For reasons of convenience, the first research question is rewritten here: is there any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' gender and their vocabulary attrition rate after a break in instruction for one month? To answer this research question, the researcher had to compare the LPMG with those of LPFG. However, to control for any possible differences between the LPMG and LPFG prior to the break, one-way ANCOVA was conducted. This way the researcher could control for any possible differences between the two groups on the pretest and then compare their posttest scores. Moreover, the researcher needed to compare the HPMG and HPFG posttest scores as part of the answer to this research question; thus another one-way ANCOVA was run. The results of the ANCOVA tests are presented below.

Table 1: Results of One-Way ANCOVA for Comparing Posttest Scores of the LPMG and LPFG

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
CorrectedModel	183.43	2	91.71	62.27	.000	.82
Intercept	14.93	1	14.93	10.14	.004	.27
Pretest	182.90	1	182.90	124.18	.000	.82
Gender	.75	1	.75	.511	.481	.01
Error	39.76	27	1.47			
Total	106788.00	30				
Corrected Total	223.20	29				

Table 2: Results of One-Way ANCOVA for Comparing Posttest Scores of the HPMG and HPFG

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
CorrectedModel	188.63	2	94.31	188.19	.000	.93
Intercept	1.31	1	1.31	2.62	.117	.08
Pretest	187.80	1	187.80	374.73	.000	.93
Gender	.009	1	.009	.018	.896	.001
Error	13.53	27	.501			
Total	147903.00	30				
Corrected Total	202.16	29				

It could be concluded from Tables 1 and 2 that the high proficiency male and female learners, not unlike their low proficiency counterparts, were afflicted with vocabulary attrition and there was no difference between male and female learners in this respect.

Results of the second research question

The second research question of the current study was “Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ language proficiency level and their vocabulary attrition rate after a disuse period of one month?” To find an answer to this research question, the low proficiency and high proficiency learners’ posttest scores had to be compared. However, these two groups of learners might have had pre-existing differences before the study break commenced (i.e. their pretest scores might have differed). That is why, like what was done for the first research question, one-way ANCOVA was conducted to help find an answer to this research question.

Table 3: Results of One-Way ANCOVA for Comparing Posttest Scores of the LPG and HPG

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
CorrectedModel	2043.18	2	1021.59	1021.66	.000	.97
Intercept	13.77	1	13.77	13.77	.004	.19
Pretest	368.37	1	368.37	368.37	.000	.86
Proficiency Level	16.24	1	16.24	16.24	.000	.22
Error	56.99	57	1.00			
Total	254691.00	60				
Corrected Total	2100.18	59				

Now it could be inferred that proficiency level significantly affected the vocabulary loss of the learners, to the effect that high proficiency learners were less susceptible to vocabulary attrition

than did the low proficiency learners (since the adjusted posttest mean score of the HPG turned out to be 65.91, while the adjusted vocabulary posttest score .

Results of the third research question

The last research question of the present study intended to find out whether certain types of vocabulary learned by Iranian EFL learners were more susceptible to attrition. To provide an answer to this research question, the researcher merely pinpointed the wrong answers of all the participants, classified them, and measured the proportion of each type to present them in the following pie chart. These vocabulary items, which were problematic for the learners, were classified into the categories of: abstract words, polysyllabic words, false cognates, and other words.

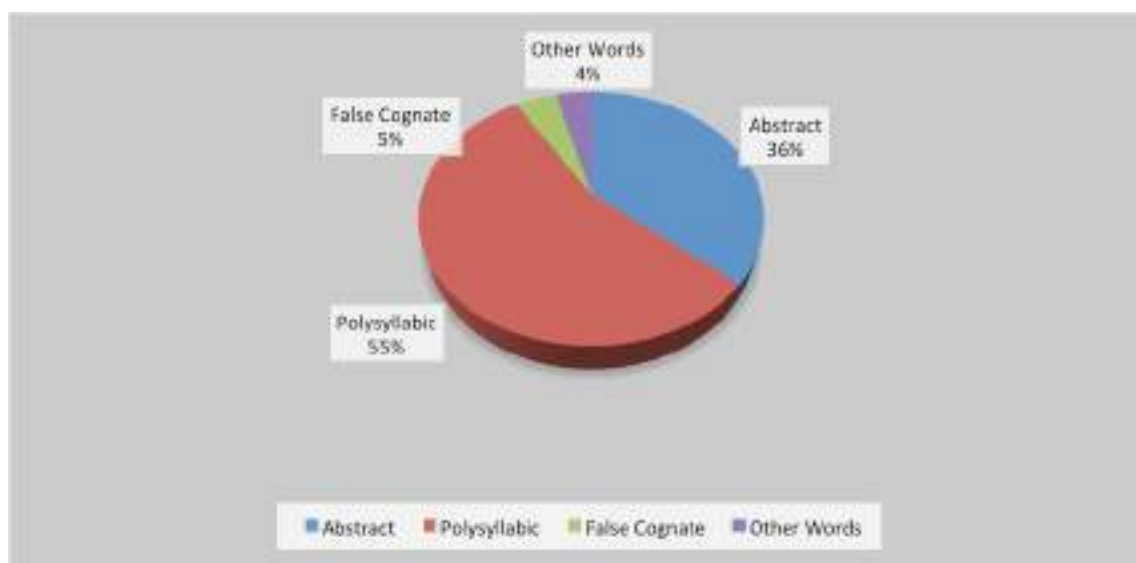


Figure 1: Percentages of Different Types of Forgotten Words

As it could be seen in *Figure 1*, polysyllabic words (55%) were more susceptible to vocabulary attrition than any other type of word. Then second most susceptible type of word was abstract words (36%), followed by false cognates (5%), and other words (4%).

CONCLUSION

Research on vocabulary attrition has been neglected for a long time however researchers have recently paid attention to this aspect of vocabulary knowledge. So this study was in fact an attempt to examine vocabulary attrition among Iranian EFL learners after a break in instruction. Furthermore An attempt was made to realize if there is any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' gender and language proficiency and their vocabulary attrition rate or not. The findings of the study revealed that gender does not affect the vocabulary attrition of Iranian EFL learners but language proficiency does affect the process of vocabulary attrition. Moreover, it was found that some certain types of vocabulary like abstract words, polysyllabic words, and false cognates seem to be more susceptible to attrition by Iranian EFL learners than others.

This study, like any other study, has a number of limitations, some of which could influence the findings and restrict the generalizability of the results. Here are some of the limitations of the research in hand: first, lack of a rich literature in dealing with the subject under investigation was one of the major shortcomings in this field. In other words, there was a lack of comprehensive helpful studies in relation to the effects of the vocabulary attrition on vocabulary learning competence of Iranian EFL learners. The second limitation of this research seems to be the sample size. As it was pointed out earlier, the participants of this study included sixty EFL learners from Nahid Art and Cultural Institute in Shahreza, Isfahan. Due to this fact, a word of caution should be taken in to account while generalizing the results of the study.

REFERENCES

- Aitchison, J. (1996). *The seeds of speech*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allen, V. F. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Andres, L., & Carpenter, S. (1997). *Today's higher education students: Issues of admission, retention, transfer, and attrition in relation to changing student demographics*. Vancouver, BC: Centre for Policy Studies in Education, University of British Columbia.
- Attinasi, L. (1986). *Getting in: Mexican American students' perceptions of their college-going behavior*. Paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education, San Antonio TX.
- Bussière, P. (2006). *Result from the third cycle of the youth in transition survey*. Ottawa, ON: Learning Policy Directorate, Human Resources Development Canada.
- Coady, J. (1997). L2 vocabulary acquisition through extensive reading. In Schmitt, N. (Ed). *Vocabulary in language teaching* (pp. 14). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, A. D. (1975). Forgetting a second language. *Language Learning*, 25, 127 – 138.
- Cohen, A. D. (1989). Attrition in the productive lexicon of two Portuguese third language speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11, 135 – 149
- de Bot, K., & Weltens, B. (1995). Foreign language attrition. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 15, 151-164.
- de Bot, K., Martens, V., & Stoessel, S. (2004). The “Savings” approach to testing vocabulary. *The International Journal of Bilingualism*, 8(3), 373-382.
- Dietsche, P. (1990). Freshman attrition in a college of applied arts and technology of Ontario. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 20(3), 65-84.
- Drea, C. (2004). Student attrition and retention in Ontario's colleges. *College Quarterly* 7(2), 1-7.
- Ellis, N.C., & Sinclair, S.G. (1996). Working Memory in the Acquisition of Vocabulary and Syntax: Putting Language in Good Order. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 49A (1), 234-250.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behaviour: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Gardner, R. C., Lalonde, R. N., Moorcroft, R., & Evers, F. T. (1987). Second language attrition: The role of motivation and use. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 6, 29-47.
- Ghasemi Bagherabadi. M (2005). *L2 lexical attrition: Study of maintenance patterns after a break in instruction*. Unpublished master thesis, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.

- Gomme, I., & Gilbert, S. (1984). Paying the cost: Some observations on the problem of postsecondary student attrition. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 14(3), 95-100.
- Grayson, J., & Grayson, K. (2003). *Research on retention and attrition*. Montreal, QC: Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.
- Gurel A. (2004). Selectivity in L2-induced L1 attrition: A psycholinguistic account. *Journal of Neurolinguistics*, 17, 53–78.
- Hansen, L. (2001). Language attrition: The fate of the start. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 60-73.
- Hansen, L., & Asao, T. (2001). Beyond vocabulary: Applying the savings paradigm to the relearning of Japanese grammatical particles. In K. de Bot, & L. Hansen (Chairs), *Reactivating a 'forgotten' language: The savings-paradigm applied*. Symposium conducted at AAAL 2001, St. Louis, Missouri.
- Kitajima, R. (2001). The effect of instructional conditions on students' vocabulary retention. *Foreign Language Annals*, 34 (5), 482.
- Kopke, B., & Schmid, M. (2004). Language Attrition: The next phase. In Monika S. Schmid, B. Kopke, M. Keijzer and L. Weilemar (Eds.), *First language attrition: Interdisciplinary perspectives on methodological issues* (pp. 1-47). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lambert, M., Zeman, K., Allen, M., & Bussière, P. (2004). *Who pursues postsecondary education, who leaves, and why? Results from the Youth in Transition Survey*. Ottawa, Canada: Statistics Canada.
- Laufer, B. (1986). Possible changes in attitude towards vocabulary acquisition research. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 24, 69-75.
- Marefat, H., & Rohshad, A. (2007). Second language attrition: Are different nouns equally likely to be lost? *Porta Linguarum*, 8, 85-98.
- Marinaccio, J. (1985). *Attrition at Community Colleges*. In *Current Issues for the Community College*. Essays by Fellows in the MidCareer Fellowship Program at Princeton University.
- Meara, P. (1980). Vocabulary acquisition: A neglected aspect of language learning. *Language Teaching and Linguistics Abstracts*, 13, 221-245.
- Mohammadi, J. (1994). *Exploring retention and attrition in a two-year public community college*. Martinsville, VA: Patrick Henry Community College.
- Moorcraft, R., & Gardner, R.C. (1987). *Linguistic factors in second language loss*. *Language Learning*, 37(3), 327-340. MRC Psycholinguistic Database. Available online at: http://www.psy.uwa.edu.au/mrcdatabase/uwa_mrc.htm.
- Nandy, M. (1994). *Vocabulary and grammar for G.C.E. 'O' level English*. Singapore: Composite Study Aids.
- Nation, P. (1997). L1 and L2 use in the classroom: A systematic approach. In Ramachandran, S.D., & Rahim, H.A. Meaning Recall and Retention: The Impact of the Translation Method on Elementary Level Learners' Vocabulary Learning. *RELC Journal*, 35(2), 161-178. doi: 10.1177/003368820403500205
- Palmberg, R. (1987). Patterns of vocabulary development in foreign language learners. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 9, 201-220.

- Ruhshad & Marefat (2007). Second language attrition: Are different nouns equally likely to be lost? *Journal of Porta Linguarum*. 18,135-144.
- Schmid, M. S. (2004). First language attrition: The methodology revised. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 8, 239-255.
- Schmid, M. S. (2006). Second language attrition. In K. Brown (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (pp. 74-81), 11. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Schmid, M. S. (2007). The role of L1 use for L1 attrition. In B. Kopke, M.S. Schmid, M. Keijzer & S. Dostert (Eds.), *Language attrition: Theoretical perspectives* (pp. 135-154). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Schmid, M. S., & Dusseldorp, E. (2010). Quantitative analyses in a multivariate study of language attrition. *Second Language Research*, 26(1), 125-160.
- Schmid, M. S. & Keijzer, M. (2009). First language attrition and reversion among older migrants. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 200, 83-101
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Summers, M. (2003). Attrition Research at Community Colleges. *Community College Review*, 30(4), 64-85.
- Thiessen, V. (2001). *Policy research issues for Canadian youth: non-completion of postsecondary educational programs*. Ottawa, ON: Human Resources Development Canada.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd. ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Weltens, B. (1989). *The attrition of French as a foreign language*. Dordrecht/Providence: Foris Publications.
- Weltens, B., & Grendel, M. (1993). Attrition of vocabulary knowledge. In R. Schreuder & B. Weltens (Eds.), *The bilingual lexicon* (pp. 135-156). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins.
- Wilkins, D. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Arnold.
- Xu, X. (2010). *English language attrition and retention in Chinese and Dutch university students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, GRODIL series (87), University of Groningen.

THE COMPARATIVE IMPACT OF SONG AND NONSONG VOCABULARY INSTRUCTIONS

Somayeh Akbarpour

MA Student of TEFL, Shahrekord University, Shahrekord, Iran

Ali Roohani*

Assistant Professor, Shahrekord University, Shahrekord, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of teaching English vocabulary through song and nonsong methods to elementary Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. To answer the question of the study, the researcher adopted a quasi-experimental design. The participants were randomly assigned into two experimental groups and two control groups within the age range of 9-12. The experimental groups, which consisted of 25 male and 25 female learners, and control groups, which consisted of 25 male and 25 female learners, received different treatments by the same teacher. The experimental groups were instructed through song and the control groups were instructed through nonsong methods. The length of time spent on vocabulary instruction for each group was approximately 12 sessions. Before starting the treatment, a 40-item vocabulary test, consisted of multiple-choice, matching type items, and true or false items was developed, validated and used as the pretest and posttest. The statistical technique of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) utilized to analyze the collected data. The ANCOVA results revealed that both song and nonsong instructions had a similar positive impact on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary gains and there was not a statistically significant difference between the two types of vocabulary instructions.

KEYWORDS: Song and nonsong Instructions; EFL learners; Vocabulary learning

INTRODUCTION

One aspect of language learning that has been disregarded in the past, is vocabulary (Prince, 1996). It has been treated as the "Cinderella of foreign language learning" (Beheydt, 1987, p. 55). Vocabulary teaching or learning has never received the same degree of attention as have the other aspects as reading, writing, or grammar (Hedge, 2008; Richards & Renandya, 2002), but now it has become a candidate for much research and attention (Amiryousefi & Vahid, 2010). According to Folse (2004), this is a myth that "vocabulary is sufficiently covered enough in our curricula and courses" (p. 1). Careful scrutiny of English as second language (ESL) textbooks will show the fact that the order of presenting materials in the books is according to grammar points. Also, the most parts of the books are allotted to grammar boxes, pair work activities, and pronunciation activities. Vocabulary lists are either consigned to the back of the book or confined to a few questions about their meanings in a reading passage. ESL learners, even those who have passed an English course, have expressed, in an exit survey by James (1996), their needs to more vocabulary practice and instruction (Folse, 2004).

In addition to the scarcity of specific, sufficient, and systematic attention to vocabulary, this important aspect of second language learning (SLL) has suffered from the scarcity of interesting methods of vocabulary instruction in most curricula. The necessity of more vocabulary practice seems to be obvious for ESL learners. However, it appears that second language (L2) vocabulary learning is not welcomed by many students because they have problems not only in memorizing the meaning, pronunciation, and spelling of English words but also in recalling and remembering them (Thornbury, 2002). Thus, it is necessary to improve the techniques of teaching L2 vocabulary to students and to break the routine that has made the students bored and discouraged them from vocabulary learning.

One of the techniques that L2 teachers can use to promote students' interests and motivations in learning L2 vocabulary is using song (Medina, 1993; Murphey, 1992). "Songs are ubiquitous" (Schon, Boyer, Moreno, Besson, Peretz, & Kolinsky, 2007, p. 2). The most popular function of song/music, is their affective attractions (Trainor, Austin, & Desjardins, 2000). Apart from the emotional appeal of song/music, though, a number of cognitive and linguistic functions have also been identified in favor of their use (Schoepp, 2001). Thus, the current study was conducted to investigate the effect of using song as an alternate instructional method of teaching and learning L2 vocabulary (i.e., English words) at the elementary level in language schools in Iran and compare it with the traditional method (i.e., using pictures, flashcards) which does not use song to teach English vocabulary to young L2 learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The enterprise of learning a second language has been a theme of many studies. In learning a second language "your whole person is affected as you struggle to reach beyond the confines of your first language into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting" (Brown, 2000, p. 1). Theories about how people learn second language are various. Each of these theories can illuminate one aspect of the language learning process. The theories which are most directly related to song/music and second language learning, which support the basis of this study, come from theories such as Krashen's second language acquisition (SLA) hypotheses and Gardner's multiple intelligences (MI). Of Krashen's five hypotheses, affective filter hypotheses have received the most attention (Medina, 2002).

Some researchers (e.g., Anton, 1990; Ayotte, 2004; Hsu, 2009; Wilcox, 1995) have claimed that the affective filter hypothesis is the best known in research that focus on music for teaching purposes, though, all of Krashen's hypotheses are widely-known in the literature of L2 research. According to this hypothesis, song/music may be able to assist in lowering high levels of stress and increase motivation and competence of L2 learners. In addition, song/music can be a great source of making optimal attitude and positive atmosphere in the classroom, enhancing total use of the linguistic input from environment. Because the melodious music and patterned lyrics in songs may be able to create a happy and low pressure environment that help lower the affective filter and bring about effective language acquisition (Butzlaff, 2000; Johnson & Memmott, 2006; Shen, 2009). Also, Jackson and Joyce (2003) state that "Group singing can lower the walls between people, decrease competitive instincts and build cooperation in its place" (p. 7).

Medina (2002) also states that applying music as a useful tool for L2 learning is compatible with Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. It can be used in various ways for teaching second language to learners. For example, students can listen to instrumental background music while writing an essay. To elicit verbal responses, they may be asked to listen to classical or jazz music. To acquire new vocabulary, when the teacher points to pictures and illustrations of key words, they may listen to a story song or sing songs within which there are key target language structures. Obviously, there are many ways for using music in L2 teaching, therefore, musical intelligence will be cultivated in this way. Thus, those students with higher musical intelligence will experience more joyful and prosperous instruction.

In addition, music inherently creates a cooperative and task sharing environment and involve the use of all other intelligences, thus giving it the potential to reinforce the effect of the instruction for the students (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004). While singing a song, L2 learners use their linguistic intelligence to keep the flow of the going language, while clapping or dancing to the rhythm, they use kinesthetic intelligence; while chanting as a whole group, they use interpersonal intelligence. This process contributes to L2 learning/acquisition because the playful characteristic of songs increases the children's interest in linguistic features of the target language through singing (Christison, 1995; Wiggins, 2007), and instructing students explicitly during singing assists students to be conscious about target sentence forms and meanings, hence, enhancing their vocabulary acquisition and retention.

The relationship between language and song/music was also investigated by Murphey. He introduced song-stuck-in-my-head (SSIMH) phenomenon in 1990. Murphey (1990) claimed that song can be an important tool for activating the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Murphey also found a similarity between SSIMH phenomenon and Krashen's Din, which is the involuntary rehearsal of a foreign language in one's mind. The characteristics of popular songs were examined by Murphey (1992) to reinforce the opinion that music can facilitate the stimulation of the LAD into the Din mode of involuntary language rehearsal. Krashen (1983) hypothesized that the LAD put the Din in action when the conditions of "comprehensible input" and "i + 1 structure" are met.

The majority of the existing studies have identified positive effects of using song/music on learning and retention of vocabulary in L2 classroom. One of the major studies that examined the effects of music upon the acquisition of English vocabulary was that of Medina (1990). She used three sources of instruction: stories, song stories and illustrations for 48 second grade Spanish speaking children with limited English proficiency. Her reason for selecting these sources of instruction was that children learned a large portion of their first language orally before they attended school, had formal instruction, and were able to read. In fact, she concluded that stories, song stories and illustrations seemed to be among the most common sources of incidental vocabulary learning for children.

Medina conducted the research for four groups of 20 Spanish children. She divided the children into four groups of twenty: the no-music group who listened to a the story spoken; the music group who listened to the same story in its song version; the illustration group listened to the

story song using illustrations of the story; and the no-illustration group who listened to the story spoken without pictures. Prior to the treatment, a vocabulary pretest was administered. After the four-day treatment period, students were given the first vocabulary posttest and one and one-half weeks after the last treatment the second posttest was administered. Results of computing scores of the four groups on two achievement vocabulary posttest, and comparing them with the vocabulary pretest scores indicated no statistical significant difference between the four groups. When the results were examined, vocabulary gained scores for the music group were considerably higher than for no music group.

Also, Medina (1990) concluded that listening to song stories was more enjoyable than listening to oral stories for all of the participants. This shed light on the value of the story-songs which were recognized as different from standard speech and on the value of using illustrations which were identified as an aid in making the words of stories more comprehensible. The interaction between music and illustration groups was not statistically significant, but vocabulary gained scores showed that the highest average gains were in the group music and illustration were used together. The conclusions for the use of music in the L2 classroom clearly indicate that “music can be as a viable vehicle for second language acquisition as stories, so songs should not be treated as extra-curricular entities without any instructional value” (p. 18).

Despite the above positive effects, some researchers (e.g., Winter, 2010) report that the use of song neither improve significantly nor hinder vocabulary learning. Winter (2010) investigated the relationship between using song and productive vocabulary gains of second grade English language learners. The study was conducted in one elementary school in a rural public school district in the upper Midwest. The ESL students were pulled out from the four regular second grade classrooms that the school had. Placement of the ESL (English as a second language) students was based on the school regular schedule, not their language proficiency. Seven ESL learners made up the control group and eight ESL students made up the experimental group. The control group had the traditional vocabulary instruction and the experimental group was instructed by listening to song. Three sets of vocabulary were presented through three stories. The researcher administered pretests (self-assessment and cloze tests), end-of-story oral assessments, and posttests (a replica of pretests). The results showed that students in the song group performed slightly better than the students in the traditional group which were not exposed to songs. However, Winter believed that the findings were not conclusive. Also, she found that songs raised students' confidence in producing vocabulary.

To the researcher's best knowledge, there are few experimental studies investigating how the use of song influences Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning, especially in the area of their fundamental linguistic functions such as English word recognition and vocabulary recall. Furthermore, most of the existing studies (e.g., Mori, 2011; Winter, 2010) in this area predominantly have focused on college level students. Therefore, there was a need to conduct research on EFL children in this regard. The paucity of research in this field, indicated that further studies would be needed in order to draw conclusions regarding the use of song in enhancing vocabulary at the elementary levels.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Does the song method improve elementary learners' English vocabulary learning more than the nonsong method?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 100 Iranian EFL learners. The participants who were selected from four intact classes were at elementary level within the age range of 9-12. They were randomly assigned to four groups: two experimental groups and two control groups (in two language institute in Isfahan). The first experimental group included 25 male EFL learners; the second experimental group included 25 female EFL learners; the first control group included 25 male EFL learners; and the second control group included 25 female EFL learners. The sampling was an accessible random sampling type. Having learned English alphabets and practiced reading and writing some English vocabulary in these institutes, the participants were able to read the words which were used in vocabulary pretest and posttest of this study.

Instrumentation

As to the instruments, the present researchers designed a vocabulary test for the pretest and the posttest. The test was an achievement test which included 40 items. In order to score this test objectively, true or false, multiple-choice, and matching type items were developed. The items were developed based on the content vocabulary which were included in the textbooks (*Song Time Starter*, *Song Time 2* (Shahsavari & Yeganeh, 2010) and *Song Time 1* (Holisaz & Yeganeh, 2010). The test was classified into four sections. Each section, which formed one type of items, consisted of ten items. In the first section, the EFL learners should look at the words and write the number of a word under the corresponding picture. In the second section (i.e., true or false type items), they should look at the picture and choose true or false. In the third section (i.e., multiple-choice type items), they should look at the picture and choose the correct answer. In the fourth section (i.e., matching type items) they should match number of a word with the corresponding pictures. The weight for each item was one mark.

To establish internal consistency for this study, Cronbach's alpha was computed. The Cronbach's alpha for the vocabulary pretest was .70 which is considered an acceptable reliability for the constructed vocabulary test. The validity of the test was investigated through content and construct validity. The content validity of the test was represented through the development and use of an elaborate specifications for items as the blueprint, content experts' advice, and pilot testing to ensure that the test is a representative sample of the content the test was designed to measure, that is, English vocabulary of L2 learners. The 40-item vocabulary test, which was administered to 100 students, was subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS.

Procedures

This research adopted a quasi-experimental design since the participants were selected from four intact classes and randomly assigned to four groups: two experimental groups and two control groups. The first experimental group included male EFL learners; the second experimental group

included female EFL learners; the first control group included male EFL learners; and the second control group included female EFL learners. When the students registered in the institutes they were interviewed in order to be placed in their appropriate level of L2 language proficiency; hence having a more homogenous sample before the study. Besides, the selected students were at elementary levels within the age range of 9-12.

The researcher followed several stages for the study. First, the previous vocabulary knowledge of both the experimental and control groups were examined through an activity. In this activity, the students had to circle the words they do not know or the words they had doubts about their meanings. The words were selected from the textbooks of *Song Time Starter*, *Song Time 2* (Shahsavari & Yeganeh, 2010), and *Song Time 1* (Holisaz & Yeganeh, 2010); the students in the control group did not have access to the song books. The selected words of the song books were presented to the control group through flashcards. Second, a 40-item test was developed. Care was taken to include item formats which suit their level of language and cognition. The students' already-known vocabulary was crossed out from the test. Third, the test was piloted on similar subjects to see if there were any problems with the test items for the main study. Fourth, content validity and construct validity were checked. It was given to the three experts in the field of testing in order to examine its content validity and check the content and table of specification. The factor analysis was also employed. Fifth, the reliability of the test was obtained through Cronbach's alpha method.

Sixth, the revised test was administered to both experimental and control groups as a pretest to assess what the subjects already know. Forty-eight sessions were held to teach the whole vocabulary in both experimental and control groups. The length of time spent on vocabulary instruction for each group was approximately 12 sessions. After 12 sessions, the posttest of English vocabulary in this study was administered to both control and experimental groups to find out the participants' acquisition of the target vocabulary after the instructional intervention was completed.

Data obtained from the pretest and posttest was analyzed using an SPSS package. The technique of ANCOVA was run to investigate the significant differences in mean scores of vocabulary test between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of pretest and posttest vocabulary scores in both groups (song and nonsong) were obtained and summarized in Table 1. As Table 1 indicates, the minimum pretest scores were 0 and 2 in song and nonsong groups respectively, which were below the possible median score (20) and the maximum pretest scores were 25 in song group and 26 in nonsong group, which were above the median score (20) on a 40-point scale. Also, Table 1 demonstrates, the minimum posttest scores were 10 and 9 in song and nonsong groups respectively, which were below the possible median score (20) and the maximum posttest scores was 37 in both groups, which was above the median score (20) on a 40-point scale.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Scores in Both Groups

Group	Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistics	Kurtosis
Non Song	Pretest Vocabulary	50	2	26	10.38	6.06	.544	-.389
	Posttest Vocabulary	50	9	37	23	7.32	.015	-.706
Song	Pretest Vocabulary	50	0	25	10.26	5.28	.502	.765
	Posttest Vocabulary	50	10	37	23.34	7.09	.122	-.929

According to Table 1, the pretest mean score in nonsong group (10.38) was a little larger than the pretest mean score in song group (10.26). But it seems that the difference was small. This supported the homogeneity of pretest scores. The posttest mean scores in the nonsong and song groups were 23 and 23.34, respectively. That is, the difference was not great. Besides, both groups showed, to some extent, an increase from the pretests to posttests.

The research question intended to see if using songs was more effective than the traditional method (which did not use songs) in teaching L2 vocabulary. To address the research question of the study, covariate analysis was conducted. However, before running the covariate analysis, several assumptions were checked to make sure that vocabulary scores had similar variances across both groups, and there was no interaction between the treatment and the pretest scores; Levene's test of equality of variance showed that there was no significant difference between both groups in terms of vocabulary scores ($p = 1.66$). Also, the treatment for the pretest scores was not statistically significant, $F = .935$, $p = .336$.

The results of analysis of variance for the impact of the treatment on the posttest vocabulary scores are reported in Table 2. The results in Table 2 revealed that the treatment of the study had no significant effect on the students' posttest vocabulary scores because the p value was greater than .05, $F = .137$, $p = .712$. The corresponding effect size was found to be .001, which was very small. Obtaining estimating marginal means, which identifies the adjusted means on the dependent variable for each of the groups, indicated that the song group ($M = 23.385$) performed slightly better than the nonsong group ($M = 22.955$) on the posttests (see Table 3), but the difference was very small. Thus, results in Table 2 and 3 show that the song and nonsong instruction did have statistically different impacts on L2 vocabulary learning among Iranian EFL learners. The results also suggests that the mean scores improved from the pretests to posttests in both groups.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance for the Treatment Effect on Posttest Scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Corrected Model	1821.147 ^a	2	910.574	26.937	.000	.357	
Intercept	5406.155	1	5406.155	159.928	.000	.622	
Pretest	1818.257	1	1818.257	53.789	.000	.357	
Group	4.641	1	4.641	.137	.712	.001	
Error	3278.963	97	33.804				
Total	58785.000	100					
Corrected Total	5100.110	99					

a. R Squared = .357 (Adjusted R Squared = .344)

Table 3: Estimate Margin Means for Groups

Group	Mean	Std. Error	99% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	23.385	.822	21.753	25.017
2	22.955	.822	21.323	24.587

Group 1= Song; Group 2 = Nonsong

Discussion

The descriptive statistics showed that the song groups appeared to perform better the nonsong groups. However, the ANCOVA analysis revealed no significant difference between the two groups on the posttests, indicating that song method was not statistically more effective in improving the students' vocabulary learning as compared with the nonsong method. The results were contradictory to El-Nahhal's (2011) findings which revealed a statistically significant difference in mean scores of vocabulary test in favor of the experimental group who learned English vocabulary through listening to children song. But the above finding is consistent with the previous studies by Ayotte (2004), Medina (1990), Mori (2011), and Winter (2010), who found that using song fail to assist learners gain large amount of second language vocabulary.

Several plausible reasons may explain why no significant differences were observed. First, it may be related to the length of the instruction. That is, a short-term instruction (about a month) for each of the song group with 30 minutes a day might be insufficient for the EFL beginners to learn English vocabulary. If the length of time for instructing vocabulary through song had been increased, the learners might have improved their word knowledge in English. In order to facilitate the learning and internalization of vocabulary especially for EFL learners, repeated exposures and manipulation of the vocabulary might be needed (Belisle, 1997; Swain & Lapkin, 1991). Thus, as discussed above, the length of treatment and consequently inadequate reinforcement of the English vocabulary might have affected the performance on the posttest and the non-significant result of the study.

The second reason is probably related to the function of song/music for Iranian EFL learners. That is, they may use song/music as an outlet (outburst) for energy. For them listening to song is a source of entertainment rather than an educational tool. It seems that they are so attracted to the elements of music such as rhythm, melody, and harmony that the meanings of target vocabulary in the lyrics are undermined (subordinated). In fact, due to the limitation in incorporating English song in curriculum and lack of trained teachers for this purpose, students are not probably familiar with the features of song/music and their educational value.

The third reason may be related to the matter of rote memorization of song. Music was found to benefit rote memorization when the information and music were presented simultaneously (Gfeller, 1983; Schuster & Mouzon, 1982). Also, the rhythmic presentation of meaningful verbal information was found to benefit memorization (Glazner, 1976; Shepard & Ascher, 1973; Weener, 1971). Salcedo (2002) found that the use of song in the foreign language classroom was considered to be helping memory of text. Although using song is one of the quick, easy, and enjoyable techniques of memorization for children, reciting the whole text does not mean that learners have learned all the words or even the majority of content words of a song. Stated differently, they may know the plot of the song story and know it from memory word for word, but they pay little attention to the meaning of each word. As Murphey (1992) states, no matter how enjoyable or memorable, singing songs fail to teach anyone to use the language and transfer the words into use.

The above results of the present study can lead to drawing two conclusions. First, the use of song might be generally beneficial in facilitating vocabulary learning. This finding also confirmed the general benefits of song in foreign language context by previous studies (Medina, 1990; Mori, 2011; Schunk, 1999; Winter, 2010). As Ayotte (2004) states, presenting authentic language into the classroom through song might arise the EFL students' interests and help them to learn L2 vocabulary. Second, using pictures (e.g., flashcards), like using song, might be generally effective in learning vocabulary. The beneficial effect of picture in recalling information is based on Paivio's dual-coding theory. In proposing this theory, Paivio (1971) assumed that both visual and verbal codes could aid in representing or recalling information (Sternberg, 2003). This theory was also psychologically supported. Many researchers have agreed that only words and images are used in mental representation (Pylyshyn, 1973). Further evidence indicates that recalling learned materials will be facilitated if verbal information and the corresponding visual image are presented together (Doff, 1988; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Shapiro & Waters, 2005). In addition, using pictures in teaching vocabulary aids EFL learners to notice the words consciously. In fact, it is a way for young L2 learners to learn target words quickly and easily.

CONCLUSION

The above findings of the present study showed that both song and nonsong instructions had a similar positive impact on Iranian learners' English vocabulary learning at the elementary level, the difference between the two methods (types of instructions) was not statistically significant. The main conclusion that can be drawn is that using song as a method of instruction is beneficial for L2 vocabulary learning, but "the extent of its value in comparison to more traditional

vocabulary instruction is still in question. More research needs to be done in this area to allow for a more definite conclusion” (Winter, 2010, p. 71). According to Salcedo (2002), using song/music in English should not be “a panacea, replacing all other methods as the only viable teaching tool”, instead, they should be employed as an acceptable material for classroom instruction (p. 127). Similarly, as Ayotte (2004, p. 87) states, using song can be served as “an alternative approach to presenting and teaching foreign language material”, but it should not be considered as the most successful and innovative method of teaching L2 vocabulary to young L2 learners.

REFERENCES

- Amiryousefi, M., & Vahid Dastjerdi, H. (2010). Vocabulary: Challenges and debates. *English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 89-94.
- Anton, R. J. (1990). Combining singing and psychology. *Hispania*, 73, 116-117.
- Arnold, J., & Fonseca, M. C. (2004). Multiple intelligence theory and foreign language learning: A brain-based perspective. *International Journal of English Studies*, 4(1), 119-136.
- Ayotte, S. B. (2004). The acquisition of verb forms through song. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65(9), 3356-A. (UMI No. 3145974)
- Beheydt, L. (1987). The semantization of vocabulary in foreign language learning. *System*, 15(1), 55-67.
- Belisle, T. (1997). *Developing vocabulary knowledge in the immersion classroom*. Retrieved December 23, 2013, from <http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol1/nov1997.pdf>
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Principles of language learning and teaching. White Plain, NY: Pearson Education.
- Butzlaff, R. (2000). Can music be used to teach reading? *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 34, 167-178.
- Christison, M. A. (1995). *English through poetry*. San Francisco: Alta Books.
- Doff, A. (1988). *Teach English*. Cambridge University Press.
- El-Nahhal, M. M. (2011). *The effectiveness of using children songs on developing the fourth graders' English vocabulary in Rafah governmental schools*. Unpublished master's thesis, Al-Azhar University, Rafah, Gaza.
- Folse, K. S. (2004). Myths about teaching and learning second language vocabulary: What recent research says. *TESL Reporter*, 37(2), 1-13.
- Gfeller, K. (1983). Musical mnemonics as an aid to retention with normal and learning disabled students. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 20(4), 179-189.
- Glazner, M. (1976). Intonation grouping and related words in free recall. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 15, 85-92.
- Hedge, T. (2008). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford University Press.
- Holisaz, F., & Yeganeh, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Song time 1*. Isfahan, Iran: Gooyesh Press.
- Hsu, H. 2009. *The effect of rhythmic teaching methods for kindergarten EFL students in Taiwan*. The University of Mississippi. (Publication No. AAT 3385871)
- Jackson, M. F., & Joyce, D. M. (2003). *The role of music in classroom management*. New York University.

- James, M. (1996). *Improving second language reading comprehension: A computer- assisted vocabulary development approach*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Hawaii, Manoa.
- Johnson, C. M., & Memmott, J. E. (2006). Examination of relationships between music programs of differing quality and standardized test results. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54(4), 293-307.
- Krashen, S. D. (1983). The Din in the head, input, and the language acquisition device. *Foreign Language Annals*, 16, 41-44.
- Medina, S. L. (1990). *The effects of music upon second language vocabulary acquisition*. Paper presented at the *TESOL Conference*. San Francisco. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 352834)
- Medina, S. L. (1993). The effect of music on second language vocabulary acquisition. *FEES News (National Network for Early Language Learning)*, 6(3), 1-8.
- Medina, S. L. (2002). Using music to enhance second language acquisition: From theory to practice. In J. Lalas & S. Lee (Eds.), *Language, literacy, and academic development for English language learners*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Mori, N. (2011). *Effects of singing on the vocabulary acquisition of university Japanese foreign language students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas.
- Murphey, T. (1990). The Song stuck in my head phenomenon: A melodic Din in the LAD? *System*, 18(1), 53-64.
- Murphey, T. (1992). *Music and song*. Oxford University Press.
- Paivio, A. (1971). *Imagery and verbal processes*. New York: Holt, Rinehard, & Winston.
- Prince, P. (1996). Second language vocabulary learning: The role of context versus translations as a function of proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, 80(4), 478-493.
- Pylyshyn, Z. W. (1973). What the mind's eye tells the mind's brain: A critique of mental imagery. *Psychological Bulletin*, 80, 1-24.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, Th. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W.A. (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Salcedo, C. S. (2002). The effects of songs in the foreign language classroom on text recall and involuntary mental rehearsal. *Dissertation Abstracts International, A: The Humanities and Social Sciences*, 63(11), 3890-A. (UMI No. DA3069732)
- Schoepp, K. (2001). Reasons for using songs in the ESL/EFL classroom. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7(2), Retrieved November 18, 2013, from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/SchoeppSongs.html>
- Schon, D., Boyer, M., Moreno, S., Besson, M., Peretz, I., & Kolinsky, R. (2007). Songs as an aid for language acquisition. *Cognition*, 106(2), 975-983.
- Schunk, (1999). The effect of singing paired with signing on receptive vocabulary skills of elementary ESL students. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 36(2), 110-124.
- Shapiro, A. M., & Waters, D. L. (2005). An investigation of the cognitive process underlying the KWM of foreign vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(2), 129-146.
- Shen, C. (2009). Using English songs: An enjoyable and effective approach to ELT. *English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 88-94.

- Shepard, W., & Ascher, L. (1973). Effects of linguistic rule conformity on free recall in children and adults. *Developmental Psychology*, 8(1), 139.
- Sternberg, R. J. (2003). *Cognitive theory* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1991). Additive bilingualism and French immersion education: The roles of language proficiency and literacy. In A. Reynolds (Ed.). *Bilingualism, multiculturalism, and second language learning: The McGill conference in honour of Wallace E. Lambert*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Thornbury, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. Harlow: Longman.
- Trainor, L. J., Austin, C. M., & Desjardins, R. N. (2000). Is infant-directed speech prosody a result of the vocal expression of emotion? *Psychological Science*, 11, 188–195.
- Weener, P. (1971). Language structure and free recall of verbal messages by children. *Developmental Psychology*, 5, 237-243.
- Wiggins, D. G. (2007). Pre-K music and the emergent reader: Promoting literacy in a music enhanced environment. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 35(1), 55-64.
- Wilcox, W. (1995). Music cues from classroom singing for second language acquisition: Prosodic memory for pronunciation of target vocabulary by adult non-native English speakers. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 45, 332. (UMI No. DA 9544866)
- Winter, N. D. (2010). *Sing, sing a song: How using songs affect productive vocabulary acquisition on English language learners*. Unpublished master's thesis, Hamline University, Minnesota.

13 VIKINGS VS 1000 ROMANS; THE EFFECT OF USING WIKIS ON IMPROVEMENT OF READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AMONG IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Morteza Bakhtiarvand

English Language Department, Ministry of Education, Khoramabad, Lorestan, Iran

Neda Azar Kia

English Language Department, Ministry of Education, Shush, Khuzestan, Iran

Forough Qhalavandi

English Language Department, Ministry of Education, Mohajeran, Arak, Iran

Hadi Motamed Nia

English Language Department, Ministry of Education, Shush, Khuzestan, Iran

**Corresponding author. Tel.: +989301895959*

E-mail address: m_bakhtiarvand@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Wiki is a major component of Web 2.0, the emergent generation of web tools and applications. Wikis are newcomers to the Internet and have recently been recognized as viable tools for teaching and learning. The present study tried to investigate the effect of using Wikis on improving Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension. To achieve this purpose, a reading comprehension test was administered to 60 language learners and ultimately 36 pre-intermediate language learners were selected and randomly assigned to two groups. The same pre-test was administered for two groups before any treatment. During the experiment, group one participants had exposure to using Wikis as an interactive teaching tool for specifying assignment texts in-and out-side the classroom and practicing reading comprehension through wikis for one and a half months. The participants in group two had not used wikis in-and out-side the classroom. At the end of the experiment, two groups took a post-test which was absolutely the same as pre-test to see whether or not any changes happened regarding their reading proficiency. The results of the posttest showed that the two groups performed differently on the posttest which was indicative of the fact that greater exposure to specific wikis-oriented language reading material promotes the Iranian EFL learners' reading proficiency. The comparison of the participants' gain scores indicated that though group one could improve their reading comprehension, wikis were more effective Web2.0 tools in enhancing Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension. New technologies in teaching have never been greater and with the recent addition of the Wiki Assisted Language Learning (WALL), teachers are able to integrate this tool into their lessons. The WALL is not only an innovative tool which meets cognitive and learning styles, but also different intelligences in a group class. This recent

technology has inspired many teachers to further their expertise in teaching and facilitate learning.

KEYWORDS: wiki, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Since 1990s, language classes have been open to different tools available to teachers through multimedia technology. A great change has taken place in the use of computers in language learning: computers function as tools that enhance foreign language learning. The rapid growth of technology on the one hand, and learners' interests in fostering their language learning autonomously on the other hand, have led researchers to try new ways to use modern technology and the Web in language learning. With the advent of Web intervals, Web 1.0, 2.0, and the newly developed one, Web 3.0, investigators are focusing on the tools available through the net so that every individual can work on his language skills autonomously. A large number of studies have so far been done on the effectiveness of these tools in language learning in general and reading comprehension in particular (Polleti & Freitag 2011).

Wiki is characterized by ease of use and rapidity of deployment, making possible powerful information sharing and supporting collaborative writing activities and improving student interaction (Boulos, 2006). Arreguin (2004) stated that “Wikis could provide unique collaborative opportunities for education combining freely accessible information, rapid feedback, simplified HTML, and access by multiple editors, wikis are being rapidly adopted as an innovative way of constructing knowledge” (p.1). Moreover, a wiki could accumulate users' opinions, and cultivate active on-line communities on the web (Wang & Lu, 2005).

Studies that investigated the direct effect of foreign / second web-based language learning on learners are still not numerous. Some previous studies revealed that web-based writing improved learner attitude and decreased their writing apprehension (Alia & Hussin, 2002). Besides, some previous studies revealed that web-based language instruction could help learners produce better writing quality and more writing quantity than traditional classroom instruction (Braine, 1997). However, some other studies showed that web-based language writing had no significantly effect on learners' performance and on reducing their writing apprehension (Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth, 2001).

What are wikis?

Wikis are socially oriented; software based web pages that enable free cross platform editing and redistribution of original content (Buffa & Gandon, 2006). Choy and Ng (2007) provide a good overview of the processes available in wikis and their potential uses in educational institutions. While wikis have been around since approximately 1995 (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001), they are part of the so called 'Web 2.0 phenomena' –the read/write web, the natural successor to web 1.0 – the read only web. The read/write web is a hypertextual system for editing and sharing information (Schwall, 2003), more commonly identified as the interactive web.

O'Neill (2005) states that wikis are a collaborative medium designed to promote content sharing. Wikis allow collaborative editing of pages by participants as well as many other features, depending on the wiki software used. Wikis often allow a history of editing undertaken by members showing an evolving process of page development with a concurrent evolution of participant knowledge and engagement. All wiki page edits are open for debate and critique from any angle by any member of the community. Augar, Raitman and Zhou (2004) highlight that a wiki environment is perfect for what they call computer supported collaborative learning, as they are student centered, giving students shared authority and responsibility for their own knowledge. Sharing of authority is central to a wiki epistemology, as is empowering participants. Any user can participate in the creation of shared documents, which evolve through shared community goals. The empowerment of users tends to be ignored in wiki research. There are clear definitions of what the technology can do through collaborative endeavors, but little evidence pointing to what values are required to facilitate the successful achievements in one.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research into 'wikis for learning' is in its infancy, although unlike the parallel early Internet learning research, it seems much more focused on pedagogical requirements. This is because the very nature of a wiki provides access to the developmental aspects, which are often hidden from the teacher's view. For this reason, the majority of wiki research has focused on the technical aspects of the wiki (Tazzoli et al., 2004), or the development of a special use 'technical' wiki, instead of attempting to understand the underpinning epistemology required to build content and community. Lanier's (2005) thought provoking article on "hive" mentality and the thoughtful response from Tumlin et al (2007) shows how these issues are now coming up for debate.

Technology has introduced new tasks and activities learners can use for their reading comprehension. Studies have shown that Internet access motivates many students to read extensively (Yang, 2009). Izquierdo and Reyes (2009) pointed out the Internet has rapidly become a basic medium not only for information and communications, but also reading comprehension in the twenty-first century. A typical Internet-based reading practice requires students to move to a higher level of comprehension tasks such as summarizing and paraphrasing, making inferences and respond with online communication tools such as an e-mail message or blog post. The Internet gives the opportunity to learners to get familiar with search engines and Websites besides using conventional knowledge of vocabulary and informational text structures (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

Computers and the Internet technology have introduced what is known as hypertexts or online texts through which one can have more access to other reading materials just by clicking on a certain word being underlined in the text. Cumley (2009) mentioned several characteristics for all online reading sources. They include being standard and authentic, having books adapted for access, requiring low-tech modifications to text, accompanying pictures/symbols with texts, being supplemented with text reader with study skill support.

Rahimi and Behjat (in press) did an empirical research on online and offline reading comprehension for Iranian EFL learners and concluded that the learners' reading is fostered to a higher degree when they are exposed to online texts which have links to other sites providing more reading materials. Comprehending hypertexts can sometimes be difficult as they require readers utilize different skills and strategies to overcome comprehension problems. The great advantage of reading hypertexts on the net is that learners can have access to authentic texts.

Verezub and Wang (2008) showed how using the net hypertexts empower language learners' comprehension of texts. As the media is equipped with images, videos and audios, comprehension would be facilitated, and it is easier to remember and later to retrieve it (Brown, 2000).

Murphy (2007) explored the role of online reading and feedback in comprehension and showed how designers should cater for different levels of language proficiency in supplying the Web with hypertexts by providing an online feedback that promoted both reading comprehension and interaction. Szymańska and Kaczmarek (2011) argued that in order for learners to become proficient readers in a foreign language, they need to have access to online texts which can help them to respond in an authentic way to what they have read.

Polleti, and Freitag (2011) posted authentic texts in a website and a number of exercises, and stated that implementing this web site, learners were prompted to actively apply a wide range of different reading skills and strategies to increase their comprehension of written texts. Yet, another advantage of reading on the net is that it can help learners be able to analyze the texts by themselves, reflect on them and try to comprehend them independent of asking for help from a teacher. Krajka (2007) claimed that "Learners autonomy is essential in the Internet-based classroom, where the learner is frequently in charge of the choice of materials, evaluation of their own progress, selection of learning strategies" (p. 194).

In the technology-oriented era, as the Web 2.0 came to the fore, it brought a couple of tools with itself. The distinctive feature of all these tools is that they are interactive not just between two but among a large number of people to share their knowledge and interests. In other words, while Web 1.0 tools such as e-mails were initially exchanged between only two people, Web 2.0 tools are those by which the emitted information can be used by all who like to have access to. That's why they are known as social networks. Among all Web 2.0 tools, wikis and blogs have shown having a positive impact on learning a language (Sharma and Barrett, 2008). Coiro (2009) mentioned that social networking sites well meet learning standards for reading comprehension as they demand online readers are personally productive, socially responsible, and able to collaborate with a diverse team.

There are some pieces of evidence in the literature to support the positive impact of wikis and weblogs in the improvement of reading comprehension. Izquierdo and Reyes (2009), for example, explored the effectiveness of blogs to promote reading comprehension and concluded that for freshman EFL students, weblogs, though difficult to understand at the beginning, can

play a vital role in the improvement of their reading comprehension. Kear and Woodthorpe (2009) confirmed that students' use of wikis in a distance learning course plays a role in their communication skills specially their comprehension of the texts appearing on the screen. Though research has shown that both wikis and blogs can enhance reading comprehension, the question which can be raised is which of them can help language learners foster their reading comprehension more.

There is still a lack of research that investigates the pedagogical potentials of Wiki for collaborative learning (Elgort, Smith & Toland, 2008). Some research also indicates that collaborative reading and writing is more the exception than the norm (Lin & Kelsey, 2009). There is thus a challenging idealistic hypothesis that Wiki is natural beneficial. Empirical studies usual focus on how Wikis work (Hoisl, Aigner & Miksch, 2007).

The limited research that has been done is also mainly prescriptive (Staley, 2009). With all these studies done, the literature on Wiki and language pedagogy seems to be in its infancy. On one hand, the application of Wikis in general and Wiki in particular needs to be justified at the theoretical level and on the other hand, there is no inclusive report of how such a tool can be used in EFL contexts with complex net of learning and teaching variables. Accordingly, the present study attempted to show the feasible ways in which this tool can improve the learners' reading skill in Iranian context.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To begin with, the following question is posed for the researcher to answer:

Does the application of Wikis effect on the improvement of reading comprehension ability among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL Learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The present study tried to investigate the effect of using Wikis on improving Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. To achieve this purpose, a reading comprehension test was administered to 60 language learners in language schools of Andimeshk, Khuzestan, Iran and ultimately 36 pre-intermediate language learners were selected and randomly assigned to two groups.

Instruments

Initially, the subjects in two groups took the reading comprehension section of a sample proficiency test. The test contained 25 multiple-choice items. The reliability of the test was .732 based on KR-21 method. The test was extracted from How to prepare for the TOEFL Test: Test of English as a Foreign Language (Sharpe, 2010). The second instrument was the materials which were selected from Internet reliable sites (such as, *Wikipedia.com*, *bbc.com* and *cnn.com*) and other authentic sources such as *New interchange series* (Richards, 2005). In order to account for the influence of Wiki on reading comprehension, two types of materials were proposed: materials

that were delivered on Wiki space and materials that were assigned offline in written form which were provided for the two groups throughout the whole treatment. The difficulty level of these materials as determined by systematic functional grammar criteria (Shokrpour 2004:pp.5-25) was calculated to make them appropriate for pre-intermediate EFL learners.

Procedure

The same pre-test was administered for two groups before any treatment lesson. During the experiment, group one participants had exposure to using Wikis as an interactive teaching tool for specifying assignment texts in-and out-side the classroom and practicing reading comprehension through wikis for one and a half months. The participants in group two had not used wikis in-and out-side the classroom. At the end of the experiment, two groups took a post-test which was absolutely the same as pre-test to see whether or not any changes happened regarding their reading proficiency. The English proficiency level of most of these learners is pre-intermediate. At language school, the medium of instruction is English. Therefore, they get a lot of exposure to the English language.

To select the homogeneous subjects, the researcher administered a sample reading comprehension proficiency test to sixty English language learners in private language institutions selected based on their availability, including both males and females. The thirty six participants were selected out of sixty. Having administered the necessary statistical calculations, these one hundred students who had scored between 5.5 and 47.5 out of 100, two standard deviation above and below the mean, in the proficiency tests were selected as pre-intermediate language learners. For the purpose of this research, the selected subjects were both male and female and were randomly divided into two groups of 16.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research question was put forward regarding the efficiency of applying Wiki as an aid in improving reading comprehension of Iranian EFL students. In what follows, first the results of the two main groups i.e. the Wiki and the traditional classes are represented and then the comparison of both groups participating in the study would be demonstrated followed by the results obtained from statistical analysis.

The present study was based on a hypothesis which claimed that the application of the main software tool offered by ICT, namely Wiki in EFL reading comprehension classes leads to better acquisition and performance of students in comparison with the traditional methods of reading textbooks. In order to confirm this claim, the final grades of the participants in both traditional and experimental classes were compared. Table 1 illustrates the results descriptively.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for final grades

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Traditional	18	11.9444	2.34451	.55261
Wikipedia	18	16.1111	2.19997	.51854

As the results in table 1 show, there seems to be a difference in the final performance of the two traditional and experimental classes. In order to check the significance of the observed differences between the final grades of the two classes, the obtained data were subjected to a paired t-test using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 18. Table 2 represents the t-test results.

Table 2: Independent t-test results for the level of participation

	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Differences	Std. Error Differences
Grades (Equal variances not assumed)	2.001	21.272	.050*	5.41667	2.70650

= statistically significant ($p < .05$)*

The statistically significant difference between the final grades of the participants in two experimental and traditional classes suggests that students in Class B (Wiki Class) have performed much better on their final exam in comparison with Class A (Traditional Class). Hence, the superiority of the application of ICT tool, Wiki, in Iranian EFL classes is confirmed. The results of the post-test are also illustrated in figure 1.

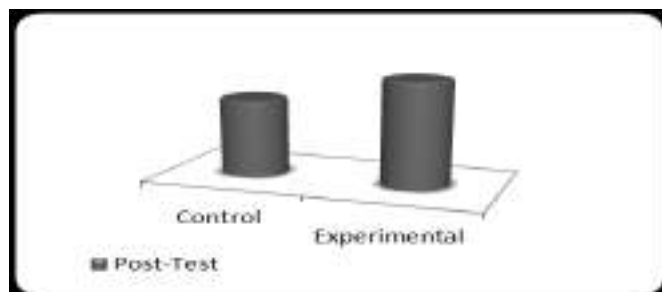


Figure 1: The mean difference of post-test between control and experimental group

The existing literature shows that the application of ICT tools such as Wiki offers numerous potentials for both teachers and learners. The present quasi-experimental study sought to present a comparative overview of one of the most practical tools offered by ICT, namely Wiki. As the research findings depict the participants who took part in Wiki classrooms collaboratively surpassed those who had participated in traditional classrooms. In addition to a higher level of participation, they exceeded them in final performance. The affective data gathered in this study portrayed the impression of students participating in the study. The participants in Class B (Wiki Class) reported their higher motivation, sense of community, collaboration, and pleasure and less confusion than the participants in Class A (Traditional Class).

The history of the application of technology to teach in general and English language teaching in specific has proved to be an area of contention meaning that in some studies there has been supportive evidence whereas in other investigations pitfalls of the implementation of the technology have been highlighted.

Some experts active in the field of computer assisted language learning have dealt with the issue of normalization stage in the use of technology and its probable effects on the learning of English as an EFL. One recently carried out study is by Salehmahdi (2013) in that he dealt with the issues of computer assisted language learning normalization in EFL contexts.

According to him the use of computers in language learning is increased widely in most countries. Many educational institutions all over the world have integrated computer technology into language instruction. However, this integration is not successful in many institutions. There are many issues that hinder the integration of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) into language learning. His paper reported on the literature associated with issues of CALL normalization. It highlighted the issues of CALL normalization in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts and explores the most important factors to be considered to improve the use of CALL in these contexts. The study also added some issues that were not mentioned in the previous studies. It was suggested that for CALL normalization to be occurred, five major issues should be addressed (i.e., personal, technical, pedagogical, socio-cultural, and institutional). Some suggestions were presented to help CALL to be normalized in EFL contexts. The findings of the present investigation are in line with the research carried out by Salehmahdi (2013).

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study well support the positive role of using Web 2.0 tools like wikis and weblogs in language classrooms to foster the learners' reading comprehension. The results of this study also indicate that compared to weblogs, wikis are better tools in enhancing reading comprehension. This might be due to the distinguishing feature of wikis which enjoy a high level of exposure to other Websites as the texts have links and they are available to the users only through clicking the underlined word in a hypertext. The editability of wiki pages helps the users add, delete, or change some parts of the hypertext and this increases the wiki attraction. Language teachers can search through the net and design their own weblogs and find suitable wiki pages to use them in their reading comprehension classes. Language classes will be more interesting if technology enters them as it has already stepped into all aspects of human life.

Limitation of the study

This study is conducted in a senior high school in Andimeshk city, Iran. Thus, the place was limited and more research is needed in similar context to find more about the effect of Wikis on improvement of reading comprehension ability. Therefore, the results may not be generalized to all language school learners and all other areas. Eight sessions were run to see the effects of the treatment which is a limited time. Moreover, this study was conducted on a small size of the learners enrolled in the program due to the availability of the participants. Moreover, the students were pre-intermediate EFL Learners and other levels were not considered.

REFERENCES

- Alia, N., & Hussin, S. (2002). E-learning in a writing course at Tenaga National University. Retrieved from http://www.teflweb-j.org/v1n3/Alia_Hussin.html

- Arreguin, C. (2004). Wikis. In B. Hoffman (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Technology*. Retrieved from <http://edweb.sdsu.edu/EET/articles/wikis/start.ht>
- Augar, N., Raitman, R., & Zhou, W. (2004). *Teaching and learning online with wikis. In Beyond the comfort zone: Proceedings ASCILITE Perth 2004*.
<http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/augar.html>
- Biesenbach-Lucas, S., & Weasenforth, D. (2001). E mail and word processing in the ESL classroom: How the medium affects the message. *Language Learning and Technology*, 5(1), 135-165.
- Boulous, M., Maramba, I., & Wheeler, S. (2006). Wikis, blogs and podcasts: A new generation of web-based tools for virtual collaborative clinical practice and education. Retrieved from <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1472-6920-6-41.pdf>
- Braine, G. (1997). Beyond word processing: Networked computers in ESL writing classes. *Computers and Composition*, 14, 45-58
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson Education.
- Buffa, M., & Gandon, F. (2006). *Sweet Wiki: Semantic web enabled technologies in Wiki*. Proceedings of the 2006 International Symposium on Wikis, Denmark. [Verified 22 Mar 2009]<http://www.wikisym.org/ws2006/proceedings/p135.pdf>
- Choy, S., & Ng, K. (2007). Implementing software for supplementing online. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 23 (2), 209-226.
- Coiro, J. (2009, March). Rethinking online reading assessment: Online and offline reading tap different skills. *Educational Leadership: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development*, 59-63. Retrieved from ayersresources.com/file/view/Rethinking+Online+Reading.pdf on 15 June 2011.
- Coiro, J., & Dobler, E. (2007). Exploring the comprehension strategies used by sixth-grade skilled readers as they search for and locate information on the Internet. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42, 214-257.
- Cumley, J. (2009). Assistive technology for reading. *Assessing Students' Needs for Assistive Technology*, Chap. 7, 1-58. Retrieved from www.wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/Ch7-Reading.pdf on 16 July 2011.
- Elgort, I., Smith, A. G., & Toland, J. (2008). Is wiki an effective platform for group course work? *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 24(2), 195-210.
- Hoisl, B., Aigner, W. & Miksch, S. (2007). *Social Rewarding in Wiki Systems - Motivating the Community*. In: Schuler, Douglas (ed.) *OCSC 2007 - Online Communities and Social Computing - Second International Conference July 22-27, 2007, Beijing, China*. pp. 362-371.
- Izquierdo, B. L. & Reyes, L. E. (2009). Effectiveness of blogging to practice reading at a freshman EFL program. *The Reading Matrix*, 9(2), 100-117. Retrieved from www.readingmatrix.com/articles/sept_2009/izquierdo_reyes.pdf on 6 Feb 2011.
- Kear, K. & Woodthorpe, J. (2009). *Using wikis for collaborative learning of technology*. In 7th International Conference on Education and Information Systems, Technologies and Applications: EISTA 2009, 10-13 July 2009, Orlando, Florida, USA.
- Krajka, J. (2007). *English language teaching in the Internet-assisted environment*. Lublin Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Press.

- Lanier, J. (2005). Digital Maoism: The hazards of the new online collectivism. Edge, 183. Edge Foundation Inc. [verified 22 Mar 2009] <http://www.edge.org/documents/archive/edge183.html>
- Leuf, B. & Cunningham, W. (2001). *The wiki way: Collaboration and sharing on the Internet* Addison-Wesley Professional.
- Lin, H. & Kelsey, K. D. (2009). Building a networked environment in wikis: the evolving phases of collaborative learning in a wiki book project. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 40(2), 145-169.
- Murphy, P. (2007). Reading comprehension exercises: the effects of feedback, proficiency, and interaction. *Language Learning and Technology*, 11(3), 107-129.
- O'Neill, M. (2005). Automated use of a wiki for collaborative lecture notes. *ACM SIGSCE Bulletin*, 37(1), 267-271.
- Polleti, A. & Freitag, B. (2011). Designing an e-learning platform for reading comprehension. Retrieved from www.fim.uni-passau.de/fileadmin/files/lehrstuhl/Freitag/ERPF07.pdf on 8 July 2011
- Rahimi, A., & Behjat, F. (in press). On the screen or printed: A case of EFL learners' online and offline reading the press. *I-Manager's Journal on English Language Teaching*. April-June issue (2011).
- Richards, J. C. (2005). *New interchange series*. (4th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge.
- Saleh Mahdi, Hassan. (2013). Issues of Computer Assisted Language Learning Normalization in EFL Contexts. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 5(1), 191-203.
- Schwall, J. (2003). The wiki phenomenon. Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster. [verified 22 Mar 2009] http://www.schwall.de/dl/20030828_the_wiki_way.pdf
- Sharma, P. and Barrett, B. (2008). Blended learning: using technology in and beyond the language classroom. Retrieved from www.te4be.com on 25 Sep. 2010.
- Sharp, P. J. (2006). *How to practice for the TOEFL*. (10th ed.). London: Barron's. Educational Inc
- Shokrpour, N. (2004). Systemic functional grammar as a basis for assessing tex. difficulty. *IJOAL*, 30(2), 5-26
- Staley K. (2009). *Exploring Impact: Public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research*. Involve: Eastleigh.
- Szymańska ,A. & Kaczmarek, A. W. (2011). Reading efficiency in blended learning context. *Teaching English with Technology*, 11 (2), 29-42. Retrieved from www.tewtjournal.org/currentissuesfor2011.htm on 10 July 2011. Melbourne, 964-968
- Tazzoli, R., Castagna, P. & Campanini, S. E. (2004). *Towards a semantic wiki wiki web*. 3rd International Semantic Web Conference, Poster Track (ISWC 2004). [verified 22 Mar 2009] <http://platypuswiki.sourceforge.net/whatis/documents/platypuswiki.pdf>
- Tumlin, M., Harris, S. R., Buchanan, H., Schmidt, K., & Johnson, K. (2007). Collectivism vs individualism in a wiki world: Librarians respond to Jaron Lanier's essay "Digital Maoism: The hazards of the new online collectivism". *Serials Review*, 33(1), 45-53.
- Verezub, E., & Wang, H. (2008). The role of metacognitive reading strategies instructions and various types of links in comprehending hypertexts. Proceedings ascilite Melbourne. Retrieved 13 January 2011 from www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/melbourne08/procs/verezub.pdf.

- Wang, H., Lu, C., Yang, J., Hu, H., Chiou, G., Chiang, Y., et al. (2005). *An empirical exploration of using wiki in English as a Second Language course*. Paper presented at the fifth IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies: 155-157, (ICALT, 05).
- Yang, S. H. (2009). Using blogs to enhance critical reflection and community of practice. *Educational Technology & Society*, 12 (2), 11–21.

PRAGMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWLY DEVELOPED IRANIAN EFL ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

Nava Nourdad (PhD)

University of Tabriz
nourdad@tabrizu.ac.ir

Laaya Roshani Khiabani

University of Tabriz
laya.roshan@Yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating pragmatic knowledge contained in newly published Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) textbook, Prospect 1 (2013), and Prospect 2 (2014) which is taught at first and second grade of junior high school in Iran. For this purpose, content analysis of the dialogues was performed to examine speech act information. Speech act information in this study consists of types, frequency and distribution provided for each speech act. Searle's (1979) model of classifying speech acts was applied in order to investigate different speech acts. Using descriptive and inferential statistics it was revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1&2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act. The results of chi-square analysis also reflected the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts within and between these books. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Even though linguistic contents would naturally be of primary concern, the pragmatic content of the EFL textbooks cannot be overlooked. By sharing the results of analyses of other EFL textbooks, curriculum developers can further provide more pragmatic sensitive materials suitable for language learning.

KEYTERMS: Speech act, communicative competence, pragmatic competence, text-book analysis

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks play a fundamental role in English as a foreign language because through textbooks learners get familiar with target culture, social norms and values. Kemp (1977) states that EFL textbooks are vital parts of an appropriate and balanced curriculum. The content of every textbook contains the most fundamental executive guidelines for achieving the aims of any educational system. Learning a foreign language is regarded nowadays as an essential component in the curricula at different educational levels. However, in order to make learners communicatively competent in English, there is a shift from previous theoretical frameworks, which considered language as a formal system based on grammatical rules, towards a more communicative perspective.

Pragmatic Competence

Accordingly, different approaches analyzing communicative competence have considered pragmatic competence as the basic component, on the other hand, within pragmatic competence increasing attention has been drawn to interlanguage pragmatic (ILP) studies most of which have been carried out on production of different speech acts. Following Kasper (1997), pragmatic competence can be defined as the knowledge of communicative action and the way to carry it out, and the ability to use language appropriately according to the context. In addition to the language user's ability in using the language, termed as linguistic competence, it is a requisite that s/he possesses pragmatic competence, an aspect of communicative competence indispensable for communicating successfully in the target language (Ji, 2007; Kim & Hall, 2002; Saville-Troike, 2006).

Pragmatic competence is so vital that lacking it may lead to communication breakdown. It can cause misunderstandings, serious miscommunication, and even distort the communication goals when learners understand only the literal meaning of words but do not know the rules for interpreting them (Kasper, 1997; Lin, 2008). Many studies on pragmatic competence have shown that there is a difference between the pragmatic of native speakers and learners of the target language for certain reasons (Yuka, 2008). First, although there is considerable amount of universal pragmatic knowledge which can be transferred for free from the learners' L1 if there is a corresponding form-function mapping between L1 and L2, learners always fail to use what they know (Kasper, 1997). Second, classroom instruction may be a cause of pragmatic failure. Finally, learners may not realize the existence of different ways or many linguistic forms to be used in conveying their intention.

Speech acts and its classifications

Since this study was based on speech act theory different definitions and classification of speech acts were provided in the following lines. The concepts of speech act was coined by Austin (1962) and expanded by Searle (1979). Austin defines speech acts as “acts performed in saying something”. Further, he distinguishes three different levels of action beyond the act of utterance. Austin distinguishes the act *of* saying something, what a person does *in* saying it, and what he or she does *by* saying it, and dubs these a *locutionary*, an *illocutionary*, and a *perlocutionary* act.

Searle (2005) starts with the notion that when a person speaks, he/she performs three different acts, including utterance acts, propositional acts, and illocutionary acts. Utterance acts consist simply of uttering strings of words. Meanwhile, propositional acts and illocutionary acts consist characteristically of uttering words in sentences in certain context, under certain condition, and with certain intention. Searle categorizes the illocutionary acts based on varied criteria as the following: i) Assertive or Representative, ii) Directive, iii) Commissive, iv) Expressive, and v) Declaration. For the purpose of this research, we have decided to use Searle's classification because it is actually a modification of Austin's general theory of speech acts. Searle's classification is based on what the speaker wants to imply in his/her utterances. In addition, this classification is more specific and detail than other classifications.

Thus, the study of speech acts appears to be necessary to the understanding of intercultural studies. The main contribution of speech act theory is to explanation of communicative competence. Pragmatic speech acts such as invitations, refusals, suggestions, and apologies are significant components of communicative competence.

Within the last few years, great deal of studies have been carried out with regard to different speech acts, such as: request (e.g. Jalilifar, 2009; Taguchi, 2006), apology (e.g. Eslami-Rasekh & Mardani, 2010; Harris, Grainger & Mullany, 2006), compliment (e.g. Sharifian, 2008; Wolfson, 1981) and refusals (e.g. Allami & Naeimi, 2010; Tanck, 2002) among which speech act of suggestion has absorbed scant attention. In order for students to learn how language really works, they need authentic materials of authentic communication situations. The demand for pragmatic input is particularly relevant when upper secondary school teaching materials are concerned, because at this level, students are expected to be quite proficient language users. Kasper (1997) suggests the inclusion of activities such as role-play, simulation, and drama to engage students in different social roles and speech events.

The Role of Textbooks in TEFL

Richards (2001) states that textbooks can serve as a tool to train the EFL teachers. Considering the advantages, Richards (2001) states that without textbooks a program may have no path, therefore they provide structure and a syllabus. In addition to the use of a textbook in a program, it can guarantee that students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way. He concludes that textbooks are efficient in that they allow much time for the teacher to focus on teaching rather than material's development.

Some scholars support this perspective. Elliott and Woodward (1990) state that textbooks form a part of schooling that is enduring and very influential; and such textbooks also describe what is mostly learnt by students and their instructors. Also it is deemed that textbooks form the core of attention of learning materials in modern schooling (Westbury, 1990). Finally, Sheldon (1988) states that textbooks depict the heart of an ELT program that can be visualized.

In 2013, Iran's Ministry of education has introduced the new series of EFL textbooks entitled *Prospect* to be taught in junior high schools. Therefore, the present study intended to investigate the pragmatic content of newly developed English textbooks, Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 to examine the types and frequency of speech acts used in the dialogues of the above mentioned books published by Iran's ministry of education. The newly developed and published Iranian EFL textbooks (Prospect 1 and 2) are claimed by the authors to follow the principles of communicative language teaching. However, the books have not been investigated in terms of speech act use; therefore, this research aimed to scrutinize the newly developed Iranian EFL textbooks (prospect 1 and prospect 2) in terms of speech act. The textbooks are recently introduced and being taught nationwide.

In order to use the textbooks effectively, it is essential for the practitioners to evaluate the materials since evaluation plays a key role in education and can provide valuable information. In other words, if we accept the value of textbooks in ELT, we must be sure of usefulness of the

textbooks, and their appropriateness for the context and people with whom they are being used. Sheldon (1988) has offered several reasons for textbook evaluation. He suggests that the selection of an ELT textbook often signals an important administrative and educational decision in which there is considerable professional, financial, or even political investment. A thorough evaluation, therefore, would enable the teaching staff of a specific institution to discriminate between all of the available textbooks on the market. Moreover, it would provide a sense of familiarity with a book's content thus assisting educators in identifying the particular strengths and shortcomings in textbooks already in use.

Although there have been studies about the content of EFL textbooks, the investigation on pragmatic information in newly developed English textbooks, Prospect 1 and Prospect 2, has not yet been conducted. There is paucity of pragmatic contents and their presentations are marginalized as compared to other language items. There are no courses offered to pre-service language teachers in the area of pragmatics as a result of which teachers do not complement textbooks with inputs to help learners acquire pragmatic competence. This study hence intended to examine the pragmatic aspect of the students' textbook to find the availability of opportunities to teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. More specifically, an attempt was made to answer the following research questions.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Hamiloglu and Karlova (2009) examined and evaluated five selected English language course books from the viewpoint of vocabulary selection and teaching techniques they employ. As an evaluation method, content-analysis was preferred in this study. Regarding the national studies on textbook evaluation, no study can be found on newly developed and published Prospect series (prospect one and two), particularly with regard to the pragmatic dimension applying Searle's (1979) models.

Another study was performed by Vellenga (2004) who compared EFL and ESL textbooks. She argues that learners hardly acquire pragmatic competence due to the lack of information in textbooks. She concluded that EFL/ESL textbooks did not provide enough metalinguistic and explicit metapragmatics information. In spite of this shortage, the comparison shows that most of EFL textbooks enjoy pragmatic information.

Matsumra (2001) conducted a valuable study on the utilization of advice and suggestion speech acts by Japanese ESL learners. He found that the participants, quite different from their common habits in their own culture, used direct speech acts, e.g. you must, you should ... for advice and suggestions when answering teacher's question, "Please tell me what I could do in order to make this class more interesting to you all" (p. 637). However, this style was considered inappropriate and rude.

Another research was conducted by Cohen and Olshtain (1993) in search of describing ways in which non-native speakers use speech acts. They scrutinized three speech acts of apology, complaint, and request, which measured through role-playing. After they videotaped each speech

act context, they applied retrospective verbal report in order to analyze processing strategies in speech act formulation. The results show that most students do not use specific language strategies and think mostly in two languages or three. They ignore grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation and only conduct general assessment.

With respect to Iranian EFL context, Ansary and Babaie (2002) investigated a corpus of 10 EFL/ESL textbook reviews plus 10 EFL/ESL textbook evaluation checklists conveniently sampled while presenting a summary of common-core characteristics of standard EFL/ESL textbooks in their studies, too. They aimed at looking for some universal, theory-neutral, and broad consensus-reached features of EFL or ESL books, and draw up some guidelines for the generation as well as systematic evaluation of EFL or ESL books. They revealed that however perfect a book is, it is merely a simple tool in the hands of teachers and what is more important than a textbook is what we, as teachers, can do with it. For the area of task-based and pragmatics, Iraj (2007) performed a research and made a careful analysis on New Interchange series based on the principles of communicative and task-based approach to investigate to what extent the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have been considered. In this perspective, she used Ellis's model (2003). Iraj (2007) criticizes *New Interchange* since the series do not follow the principles of communicative and task-based approaches as the author claimed. The book also has no frequency of meta-pragmatic information.

Razmjoo (2007) employed the Hymes' (1972) scheme to investigate the extent to which the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks represent the CLT principles. For that purpose, the textbooks of the Iranian high schools and private institutes were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The results indicated that while high school textbooks are not conducive to CLT implementation, the textbooks in private institute represent the CLT foundations to a greater extent.

In another story, Riazi and Aryasholouh (2007) studied the four high school and pre-university English textbooks focusing on the consciousness-raising aspect of vocabulary exercises. They concluded that of all exercises in the four books, only one percent of exercises may be categorized as consciousness-raising. They also showed that the exercises mainly concentrated on individual words (approximately 26%) with no emphasis on fixed expressions, lexical collocations (approximately 15%) and grammatical collocations (approximately 2%). They found that students are mainly dealing with meanings of individual words and not with how words are used with other words or in what combinations. Zare Moayed (2007) performed an evaluation on a series of ELT materials namely, Interchange third edition. For their purpose, Littlejohn's (1998) detailed framework was used in this attempt. Results revealed that the Interchange series are not completely in line with the objectives intended for it. These series do not use learners or even the teachers as a source for its content. In addition, supra sentential level has been ignored for both the expected output and input of the learners. What is more, these are not the learners who initiate the tasks. On the other hand, Interchange series focus mainly on pair works and meaning. These series also encourage learners to use the language and more importantly, they more often require them to express themselves than to be a listener.

In Iranian context where English is taught as a foreign language, most studies have been contrastive in a way that native speakers of Persian and English were investigated for their pragmatic production of a specific speech act and the strategy they employed to fulfill that aspect in their native language (Shariati & Chamani, 2010; Shams, 2015; Soozandefar & Sahragard, 2011). No doubt these kinds of studies shed some light on specific linguistic cases, but what seems to play a crucial role in foreign language learning is to equip the learners with the practical knowledge of language which is demanded by immediate conversational instances. It can be concluded from the studies on pragmatic information in different ESL and EFL context reviewed above that most course materials failed to provide adequate amount of pragmatic knowledge for students to develop their pragmatic competence. The newly developed and published Iranian EFL textbooks (Prospect 1 and 2) are claimed by the authors to stick to the principles of CLT. However, the books have not been investigated in terms of speech act analysis ; therefore, this research is going to scrutinize the newly developed Iranian EFL textbooks (prospect 1 and prospect 2) which were published by the publishing company of Iran. The textbooks are recently introduced and being taught nationwide.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

There were four research questions that this study aimed to answer which were as follows:

- 1-What are the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues of Prospect 1 (2013) published by Iran's ministry of education?
- 2-Is there a significant difference in distribution of speech acts in Prospect 1?
- 3-What are the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues of Prospect 2 (2014) published by Iran's ministry of education?
- 4-Is there a significant difference in distribution of speech acts in Prospect 2?

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Textbooks as the major source of teaching and learning process in Iranian EFL context should contain the adequate number of speech acts to promote teachers and learners' pragmatic competence. To develop textbooks with sufficient number of speech acts suitable to the norms followed by native speakers of the language, EFL textbook authors should be linguistically and pragmatically competent in the target language to be able to incorporate the right numbers of speech acts in EFL textbooks. To put it another way, the speech acts deserve further attention when designing material and textbooks for Iranian learners of English. This study was performed using a mixed method. According to Creswell (2001), qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning and understanding through words or illustrations. For this purpose, we attempted to determine the type and the number of speech acts used in dialogue section of two textbooks (Prospect 1 and Prospect 2) Searle's (1979). Previous research proved that speech acts categories are considered as one of the universals of all languages and these categories are said to be found in all languages nearly with the same range or frequencies. On the quantitative stages inferential statistics were applied to make within book comparison of the speech acts.

Materials

The materials used in this study were the dialogue and conversation sections included in the two series of EFL course books. "Prospect 1" and "Prospect 2" are newly developed textbook series for national purposes taught in Iranian junior high school. Prospect 1 is one of the series English textbooks for school children is designed to help the children in the first year of secondary school to learn English for communication. "Prospect 1" authored by Alavi, Ananisarab, Forozandeh Shahraki, Ghorani, Khadir Sharabian and Kheirabadi was published in 2013. "Prospect 1" has 8 main units and 4 reviewing units followed by a photo dictionary. Each main unit is divided into three parts: the first part is listening and speaking that starts with a dialogue and continues with pair/group practices; the second part is writing skill. In this part alphabet letters and the relationship between the sounds of the letters and their forms and different allophones of one sound are taught to the learners; the third part is role play/your conversation.

"Prospect 2" authored by Alavi, Forozandeh Shahraki, Nikoopoor, Khadir Sharabian and Kheirabadi was published in 2014. The book includes work book, student book, audio CD and teacher's guide. It consists of 7 main units and 4 reviewing units followed by a photo dictionary. These series are based on all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). They assign a different role to teacher and learner in contrast with traditional books. The role of teacher in these textbooks is designed based on the communicative approaches and therefore; the role of the teacher is considered as a co-worker and an assistant in language learning process and the role of learner changes from implementation of instructor's instruction to an active role in every aspect of language learning process.

Instruments

The instrument used in this study to analyze the materials was Searle's (1979) model of classifying speech acts: Commissives, Expressives, Assertives, Directives, and Declarations. Each of these categories consists of some subcategories. As it can be seen in the Table 1, the category of directives includes several sub-categories like inviting, suggesting, daring, defying, ordering, requesting, commanding, advising, recommending, and challenging.

Table 1: Searle's (1979) Classification of Speech Acts

Category	Sub-categories
Assertives	stating, boasting, complaining, claiming, reporting, asserting, describing, announcing, insisting, guessing, forecasting, predicting, introducing, calling, complimenting concluding, reasoning, hypothesizing, telling, insisting, or swearing
Directives	requesting, warning, inviting, questioning, ordering, commanding, advising, reassuring, summoning, entreating, asking, directing, bidding, forbidding, instructing, begging, recommending, suggesting, daring, defying, and challenging.
Expressives	Greeting, thanking, apologizing, regretting, commiserating, congratulating, condoling, deploring, welcoming, surprising, blaming, praising.
Commissives	Promising, vowing, offering, threatening, refusing, pledging, intending, vowing to do or to refrain from doing something
Declarations	Declaring, christening, firing from employment, resigning, dismissing, naming, excommunicating, appointing, sentencing, blessing, firing, baptizing, and bidding.

Data Collection Procedure

No one can deny the role of dialogues and conversations IN providing situations for speakers to make use of different speech acts in their speech. Guerin (2004, p. 6) stated that “to have an appropriate sample size in Conversation Analysis, we need to analyze samples of “natural” conversations based on the topics, or recall of such conversations if necessary, and find out how the topics are being used in those conversations: are they jokes; are they serious of issues in which the speakers try to persuade each other; are they to entertain the group listening; are they gossiping devices?” Therefore, in order to obtain a measure regarding speech acts, the conversation parts in both textbooks of *Prospect 1* and *Prospect 2* were examined. Though in qualitative research, analyzing 10% of the whole population is considered enough, the researchers decided to analyze all the conversation available in both textbooks. The conversations were different both in length and in number. Prospect 1 and 2 consists of various conversations, some lengthy and some short dialogues. Nevertheless, all conversations and dialogues were investigated in search of speech acts based on Searle's (1979) classification of speech acts.

Data analysis procedure

For the qualitative section of the study, the main statistical analysis used is frequency to indicate the distribution level of speech acts. No special statistical analyses have been required there due to its qualitative nature. Thus, the entire analysis was carried out by careful inspection of the conversations included in the two books of Prospect 1 and prospect 2 on the basis of Searle's (1979) speech acts. The purpose of this observation was to find out the types of speech acts involved in the contents of the dialogues. Fundamentally, some simple statistical analyses like counting the frequencies of the occurrence of each sub-category of Searle's (1979) speech act taxonomy as well as their percentages presented in different tables were done.

Furthermore, the chi-square test was reported in order to better illustrate the distribution levels of these pragmatic variables. Therefore, a chi-square test has been applied to manifest whether the distribution level of speech acts is equivalent or not. The frequency of each speech act each textbook was counted and calculated. The main focus of the researchers was on the content analysis of the textbook through which they examined the contexts of using speech acts in these textbooks.

As it is mentioned, after the types of speech acts in the two groups were all determined, the frequency of occurrence and the percentage for each category were determined to answer the first two questions raised in this research. Finally, the reliability of the results was checked by two independent raters, and inter rater reliability was calculated.

On the quantitative part of the study Chi-square formula was applied to make a comparison between the distribution rate of the speech act types within each book and answer the third and fourth research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Speech acts in Prospect one

In this section, all the dialogues of the abovementioned textbooks were scrutinized in terms of Searle's (1979) speech act category. The results which revealed some significant findings are presented in this section. The codification of the dialogue in the first lesson is presented here as an example.

Lesson one (sample)

1. Shayan: Mr. Chaychi, this is my cousin Sam. (*Assertives: introducing*) He speaks French, English, and a little Persian. (*Assertives: informing*).
2. Teacher: Oh, (*Expressives: praising*) nice to meet you, Sam. (*Expressive: greetings*)
3. Sam: Nice to meet you, too. (*Expressive: greetings*)
4. Teacher: Are you from Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
5. Sam: Yes, I'm originally Iranian, (*Assestrives: admitting*) but I live in France. (*Assertives: informing*)
6. Teacher: Welcome to our class. (*Expressives: welcoming*). How do you like it in Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
7. Sam: Iran is great! (*Assertives: describing*). I love it. (*Assertives: stating*) It's a beautiful country. (*Assertives: claiming*)

The frequency, mean and percentages related to the speech act use in Iranian EFL textbooks prospect one are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of speech act categories in Prospect One

Speech act Category	Frequency	mean	percentage
Assertive	33	6.4	40.5%
Directive	30	6	37.97%
Expressive	14	2.8	17.72%
Commissive	3	0.6	3.79%
Declarative	0	0	0%
Total	80		

According to Table 2, assertive speech act (mean= 6.4; percentage =40.5) was found as the most frequently used speech act in *Prospect one* followed by directive speech act (mean=6; percentage=37.97), Expressive (mean=2.8; percentage =17.72), and Commissive speech acts (mean= 0.6; percentage= 3.79), respectively. Furthermore, it was found that that declaration speech acts were never used in the dialogues of *Prospect one* with mean score of 0. Analyzing all speech acts based on Searle's (1979) classification revealed the most and the least frequently used speech acts in more details.

Assertive as the most frequent category comprised 40.5 percent of the whole data, while both categories of directive and expressive occurred 37.97 and 17.72 percent (see table 4.1). The main body of speech acts performed in both textbook series belonged to the three categories of

assertive, directive, and expressive. The frequency of occurrence of these categories is 77, altogether. This number equals 96.19 percent of the total 80 speech acts.

Results of analysis of Speech acts in Prospect Two

The dialogues of the second book were also codified according to Searle's (1979) speech act category. The results of which revealed are presented in this section. The codification of the dialogue in the first lesson is presented here as an example.

Lesson 1 (sample)

1. Shayan: Mr. Chaychi, this is my cousin Sam. (*Assertives: introducing*) He speaks French, English, and a little Persian. (*Assertives: informing*).
2. Teacher: Oh, (*Expressives: praising*) nice to meet you, Sam. (*Expressive: greetings*)
3. Sam: Nice to meet you, too. (*Expressive: greetings*)
4. Teacher: Are you from Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
5. Sam: Yes, I'm originally Iranian, (*Assestrives: admitting*) but I live in France. (*Assertives: informing*)
6. Teacher: Welcome to our class. (*Expressives: welcoming*). How do you like it in Iran? (*Dirrectives: requesting inf.*)
7. Sam: Iran is great! (*Assertives: describing*). I love it. (*Assertives: stating*) It's a beautiful country. (*Assertives: claiming*)

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of speech act categories in Prospect Two

Speech act Category	Frequency	mean	percentage
Assertive	37	7.2	41.37%
Directive	33	6	37.93%
Expressive	16	3.2	18.39%
Commissive	2	1.2	2.29%
Declaration	0	0	0%
Total	88		

As shown in Table 3 regarding speech act use in conversation sections of *Prospect Two*, assertive with the mean of 7.2 and percentages of 41.37 was found to be the most frequently used speech act. Directive (mean=6 and Percentage=37.93) was the next speech act use in the conversations. The third rank of speech act use belong to expressive (mean=3.2 and Percentage=18.39) followed by commissive speech act (mean=1.2 and Percentage=2.29) with the least frequency and percentage. Similar to the other book declarative speech acts were not found in the dialogues of Prospect Two.

Comparison of speech act within Prospect 1 and 2

To answer the second and fourth research questions of whether there are any significant differences in the distribution of each speech act in the in the dialogues of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2, two chi-square test was performed. The results of analysis for Prospect One and Two are presented in Tables 4 and 5 respectively.

Table 4: Chi-Square for Goodness of Fit of Speech Acts in Prospect One

Speech Act	Observed	Expected	Difference	Difference Sq.	Diff. Sq. / ExpFr
Assertive	33	20	13.00	169.00	8.45
Directive	30	20	10	100.00	5.00
Expressive	14	20	-6.00	36.00	1.80
Commissive	3	20	-17.00	289.00	14.45
Total					29.700

The Chi² value is: 29.7 The P-Value is < 0.001. The result is significant at $p \leq 0.05$. Table 4 shows the chi-square test of distribution of each speech act in the conversation section of the *Prospect One*. As the results reveal the chi-square value is: 29.7, and the P-Value is < 0.001. Therefore, the result is significant at $p \leq 0.05$. so as the results of chi-square test reveals the distribution of speech acts in prospect one were not equally preferred $\chi^2 = (3, N=80) = 29.70$, $p \geq 0.05$. According to the statistical conventions, the use of the chi-square tests is inappropriate if any expected frequency is below 1 or if the expected frequency is less than 5 in more than 20% of your cells. Therefore, declaration speech act whose frequency is zero is not included in chi-square test.

Table 5: Chi-Square for Goodness of Fit of Speech Acts in Prospect Two

Speech Act	Observed	Expected	Difference	Difference Sq.	Diff. Sq. / ExpFr
Assertive	37	22	15.00	225.00	10.23
Directive	33	22	11.00	121.00	5.50
Expressive	16	22	-6.00	36.00	1.64
Commissive	2	22	-20.00	400.00	18.18
Total					35.545

Based on the data in Table 5, the chi-square test of distribution of each speech act in the conversation section of the *Prospect two* reveals some interesting information. The results show that there is a significant difference among subcomponents of speech acts in prospect two $\chi^2 = (3, N=88) = 35.54$, $p \geq 0.05$. Again, according to the statistical conventions, the use of the chi-square tests is inappropriate if any expected frequency is below 1 or if the expected frequency is less than 5 in more than 20% of your cells. Therefore, declaration speech act whose frequency is zero is not included in chi-square test.

According to the points discussed in the previous research questions with regard to the types and the frequency of speech acts in the conversations, it is revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1 & 2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act, and the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Besides, these speech acts must be used and distributed among the conversations in such a systematic way that when being read, studied, and practiced, all types of them can be recognized by learners' and applied in their speaking performance. In other words, not only must all types of Searle's (1979)

speech acts be present in the conversations of the books, but also they must be distributed equally and at the same frequency or percentage among all of the conversations.

Furthermore, with regard to what Guerin (2004) states in terms of the type of sampling and the criterion for this sample to be analyzed, this equality in the distribution of speech acts must be on the basis of topical or thematic contexts. These contexts in these textbooks are, actually, in the same line with different units or chapters of the books, each of which deals with a particular and real-life topics or themes. One suggestion is that teachers can select the materials in the classrooms that model the real language situations. To familiarize learners with different components of communicative competence especially in the use of speech acts, some activities such as tape recordings, role-playing activities, video films, and TV shows are suggested by the researchers. Textbooks as the major source of teaching and learning process in Iranian EFL teaching settings should contain the adequate number of speech acts to promote learners' pragmatic competence. To design textbooks with sufficient number of speech acts conforming to the norms followed by native speakers of the language, EFL textbook writers should be linguistically and pragmatically competent in the target language in order to be able to incorporate the right number of speech acts in EFL textbooks. To recap, the speech acts deserve further attention when designing material and textbooks for Iranian learners of English. Therefore, these pragmatic variables, i.e. speech acts, must be distributed equally not only all over the entire conversations of these two books, but also in each one of the units, which focuses on a particular and natural theme in everyday life.

Therefore, according to what has been said up to this point, the *Prospect One* and *Two* which are claimed to have significant improvements in terms of communicative language teaching principles comparing with the previous series (*Path to English*) have serious problems with regard to the pragmatic dimension. In other words, the results of the present study revealed that the conversations in *Prospect One* and *Two* are not pragmatically competent and learners are strongly recommended to be more careful of these two beginner-level textbooks if they choose them to start improving their speaking performance through their conversations. In fact, taking a quick look at the results, one can easily recognize the above-mentioned pitfalls.

Unlike the common belief and considering the problems in syllabus design, being newly published does not guarantee the appropriateness of textbooks for language teaching programs. Similarly, this study proved that the two newly published textbooks *Prospect 1* and *Prospect 2* are not pragmatically competent and suitable for learners who now feel the need to gain communicative competence more than ever. Furthermore, the researchers thoroughly examined all conversations in the *Prospect* series and it was revealed that the series fell short of supporting the communicative competence. Owing to inequality of speech acts' distribution, the learners exposed to these textbooks might be competent in using one speech acts but unable to produce another.

This study can be of great consideration to those who claim responsibility for EFL/ESL courses and syllabus designers. In choosing or developing textbooks and other kinds of teaching materials, textbook writers need to be aware of the research findings in order to select materials

that are authentic and motivating for learners. Conversation has recently become a focus of interest for speech act theory and several proposals have been formulated concerning the possible extension of speech act theory to the analysis of conversation. There is a common sense argument shared by philosophers and linguists in favor of the possible extension of speech act theory to textbook evaluation. Speech acts are not isolated moves in communication. They appear in more global units of communication, defined as conversations or discourses. Therefore, a course book must meet a number of criteria, in order to legitimately claim the title of Communicative Language Teaching.

First and foremost, it should correspond to the learners' communicative needs. In this context, it is crucial for the syllabus designers to include a wide variety of speech acts. It seems that syllabus designers should consider the recent classification of speech acts such as requesting, inviting, complaining, apologizing, etc. in designing textbooks because it appears that these categories are universal in all languages and they deserve more attention. One possible solution would be the using of successful dialogues reflecting the sociocultural norms of the target language to increase learners' understanding of linguistic behavior of the Iranian EFL learners. The second suggestion is modifying textbook dialogues authored by the Iranian textbook writers. This study can also provide material developers and textbook writers with the necessary information regarding the pragmatic dimension of the conversation sections of these beginner-level textbooks. Textbook developers can take the pragmatic pitfalls of the conversations of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 into consideration as a useful source to modify and revise other developing textbooks. This study recommends the developers and the editors of Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 to take the reported pragmatic shortcomings under the rigorous scrutiny so as to consider and use all types of language functions and speech acts, and to balance them to the same range or level.

CONCLUSION

This study was partly descriptive and partly comparative. In the descriptive part, it first attempted to determine the type and the number of speech acts used in two textbooks. In the comparative part, it tried to investigate if there was an equal distribution in the number and type of speech acts categories performed in the two series. Previous research proved that speech acts categories are considered as one of the universals of all languages and these categories are said to be found in all languages nearly with the same range or frequencies. The results showed discrepancies in the use of speech acts between the two series. The frequencies of speech act categories in the above mentioned textbooks were different. In this section, we have presented concluding remarks regarding the hypotheses with respect to the results. This study intended to examine the pragmatic aspect of the students' textbooks to find the availability of opportunities to teach pragmatic competence to EFL learners. The pragmatic content of newly developed English textbooks, Prospect 1 and Prospect 2 was investigated to examine the types and frequencies of speech acts used in the dialogues. According to the points discussed in the previous research questions with regard to the types and the frequencies of speech acts in the conversations, it is revealed that the conversations in the newly published Prospect series (1 &2) have a number of significant shortcomings, such as the lack of declaration speech act, and the inequality and variation in the distribution of speech acts. To be regarded as pragmatically competent, the

conversations in these two textbooks must include all types of speech acts which are all used in the real-life communications. Besides, these speech acts must be used and distributed among the conversations in such a systematic way that when being read, studied, and practiced, all types of them can be recognized in learners' speaking performance. In other words, not only should all types of Searle's (1979) speech acts be present in the conversations of the books, but also they should be distributed equally and at the same frequency or percentage among all the conversations.

REFERENCES

- Alavi, B., Ananisarab, M., Forozandeh Shahraki, E., Ghorani, N., Khadir Sharabian, S. & Kheirabadi, R. (2013). *English for school "prospect 1": Student book, junior secondary program*. Tehran: Ministry of Education.
- Alavi, B., Forozandeh Shahraki, E., Khadir Sharabian, S., Kheirabadi, R., & Nikoopoor, J. (2014). *English for school "Prospect 2": Student book. Junior secondary program*. Tehran, Iran: Ministry of Education.
- Allami, H., & Naeimi, A. (2010). A cross-linguistic study of refusals: An analysis of pragmatic competence development in Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43, 385-406.
- Ansary, H., & Babaii, E. (2002). Universal characteristics of EFL? ESL textbook: A step towards systematic textbook evaluation. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 2, 1-8.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, A. D., & Olshtain, E. (1993). The production of speech acts by EFL learners'. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1), 33-56.
- Creswell, J.W. (2001). *Research Design: Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage Publication.
- Elliott, D.L., & Woodward, A. (1990). *Textbooks and schooling in the United States. 89th Yearbook the National Society for the Study of Education*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Ellis, Rod. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Guerin, B. (2004). *Handbook for analyzing the social strategies of everyday life*. Reno, Nevada: Context Press.
- Hamiloğlu, K., & Karlıova, H. (2009). A Content Analysis on the Vocabulary Presentation in EFL Course Books. *Ozean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(1), 132-133.
- Harris, S., Grainger, K., & Mullany, L. (2006). The pragmatics of political apologies. *Discourse and Society*, 17(6), 715-737.
- Hymes, D. (1972). *Foundations of Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Iraji, A. (2007). *Pragmatic features of New Interchanger: How communicative and task-based it is*. Unpublished master's thesis, Shiraz University, Iran.
- Jalilifar, A. (2009). Request strategies: Cross-sectional study of Iranian EFL learners and Australian native speakers. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 46-61.
- Ji, P.Y. (2007). Exploring pragmatic knowledge in college English textbooks. *CELEA Journal*, 30(5), 109-119.

- Kasper, G. (1997). *Can pragmatic competence be taught?* Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.
- Kemp, J.E. (1977). *Instructional design: A plan for unit and course development* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Kim, D., & Hall, J.K. (2002). The role of an interactive book reading program in the development of second language pragmatic competence. *The modern language journal*, 86(iii), 332-348.
- Lin, M.X. (2008). Pragmatic failure in intercultural communication and English teaching in China. *China Media Research*, 4(3), 43-52.
- Littlejohn, A. (1998). 'The Analysis of Language Teaching Materials: Inside the Trojan Horse On B. Tomlinson (Ed), *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (pp.190-216). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Matsumura, S. (2001). Learning the rules for offering advice: A quantitative approach to second language socialization. *Language Learning*, 51(4), 635-679.
- Razmjoo, S. A. (2007). High schools or private institutes course books? Which fulfill communicative language teaching principles in the Iranian context? *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(4), 125-126.
- Riazi, A.M., & Aryashokouh, A. (2007). Lexis in English textbooks in Iran: Analysis of exercises and proposals for consciousness-raising activities. *Pacific Association of Applied Linguists*, 11(1), 17- 34.
- Richards, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Saville-Troike, M. (2006). *Introducing second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J. R. (2005). *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Oxford University Press.
- Searle, J. (1979). *Referential and attributive*. In *Expression and meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shariati, M., & Chamani, F. (2010). Apology strategies in Persian. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(6), 1689-1699.
- Sharifian, F. (2008). Cultural schemas in L1 and L2 compliment responses: A study of Persian-speaking learners of English. *Journal of Politeness Research. Language, Behaviour, Culture*, 4 (1), 55-80.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42 (4), 237- 246.
- Taguchi, N. (2006). Analysis of appropriateness in a speech act of request in L2 English. *Pragmatics*, 16(4), 513-533.
- Tanck, S. (2002). Speech act sets of refusal and complaint: A comparison of native and non-native English speakers' production. *TESOL Working Papers*, 4 (2), 1-22.
- Vellenga, H. (2004). Learning Pragmatics from ESL & EFL Textbooks: How Likely? *TESL-EJ*, 8 (2), 25-38.
- Wolfson, N. (1981). Compliments in cross-cultural perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15(2), 117-124.
- Yuka, A. (2008). Examining closing sections in "oral communication I" textbooks. *The Economic Journal of Takasaki City University of Economics*, 50(3), 111-124.

Zare Moayed, I. (2007). *An in-depth evaluation of Interchange series* Unpublished master's thesis, Shiraz University, Iran.

Zu, L. (2009). A Study on the Approaches to Culture Introduction in English Textbooks. *English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 112-118.

GOOD LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PREFERENCES FOR MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES: A FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

Trifa Soufi Mahmoudi

*Department of English Language, Kurdistan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Sanandaj, Iran
t.soofi2000@yahoo.com@yahoo.com*

Mohsen Masoomi

*Department of English Language, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Sanandaj, Iran
masoomi.mohsen@outlook.com*

Corresponding author: Mohsen Masoomi

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate and explore the motivational strategies employed by good language learners and examine students' differences in using the most-highly used motivational strategies with respect to the gender of the participants. The procedures were done with participation of twenty male and female (10 male and 10 female) students majoring Teaching English Foreign Language at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj, Iran. The researcher, having divided the students into two groups, used focus group interview. The researcher acting as a facilitator guided the groups based on a predetermined set of topics. The result of quantitative and qualitative investigations and calculations showed that the learners mentioned 158 cases of motivational strategies categorized into 17 factors. These factors were both integrative, such as engaging in problem-solving activities, enjoying success, positive attitudes towards L2 speakers as well as increasing self-esteem and instrumental, like finding job, getting higher degrees, and promoting in current work. Also, the most commonly cited factors from the most to the least included pursuing studies (12.7%), finding good job (11.4 %), spending more time (10.1 %), engaging in problem-solving activities (10.1 %), and getting higher marks (9.5 %). The difference between the five most frequently-used motivational strategies with respect to the gender of the participants who were good language learners showed that: a) female students were more motivated in learning English, b) as for finding good job, male students were more motivated to learn English, c) as for spending more time, engaging in problem-solving activities and getting high grades, the difference between male and female students was not significant.

KEYWORDS: Motivational Strategies, Good Language Learner

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, research on L2 motivation has focused on the social-psychological perspectives that create interest in learning and facilitate in sustaining it among which factors such as "integrative motivation" and "intrinsic motivation" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132) were more prominent. Later on, the impact of motivation was examined from cognitive psychology

perspectives and motivation was regarded as “intrinsic motivation” (i.e., doing something as an end in itself) and “extrinsic motivation” (i.e., doing something as a means to some separable outcome) (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.41).

Nevertheless, motivation, itself, has not been sufficient since there is also another aspect to motivation that every learner most likely has encountered at some point: Motivational strategies. Similar to research carried out on learning strategies, Dornyei (2001) underscored the use of discussion and joint experience in raising learners’ awareness of the strategies. As a matter of fact, it is rather difficult to theorize the motivational strategies. It can be taken as a driving force that energizes human behavior and orients it for better performance.

It has already been documented that motivation performs an effective role in second language acquisition. A sheer number of research explored L2 motivation, examining its complex nature and the way in which it influences the L2 learning process (Clément, 1980; Gardner, 1979; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Ushioda, 2009, to name but a few). So there is a benefit to such sorts of research works because of linking theory to practice by transferring motivational theories into techniques and strategies that can be applied by EFL teachers in the classrooms. The present study set out to explore and examine motivational strategies from the perspectives of EFL student in the context of Iran.

During the last five decades, much research has been conducted in the field of L2 motivation and its relevance to the success in L2 learning (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985). The primary studies of L2 motivation are influenced by the work of Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972), focusing on the social psychological approach. A key issue to this perspective is the view of L2 motivation as a determining factor which leads to L2 achievement. A noteworthy development in L2 motivation research occurred in the 1990s during which research in the field expanded to incorporate cognitive and educational views of L2 motivation (e.g., Noels, Clément, & Pelletier, 1999; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Ushioda, 1996a). During this time, research into L2 motivation emphasized the teacher’s role in motivating students as well as the importance of the learning environment.

Since the current study is to focus on the contribution of motivational strategies to good language learners, it should be mentioned that research in the area of characteristics of good language learners has been the home of choice for SLA researchers since mid-1970. According to Griffiths (2008), in conducting such research, both learning and learner variables should be taken into account. However, one topic that has not been touched in this domain is the relationship between the characteristics of good language learner and the use of motivational strategies. It is evident that good language learners are motivated students.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

One of the key factors to determine success in learning a foreign language is Learner’s motivation. Motivation researchers suggested that motivational strategies that learners’ motivation toward learning a foreign language can be effectively influenced by using teachers

(e.g., Banya & Cheng, 1997; Dörnyei, 1994a; Fives & Manning, 2005; Stipek, 1996). In 2001, Dörnyei demonstrated the motivational strategies in his text, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*. Creating the basic motivational conditions, generating initial motivation, maintaining, and protecting motivation and rounding off the learning experience (encouraging positive self-evaluation) are the groups of motivational strategies. Based on this idea, the concept of all these strategies is teacher behavior and beliefs significantly affect students' motivation for learning a foreign language. For this reason, an important aspect of motivation toward learning a foreign language is strategies in motivating language learners.

Therefore, motivational techniques have been constructed and summarized in several research studies for teachers in classroom application (e.g., Alison & Halliwell, 2002; Brown, 2001; Chambers, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1997). Moreover, several relevant motivational components into a multilevel are integrated by Dörnyei (1994a), motivational construct in second-language is based on understanding the second language motivation from an educational view. He made a practical motivational strategy list based on these components comprised of thirty strategies for helping language teachers better understand what motivates their students in the second language classroom. The result shows that not only motivational strategies can influence learners' motivation, but also that teachers play significant roles to help learners establish self-confidence and achieve successes that can crucially influence motivation (Fives & Manning, 2005; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant & Mihic, 2004).

Accordingly there is a severe lack of research on the determining role of L2 learner's motivational strategies in terms of the new perspectives of motivation including the social and cultural context of motivation in promoting good language learners. The problem lies in the fact that most of the students just focus on cognitive aspects and strategies to improve their English, and they underrate the role of emotional factors in their success. Likewise, research on L2 motivation deals with what makes a person want to learn a second language and what maintains him or her interested in learning. However, motivation to learn a second language is a complex construct, taking into account that language is always socially and culturally bound and hence, quite different from other school subjects (Dörnyei, 2001). Particularly, to gain mastery over a L2 is also a social event that is unavoidably accompanied by some elements of the L2 culture.

The current study, as an initial attempt, tries to identify the motivational strategies that learners employ to function well in English language, and in so doing, focus group interview is the focus of this study to figure out the relevant data. Having identified the motivational strategies, the researcher explores the most influential strategies used by good language learners. What mainly prompted this study was the novelty of this particular area of research, that is, the relationship between motivational strategies and good language learner. Based on Vygotskyian Sociocultural theory of mind (1978), higher order cognitive functions are internalized from social interaction with more competent others. Therefore, using group discussion and interaction, finding out the strategies employed by learners who are successful in learning a second language would lead to better understanding of the strategies that play significant roles in learning. L2 motivation is needed to help learners expend and persist in their effort in an L2 learning process which might extend over a long period of time.

Therefore, this study investigates the motivational strategies which EFL learners use to promote their learning process in Iranian context. In particular, it considers the perceptions of EFL students about different motivational strategies. This definition assumes that teachers can apply some motivational strategies in order to raise learners' motivation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to examine the application of motivational strategies by successful L2 learners, the current study set out to provide answers for the following questions:

1. What factors do determine the motivational strategies employed by good language learners?
2. What is the frequency and order of importance of the motivational strategies employed by good language learners?
3. Are there any significant differences between motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to the gender of the participants?

The first research question of the present study mentioned above is a qualitative question; therefore, no research hypothesis is formulated for it. However, the following null hypotheses were formulated for the two quantitative questions (i.e., the second and third research questions) of the current study:

H02: There are no significant differences between motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to the gender of the participants.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study follows two theoretical frameworks to explore and examine the association between the motivational strategies and good language learners: 1) "Motivational strategies" proposed by Dornyei (2005) and "characteristics of good language learners" suggested by Rubin and Thomson (1983, cited in Nunan, 1999). The guidelines suggested by Dornyei (2005) are factors based on which the individual's goal-related behavior are promoted. The present study followed the guidelines proposed by Dornyei (2005) regarding the L2 Motivational Self System, including the following three components:

- (1) Ideal L2 Self, which is the L2-specific facet of one's 'ideal self': if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the 'ideal L2 self' is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves. Traditional integrative and internalized instrumental motives would typically belong to this component.
- (2) Ought-to L2 Self, which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes. This dimension corresponds to Higgins's ought self and thus to the more extrinsic (i.e. less internalized) types of instrumental motives.
- (3) L2 Learning Experience, which concerns situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). This component is conceptualized at a different level

from the two self-guides and future research will hopefully elaborate on the self-aspects of this bottom-up process.

Since the dependent variable in this study is good language learner, the present study also pays attention to the perceptions of good language learners regarding the reasons that they offer for their successes and their attributions for their successes. The theoretical framework that frames the characteristics of good language learners for the present study refers to Rubin and Thomson's (1983, cited in Nunan, 1999, p. 57) theory of efficient including the following features: 1) finding their own way, 2) organizing information about language, 3) being creative and experiment with language, 4) making their own opportunities, 5) finding strategies for getting practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom, 6) living with uncertainty and develop strategies for making sense of the target language without wanting to understand every word, 7) using linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language in mastering a second language, 8) letting the context (extra-linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world) helps them in comprehension, 9) learning production techniques (e.g., techniques for keeping conversation going), and 10) learning different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation.

Therefore, The aims of the study were to 1) identify, analyze and categorize the motivational strategies employed by good language learners at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj, 2) tabulate the frequency and order of the most highly used motivational strategies, and 3) investigate the association between motivational strategies and good language learners in terms of the most frequently-cited factors emerged from L2 learners' responses. The researcher tried to collect the relevant data regarding the major variables including good language learner characteristics as dependent variable, and motivational strategies as independent variable, and used relevant statistical procedures to carry out his research work. To conduct the interview, the researcher followed Semi-structured focus group interview.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 20 male and female EFL students majoring in TEFL at Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj. To select the students, first, the researcher chose those students who were between 6th and 8th (junior & senior) semester since they have had enough experience of engaging with learning English language. Then, he went for those students whose average points met certain criteria, that is, they had the required mean score that was 16+ to confirm the sample homogeneity. Following this, the researcher distributed Nelson Test of Proficiency to them and, finally, 20 students were selected based on their higher scores on the test. The students were willing to take part in the study and they were divided into two groups including 10 male and 10 female students. The number of students in each group was small enough to give everyone the opportunity to express an opinion and simultaneously, large enough to provide diversity of opinions. The researcher named the two groups as Group A (including male students) and Group B (including female students).

Instrumentation

The major instrument used in this study was “focus group interview” to collect data from multiple individuals simultaneously.

The researcher used “semi-structured type of focus group” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 144) to conduct the research which is the most common format because it included three major questions (See appendix A) posed by the researcher rather than giving the participants freedom to discuss some broad topics.

Procedures

To collect data for the study concerning the extent to which students employ the motivational strategies introduced by Dornyei (2001), the researcher, having divided the students in two groups, used focus group interview since a focus group is a group interview of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics or common interests. The researcher acting as a facilitator guided the group based on a predetermined set of topics. She created an environment that encouraged participants to share their perceptions and points of view.

The researcher held four sessions for each group separately in a quiet classroom and each session and since focus groups typically last about 60 minutes, she tried to pose the questions and leading hints in a way that the session did not last more than around 60 minutes. The researcher guided the group through the discussion and kept the group focused on the topics for discussion. She also asked one of her friends to act as the note-taker and recorder during the sessions. The note-taker was just an observer and did not interact with the group. The notes included a sense of what each person said; identifying how comments were said; and recording when transitions occurred from one topic to the next. She was also responsible for recording the focus group discussion. The recordings were then transcribed by the researcher to figure out and categorize the common themes elicited from students' responses.

To collect the data from students' response three alternatives were possible. Indeed, Focus group data can arise from one of the following three types: individual data, group data, and/or group interaction data (Duggleby, 2005). Focus group theorists disagree as to the most appropriate unit of analysis for focus group data to analyze (i.e., individual, group, or interaction). Some theorists believe that the individual or the group should be the focus of the analysis instead of the unit of analysis (Kidd & Marshall, 2000). However, most focus group researchers use the group as the unit of analysis (Morgan, 1997). The researcher of the present study also used the group as the unit of analysis since it also included the interaction between group members. The researcher believed that out of interaction themes arose that was more than the individual data. By doing so, the researcher coded the data and presented emergent themes.

The researcher provided a focus group guide for herself which included a series of questions and prompts to use during the interview sessions. She asked the relevant questions of the group and allowed time for participants to respond to each other's comments. The focus group guide served as a “road map” and memory aid for the facilitator. The same focus group guide was used for each focus group.

To analyze the data gathered from students' responses and interactions, the researcher first explored different techniques used to analyze the data. Indeed, the frameworks of Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) suggest several qualitative analysis techniques that can be used to analyze focus group data. Specifically, the analytical techniques that lend themselves to focus group data are constant comparison analysis, classical content analysis, keywords-in-context, and discourse analysis (for a review of analytical techniques, see, for example, Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

The researcher of the present study made use of both constant comparison analysis and classical content analysis to analyze data. With reference to constant comparison analysis, she followed the three major stages of the constant comparison analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During the first stage (i.e., open coding), the data were chunked into small units. The researcher attached a descriptor, or code, to each of the units. Then, during the second stage (i.e., axial coding), these codes were grouped into categories. Finally, in the third stage (i.e., selective coding), the researcher developed one or more themes expressing the content of each of the groups.

With regard to classical content analysis, the researcher created smaller chunks of the data, placing a code with each chunk. However, instead of creating a theme from the codes (as with constant comparison analysis), with classical content analysis, these codes then were placed into similar groupings and counted. The researcher, first, identified whether each participant used a given code, then, she assesses whether each group used a given code, and finally, she identified all instances of a given code. The researchers not only provided information regarding the frequency of each code (i.e., quantitative information) but supplemented these data with a rich description of each code (i.e., qualitative information), which would create a mixed methods content analysis.

RESULT AND FINDING

Results from Focus Group Interview with Good Language Learners

To explore the first research question, the researcher employed Focus Group Interview, following the guidelines proposed by Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) through which initially the researcher acting as a facilitator posed open-ended questions and closed-ended questions in English language and let students express their ideas while her friend acting as note-taker, wrote down the verbal and non-verbal communication data and she also recorded their voices using audio-tape recorder. The researcher finally came up with common themes employing the techniques of open-coding, axial-coding and selective coding to analyze data.

The researcher started the interview with demographic question as follows: Would you please introduce yourself one-by-one in brief to the group, and immediately asked the questions already constructed to follow a semi-structured focus group interview. Here are the questions and some common statements elicited from the two groups including Group A (10 male students) and Group B (10 female students).

Question 1:

1. Could you talk about the characteristics of a good language learner?

The group interviews obtained from transcribing the responses out of group analysis revealed the following findings:

Group A:

Good language learners have self-esteem and they are confident. They practice as much as possible. They try their best to learn in the classroom and concentrate on whatever they study. A good language learner participates actively in class discussion. Students should rely on themselves not the teacher and a good language learner should be competent in listening skills more than anything else. Moreover, good language learners attribute their success to themselves not significant others, and their success is the result of their effort not their intelligence.

Group B:

Good language learners are willing to attend the classes. They pay attention to details more. They think that a good language learner should speak fluently and has good accent. They write their homework well. They should memorize vocabulary and grammatical points. They are more reflective than impulsive, reflecting on what they have learned and on their lectures. They like to be checked by the teachers and they attribute their success to significant others, not their own effort. They have good marks.

Question 2:

2. To what extent does motivation determine your success in learning English?

Group A:

Motivation is a key factor in successful language learning because if we have possessed motivation, we could put away the obstacles and always tries to learn more. When we are motivated, we spend more time to learn. A good language learner has a driving force and will not leave his studies if he finds the task difficult. When we see that we are developing, we expect ourselves to progress more and this is a good indication of having motivation. We not only study our lessons but also learn from outside textbooks and films.

Group B:

To a great extent, learning depends on our motivation. Motivation increases our desire to learn English and become successful learners. Sometimes, some students say that if I fail to pass the final test in this or that course, I will give up my studies. Or, there are students who say that what is the difference between getting 12 or 20? We believe that they have not enough motivation and they think about how much they get at the end of the term, but, we think about both how much we get at the end of the term and how much we learned from the course at the end of the term. We like to learn more vocabulary because we are interested in learning them. Motivation helps us enjoy our learning. Indeed, when the teacher or our family praises us, we feel happy and when we see our good course grades, we become excited.

Question 3:

3. What motivational factors do help you sustain in learning English?

Group A:

We like to promote in works (teaching in private institutes) in English language. Learning English language increases our self-confidence and we feel satisfaction, say, when we see that we are watching an original film and can understand the films. We like to find the answer to the questions ourselves when listening to a track and we like to have teacher but as a mediator who provides hints for us not giving the answer at once. Indeed, we like to engage in problem-solving activities. We do not need to have forces from outside to study; we are worried if we find a good textbook about English language skills or components unread. We also learn English language to continue our studies and find a good job. We like to go abroad and communicate well with other people through English language. Motivation increases self-esteem and self –efficacy. When we are motivated, we participate actively without worrying about our mistakes.

Group B:

We like to pursue our studies. We are studying with together and we have a calm environment and we support each other in our lessons and our homework. We learn better in classes where the teacher does not cause stress for us. When we speak in English like native speakers or we write an E-mail in English language, we feel happy. We have a positive attitude towards English culture and try to learn the good points from their cultures; for example, to be honest, to be frank, and to be lively. We like to learn both linguistically and non-linguistically, such as performing well on the tests and paying attention to cultural values. Moreover, educated people are expected to know English language.

Frequency and order of motivational strategies

To find an answer for the second research question, the researcher, first, made use of three stages of coding. He chunked the data into small units during the stage of open coding. Then, he attached a code to each of the units, and these codes were grouped into categories during the stage of axial coding. Finally, the researcher developed one or more themes expressing the content of each of the groups in the stage of selective coding. In the last stage, these codes then were placed into similar groupings and counted. The number and frequency of the categories that motivated the students to learn English were tabulated by the researcher using Descriptive Statistics. Therefore, the first research hypothesis with regard to the frequency of motivational categories was rejected.

Altogether, 158 cases were elicited from focus group interview and they were categorized into 17 factors. The results from the SPSS Software for Windows version 21: 00 yielded interesting frequency. The most commonly cited factors included pursuing our studies (12.7%), finding good job (11.4 %), spending more time (10.1 %), engaging in problem-solving activities (10.1 %), and getting higher marks (9.5 %).

The relationship between the most frequently cited motivational strategies and good language learners with respect to gender

Pursuing studies

Table 1: The number of cases pursuing their studies

		pursuing studies		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	6	14	20
	Female	14	6	20
Total		20	20	40

As displayed by Table 1, the number of cases for pursuing studies mentioned by males was 6 and by female were 14.

Table 2: Chi-square test for pursuing studies

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.40a	1	.01		
Continuity Correctionb	4.90	1	.02		
Likelihood Ratio	6.58	1	.01		
Fisher's Exact Test				.02	.01
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.24	1	.01		
N of Valid Cases	40				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

To see if the difference between the two categorical variables is significant, we refer to the next table. The main value that should be checked in from the output is the first chi-square value which is presented in Table 3, headed Pearson Chi-Square. In the table, the value is 6.40, with an associated significance level of .00 (this is presented in the column labeled Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)). To be significant the Sig. value needs to be .05 or smaller, and in this case, the value of .01 is less than the alpha value of .05; thus, it is concluded that the result is significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to pursuing studies is significant; female students are more motivated to learn English language in order to pursue their studies.

Finding good job

Table 3: The number of cases for finding good job

		finding good job		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	12	6	18
	Female	6	12	18
Total		18	18	36

The number of cases discussed by the good language learners for finding good job with reference to male students was 12 and the number of cases for female students was 6. Out of 20 students, 18 students mentioned it in their talks (See Table 3).

Table 4: Chi-square test for finding good job

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.0a	1	.04		
Continuity Correctionb	2.7	1	.09		
Likelihood Ratio	4.0	1	.04		
Fisher's Exact Test				.09	.04
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.8	1	.04		
N of Valid Cases	36				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

With reference to Table 5, the results demonstrated that the difference between the two categorical variables for finding good job is significant. The main value obtained from the chi-square is 4.00, with an associated significance level of .04. The significant value is .04 which is less than the alpha value of .05, so that it is concluded that the result is significant. This means the difference between male and female students with reference to finding good job is significant; male students are more motivated to learn English language in order to finding good job.

Spending more time

Table 5: The number of cases for spending more time

		spending more time		Total
		Mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender	Male	9	7	16
	Female	7	9	16
Total		16	16	32

As shown in Table 5, the number of cases discussed by the good language learners for spending more time with reference to male students was 7 and the number of cases for female students was 9.

Table 6: Chi-square test for spending more time

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.50a	1	.48		
Continuity Correctionb	.12	1	.72		
Likelihood Ratio	.51	1	.47		
Fisher's Exact Test				.72	.36
Linear-by-Linear Association	.48	1	.48		
N of Valid Cases	32				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

As for spending more time, the results demonstrated that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is .50. The significant value is .48 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This shows that both male and female students spend more time for studying

appropriately in the same amount. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to spending more time is not significant. This shows that both male and female students spend time for studying appropriately in the same amount (See Table 6).

Engaging in problem-solving activities

Table 7: The number of cases for engaging in problem-solving activities

	engaging in problem-solving activities		Total
	mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender male	8	8	16
female	8	8	16
Total	16	16	32

As displayed by Table 7, the number of cases engaging in problem-solving activities mentioned by males and females was the same, that is, male students mentioned it 8 times and female students mentioned it 8 times.

Table 8: Chi-square test for engaging in problem-solving activities

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.00a	1	1.00		
Continuity Correctionb	.00	1	1.00		
Likelihood Ratio	.00	1	1.00		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.00	.63
Linear-by-Linear Association	.00	1	1.00		
N of Valid Cases	32				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Regarding engaging in problem-solving activities, the results showed that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is .00. The significant value is 1.00 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to engaging in problem-solving activities is not significant (See Table 8).

Getting good grades

Table 9: The number of cases for getting high grades

	getting high grades		Total
	mentioned	not-mentioned	
Gender male	6	9	15
female	9	6	15
Total	15	15	30

The number of cases discussed by the good language learners for getting high grades with reference to male students was 6 and the number of cases for female students was 9.

Table 10: Chi-square test for getting high grades
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.20a	1	.27		
Continuity Correction ^b	.53	1	.46		
Likelihood Ratio	1.20	1	.27		
Fisher's Exact Test				.46	.23
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.16	1	.28		
N of Valid Cases	30				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.50.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Regarding getting high grades, the results showed that the difference between the male and female students is not significant. Indeed, this time, the main value obtained from the chi-square is 1.20. The significant value is .27 which is larger than the alpha value of .05; thus, the result is not significant. This means that the difference between male and female students with reference to getting high grades is not significant (See Table 10).

Discussion

The results of the present study are mostly in line with previous research conducted in Iran (e.g., Dastgheib, 1996). Iranian people usually learn English in order to enter prestigious universities and thereby proceed to the highest levels of education and strata in their society (Sadeghi & Maghsudi, 2000). They also have a tendency to study English in order to live and study abroad and get access to rich resource as well as get familiar with cultural aspects of western societies (Tagughi, Magid & Papi, 2009). On the contrary, the results of the present study was not in line with what Matin (2007) found in the context of Iran. Matin (2007) examined the motivational characteristics of university students in Tehran. The results of the study indicated that the participants did not differ in terms of their general orientation to learn English. Indeed, the students were motivated instrumentally and had integrative forces. The knowledge promotion and employment were the highest and lowest factors on the instrumental scale, and interest in the English language ranked the highest and interest in English culture ranked the lowest on the integrative scale.

In sum, based on the findings of the present study and similar findings with regard to motivational forces in the context of Iran, it is obvious that good language learners tend to have prestigious social status in the classroom and in the society. Norton (2000, p. 10) refers to "investment" according to which learners invest in learning a new language so that they can improve their cultural perspectives, their conceptions of themselves and their desires for the future. Indeed, they want to improve their professional identity in the educational communities of practice.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, major conclusions can be drawn from the present study. Firstly, the line research on motivational strategies in the past two decades is not country-specific because similar pattern has been found in some other countries like Hungary and Japan (Dornyei, 2005). This confirms the fact that motivational research has external validity. Secondly, the findings highlight the fact that both integrativeness and instrumentality are important to become good language learners in the context of Iran. Instrumentality can be classified into three major constructs including continuing studies and employment, and integrativeness can be classified into two major constructs entailing spending more time and problem-solving strategies.

The kind of data elicitation in this study was focus group interview based on which interaction and discussion between good language learners confirmed the content validity of the categories emerged and cultural differences were taken into consideration. Although the two groups selected for this study were homogeneous based on their proficiency, the findings revealed interesting facts regarding the gender of the participants. As an example, female students have greater tendency than male students to continue their studies. It is evident today in our universities that female students at MA and PhD levels outnumber male students; however, male students are worried about finding job because of socio-economic factors to be able to afford their future lives and for this reason, the male students outnumber female students in this respect. There are some shared discourses among the individuals, that is, everyone likes to spend more time and learn English better or have a good job. Motivation is the gate for expectancy of success for them, that is to say, those who see their progress, promote in learning since success increases motivation and self-esteem. A critical principle to the maintenance of motivational strategies is that motivation should emerge from the within, that is, from the learner rather than controlled by the teacher.

REFERENCES

- Alderman, M. K. (1999). *Goals and goal setting. Motivation for achievement: possibilities for teaching and learning*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Alison, J., & Halliwell, S. (2002). *Challenging classes: Focus on pupil behavior*. London, UK: CILT.
- Ames, C. (1992). Classrooms: Goals, structures, and student motivation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84, 261–271.
- Ames, C., & Archer, J. (1988). Achievement goals in the classroom : student's learning strategies and motivation processes. *Journal of Research in science Teaching*, 31, 811-813.
- Atkinson, J. W. (1957). Motivational determinants of risk taking behavior. *Psychological Review*, 64, 359–372
- Atkinson, J. W. (1964). *An Introduction to Motivation*. Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand. → See especially pages 240–268, “A Theory of Achievement Motivation.
- Atkinson, J. W., & Feather, N. T. (Eds) (1966). *A theory of achievement motivation*. London: Wiley .
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. New York: General Learning Press.

- Bandura, A. R. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: a social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived Self-Efficacy in Cognitive Development and Functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28(2), 117-148.
- Bandura, A. R. (1994). *Self-efficacy*. In Ramachaudren, V. S. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior*, 4. New York: Academic Press, 71-81.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York, NY: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A., & Schunk, D. H. (1981). Cultivating competence, self-efficacy, and intrinsic interest through proximal self-motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 41, 586-598.
- Banya, K., & Cheng, M. H. (1997). Beliefs about foreign language learning: A study of beliefs of teachers' and students' cross culture settings. *Orlando, FL: The 31st Annual TESOL Convention*. (ERIC Document No. ED411691). Retrieved March 7, 2009, from ERIC database.
- Becker, H. S. (1970). *Sociological work: Method and substance*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Bernaus, M., & Gardner, R. C. (2008). Teacher motivation strategies, student perceptions, student motivation, and English achievement. *Modern Language Journal*, 92, 387-401.
- Brophy, J. (2004). *Motivating students to learn* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Brophy, J. & Neelam. (1986). *Teacher socialization as a mechanism for social psychology of Education Current Research and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press. 257-288.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Chambers, G. N. (1999). *Motivating language learners*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cheng, H.-f., & Dörnyei, Z. (2007). The use of motivational strategies in language instruction: The case of EFL teaching in Taiwan. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1, 153-174.
- Christophel, D. M., & Gorham, J. (1995). A test-retest analysis of student motivation, teacher immediacy, and perceived sources of motivation and demotivation in college classes. *Communication Education*, 44, 292-306.
- Clément, R. (1980). *Ethnicity, contact and communicative competence in a L2*. In H. Giles, W. P. Robinson and P. M. Smith (Eds.), *Language: Social psychological perspectives* (pp.147-154). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Covington, M.V. (1992). *Making the grade : A self- worth perspective on motivation and school reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Covington, M. V. (2000). Goal Theory, Motivation and School Achievement: *An Integrative Review*. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51, 171-200.
- Covington, M.V., & Beery, R. (1976). *Self- worth and school learning*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. New York: Sage Publication
- Crookes, G., & Schmidt, R. W. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the research agenda. *Language Learning*, 41, 469-512.

- Dastgheib, A. (1996). *The role of attitudes and motivation in second/foreign language learning*. PhD thesis, Islamic Azad University of Tehran.
- Deci, E.L., & Moller, A.C. (2007). Control (p. 182-185). In R. F. Baumeister & K. D. Vohs (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology*, Vol. 1, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. Plenum, New York.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.
- Dickinson, L. (1995). Autonomy and motivation: A literature review. *System*, 23 (2), 174.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1990). Conceptualizing motivation in foreign-language learning. *Language Learning* 40, 45-78.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1994a). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language Classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 78, 273-284.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1994b). Understanding L2 motivation: On with the challenge! *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(4), 515-523.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language Teaching Research*, 2 (3), 203-229.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Otto, I. (1998). Motivation in action: A process model of L2 motivation. *Working papers in Applied Linguistics*, 4, 43-69.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation (Second Edition)* Harlow: Pearson Education
- Dweck, C. S. (1992). The study of goals in psychology. *Psychological Science*, 3, 165-167.
- Eccles, J. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In J. T. Spence (Ed.), *Achievement and achievement motives: Psychological and sociological approaches* (pp. 75-146). San Francisco, CA: W. H. Freeman.
- Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational Beliefs, Values, and Goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 109-32.
- Fives, H., & Manning, D.K. (2005). Teachers' strategies for student engagement: Comparing research to demonstrated knowledge. Washington, D.C.: *The 2005 Annual 53 Meeting of the American Psychological Association*. Retrieved February 10, 2009, from http://netdrive.montclair.edu/~fivesh/Research_files/Fives&Manning_2005_APA.pdf
- Gan, Z., Humphreys, G., & Hamp-Lyons, L. (2004). Understanding successful and unsuccessful EFL students in Chinese universities. *Modern Language Journal*, 88, 229–244.
- Gardner, R. C. (1979). Social psychological aspects of second language acquisition. In H. Giles & R. St. Clair (Eds.), *Language and Social Psychology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1959). Motivational variables in second language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 13, 266-272.
- Gardner, R. C., Masgoret, A. M., Tennant, J., & Mihic, L. (2004). Integrative motivation: Changes during a year-long intermediate-level language course. *Language learning*, 54(1), 1-34

THE EFFECT OF VISUAL SCAFFOLDING ON READING COMPREHENSION OF IMPULSIVE VS. REFLECTIVE EFL YOUNG LEARNERS

Amir Reza NematTabrizi (Ph.D) and Khadijeh Shokripour

Department of English language, Payame Noor University, I. R. of Iran.

Corresponding email address

Kh.shokripour.2015@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of visual scaffolding on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective young learners. A group of 110 was chosen randomly out of 200 elementary 11-13 year-old students from Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Shiraz, Iran. They were given a KET-for-schools test to choose a homogenous group of 80 elementary students. Then a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barratt's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (BIS-11) was given to students to divide the participants into two groups of Impulsive and Reflective. A KET-for-school test (reading part) was given to all participants as pre-test. Students, then, were assigned to three groups of 25, 25, 30, two experimental groups of 25, one impulsive and other reflective students and a control group of 30. Impulsive and reflective groups were taught using visual instructional scaffolding during 12 sessions. Every session, students were given instructions and were exposed to modeling in order to retell a story, to discuss, to find a solution for a proposed problem, to illustrate data which is driven from a video on a diagram, flowchart or map, to do puzzle while control group received no treatments. A KET-for-school test (Reading part) was set up as post-test to see whether or not teacher's visual instructional scaffolding makes significant impacts on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective students. It was obviously observed that utilizing the techniques of visual scaffolding has an effect on students' reading comprehension. Moreover the effect of it on reflective students was more than impulsive ones. The analyses of this study indicates that the importance of modeling and teachers' awareness of students' learning style are clearly recognized in young learners classes.

KEYWORDS: Impulsivity, Reading Comprehension, Reflectivity, Visual Scaffolding

INTRODUCTION

As students themselves bring a certain wide range of learning styles, teachers, either consciously or unconsciously, select methods that offer ways of approaching desired language learning. Kneefe (1979, p.4) defined a learning style as "Cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment" while Oxford, Holloway and Horton define it as a whole range of social and affective factors, too. Students' learning styles is influenced by their previous learning experiences, their culture and the society they live in.

To answer why teachers should be aware of students' different learning styles, Sue Davidoff and Owen van den Berg (1990) suggest four important steps: plan, teach / act, observe and reflect.

- Students learn better and more quickly if the teaching methods used match their preferred learning styles.
- As learning improves, so too does self-esteem. This has a further positive effect on learning.
- Students who have become bored with learning may become interested once again.
- The student-teacher relationship can improve because the student is more successful and is more interested in learning.

On the other hand, one of the techniques that could be used to enhance language learning is called scaffolding.

Visual scaffolding is a strategy for teaching English language learners (ELLs) that utilizes drawings, photographs and other visuals in order to help students to better understand the language used in each lesson (Herrell, 26). This strategy encourages active involvement from all students in each lesson. Using methods and resources that add context to the language that a student is learning, such as props, gestures and pictures, contributes to that child's language acquisition and ultimately to the production of new language. Diaz-Rico and Weed (220), and Ovando, Collier, and Combs (2003), believe that teachers who constantly use scaffolding strategies, including visuals and graphics, to assist English learners in multiple areas of learning, are supporting their students in making significant achievements in comprehension of both academic English and curriculum content. The teacher only attempts to help the student with tasks that are just beyond his current capability. "Scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know. If scaffolding is properly administered, it will act as an enabler, not as a disabler" (Benson, 1997).

Until students can demonstrate task mastery of new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance or support from a teacher or a more knowledgeable other (MKO). Zhao and Orey (1999) summarize, "scaffolding is a metaphor to characterize a special type of instructional process which works in a task-sharing situation between the teacher and the learner." The authors further delineate this basic idea into two key aspects (or rules): "(a) help the learner with those aspects of the task that the learner cannot manage yet; and (b) allow the learner to do as much as he or she can without help" (p. 6).

Scaffolding benefits:

- Provides individualized instruction
- Greater assurance of the learner acquiring the desired skill, knowledge or ability
- Provides differentiated instruction
- Creates momentum—Through the structure provided by scaffolding, students spend less time searching and more time on learning and discovering resulting in quicker learning
- Engages the learner
- Motivates the learner to learn

- Minimizes the level of frustration for the learner
- Another major benefit of scaffolding is that it supports the five principles of effective teaching highlighted in Ellis, Worthington and Larkin's Executive Summary of the Research Synthesis on Effective Teaching Principles and the Design of Quality Tools for Educators.
These five principles are:
 - *Principle 1:* Students learn more when they are engaged actively during an instructional task.
 - *Principle 2:* High and moderate success rates are correlated positively with student learning outcomes, and low success rates are correlated negatively with student learning outcomes.
 - *Principle 3:* Increased opportunity to learn content is correlated positively with increased student achievement. Therefore, the more content covered, the greater the potential for student learning.
 - *Principle 4:* Students achieve more in classes in which they spend much of their time being directly taught or supervised by their teacher.
 - *Principle 5:* Students can become independent, self-regulated learners through instruction that is deliberately and carefully scaffolded.

Purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine and analyze the impacts of the nonverbal support for language comprehension provided by teachers' use of visual scaffolding, including pointing, representational gestures, diagrams, and other methods of highlighting visual information on reading comprehension of impulsive and reflective young EFL learners and to determine the consistency of these effects through this descriptive pedagogical tool.

Previous studies have shown that visual scaffolding may facilitate listeners' comprehension of speech, particularly when the verbal message is ambiguous or highly complex. These findings suggest that visual scaffolding may be particularly important in instructional settings, in which students' comprehension is often challenged by new concepts and unfamiliar terms. However, little is known about how teachers actually use visual scaffolding in instructional communication or about whether such gestures influence impulsive or reflective students' reading comprehension. Regarding previous studies in this field, some believe in the positive role of effectiveness of visual scaffolding, some others argue this kind of instruction has little or no effect on students' reading comprehension. This study had two aims: (1) to investigate whether visual scaffolding promotes students' reading comprehension, and therefore their learning; and (2) to compare the effects of visual scaffolding on impulsive vs. reflective young learners, by facilitating students' encoding of visual information.

This study examined the effect of teacher's visual scaffolding on reading comprehension of impulsive vs. reflective young EFL learners and is significant in the sense that:

1) ESL/EFL students come to our classrooms with assumptions, usually unconscious, about how learning occurs. As teachers, we also come to our classrooms with assumptions, which are also

usually unconscious, about how learning occurs. When these two sets of assumptions are different, both students and teachers become frustrated. As an ESL/EFL teacher, one needs to address this variation in learning. When teachers want to take decisions about whether or not, for instance, to use visual techniques for impulsive learners, they should consider the aim for using visuals. If the purpose can be achieved in another way, it may be better not to use visuals. Another implication, relates to the dimension of impulsivity versus reflectivity as two learning styles. By using the data on language learning styles, teachers are better able to spot any style conflicts in the language classroom. Teachers can also vary their instructional techniques to meet the needs of students with contrasting styles of learning, to give reflective learners, for instant, more time to think about the new items in a given text.

2) Visual scaffolding data with regard to learning style can help the teacher prepare a language learning environment that accommodates different learners, here reflective and impulsive, alike. The learning environment can establish the class as inclusive, welcoming everyone.

3) Teachers often desire to take incremental steps checking for comprehension and attainment of the desired skills. This study could help teachers to do their best in this controversial issue by initially setting a high goal for students to attain, then, recognizing the skills the students have, building up their skills to meet that goal,.

4) The bulk of the studies conducted on the effectiveness of scaffolding have been done with adult L2 learners. Few of the studies on the effects of teacher visual scaffolding have been conducted on younger learners. The results of this study would provide learners and language teachers with evidence concerning the effectiveness of visual scaffolding by teacher in L2 writing classes.

5) It is important to study this approach at the level of young learners. If the reading curriculum adopts teacher's scaffolding in early classes, students would internalize the techniques of utilizing the hierarchical learning at early ages, and consequently it might take less effort in the most challenging skill in learning English.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Scaffolding is based on the socio-cultural theory popularized by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky believes that success in gaining knowledge can only be achieved through scaffolding from a knowledgeable person to a novice. This view is shared by other researchers such as Franklin (1996), Mayer (2003) and Mercer (2000). Thus scaffolding can be defined as a metaphor which is derived from the work of Wood et al., (1976) and it is based on Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal difference (ZPD) to capture the nature of support and guidance in learning.

The ultimate goal for learning is to gain knowledge. Knowledge is gained when meanings or attributes are attached to information and the learner has clearly defined and stored that information (Tokoro & Steels 2003). Many scholars within the socio-cultural tradition have

shown that language learning is not an individual cognitive process because ELLs are more likely to succeed in learning English as a second language (ESL) when they have teachers, peers, and community members who affirm their cognitive and linguistic capacities and provide support (August & Hakuta, 1997).

Drawing upon pioneering research conducted by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) and other scholars (Maloch, 2002; Rogoff, 1990, 1997) who studied the role of knowledgeable others (e.g., tutor or teacher) in scaffolding, Rodgers (2005) revealed the interactive nature of scaffolding through empirical research that documented the growing control of reading words and independence in the reading process among struggling readers in one-on-one instructional settings. To provide scaffolding that leads to students' successful reading, teachers begin with careful observation of individual learners, respond thoughtfully to learners' needs, and use appropriate instructional materials (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2004). Specific types of teacher questions as a scaffolding technique can promote ESL students' disposition for learning and language development (Cazden, 1988). Kao, Lehman, and Cennamo (1996) postulated that scaffolds could be embedded in hypermedia or multimedia software to provide students with support while using the software. They realized that soft scaffolds are dynamic, situation-specific aids provided by a teacher or peer while hard scaffolds are static and specific.

A series of investigations of reflectivity –impulsivity in children has demonstrated impressive stability over both time and tasks. In addition, the construct has produced meaningful findings concerning IQ (Bryant & Gettinger, 1981; Camara & Fox, 1983) , modifiability (Butter, 1979; Laval, 1980), fluid ability (Cronbach & Snow, 1977) , and a variety of problem solving and decision- quality exercises(Kagan, 1966; Mann, 1973) . Impulsive subjects, in contrast to reflective subjects of similar age and verbal skills, make more errors in reading prose when in the primary grades, make more errors of commission on serial recall tasks, and are more likely to offer incorrect solutions on inductive reasoning problems and visual discrimination tasks (Stahl, Erickson & Rayman, 1986).

The research findings on reflective subjects are commonly the opposite of those obtained with impulsive s. in general reports describe the reflective child as one who pauses before beginning a task or making a decision and as one who spends time evaluating the differential validity of alternatives (Kagan, 1965 a,c). The reflective subject tends to make fewer errors in word recognition tests, serial learning and inductive reasoning(Zelniker & Oppenheimer, 1973). researchers have also found that a number of personality factors tend to contribute to the impulsive cognitive style–specially minimal anxiety over committing errors, an orientation toward quick success rather than avoiding failure, low performance standards , low motivation to master tasks, and less careful attention to and monitoring of stimuli (Kagan, 1966; Messer, 1970).

Kagan's theory falls under the realm of intellectual development, and specifically measures cognitive “tempo” or pace. Through observation and testing, Kagan made several conclusions. First, reflection increases with age. Second, impulsiveness or reflectiveness is relatively stable for the first 20 years, regardless of repeated attempts to alter it. Third, impulsiveness or reflectiveness

shows up in the performance of many tasks. Finally, impulsiveness or reflectiveness appears to be linked to personality. The first application of Kagan's theory was to "a child's ability to learn to read". The reflective child took their time to sound out words and read accurately. The impulsive child tended to slide over unfamiliar words and passages, decreasing levels of comprehension.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

- Q1:* Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of EFL young learners?
Q2: Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners?
Q3: Does visual scaffolding have any effect on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners?
Q4: Does visual scaffolding have more effect on reading comprehension of reflective than impulsive learners?

Regarding the questions proposed above, following hypotheses were projected:

- H01:* Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of EFL young learners.
H02: Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners.
H03: Visual scaffolding has no effects on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners.
H04: Visual scaffolding has more effect on reading comprehension of impulsive than reflective learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present study were 80 Iranian EFL 11-13 year old students chosen out of 110 students based on their scores of KET-for-school test. The students were from Kish Language Institute of Science and Technology Shiraz, Iran. By applying a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire the students were assigned to three groups: impulsive group (25 students), reflective group (25 students) and control group (30 students). The students in experimental groups benefited from visual scaffolding techniques and 30 students in control group received no treatments.

Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study:

The first instrument was KET-for-schools as proficiency test. Key English test for schools is a proficiency test which consists of 35 reading questions including 13 multiple-choice, 10 matching, 7 true-false questions and 5 gap-filling questions, 21 writing questions including 20 gap-filling and 1 small writing, 25 listening questions including 10 multiple-choice and 15 matching questions and finally a 2-part speaking test. The reading part, was used as post-test.

The second instrument was a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire to divide the participants into two groups of Impulsive and Reflective. *The Barratt Impulsiveness Scale, Version 11 (BIS-11)* is a 30-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess general impulsiveness taking into account the multi-factorial nature of the construct. The structure of the instrument allows for the assessment of six first-order factors (attention, motor, self-control, cognitive complexity, perseverance, cognitive instability) and three second-order factors (attentional impulsiveness [attention and cognitive instability], motor impulsiveness [motor and perseverance], non-planning impulsiveness [self-control and cognitive complexity]). A total score is obtained by summing the first or second-order factors. The items are scored on a four-point scale (Rarely/Never [1], Occasionally [2], Often [3], Almost Always/Always [4])

Procedure

First, 110 students were selected randomly out of 200 students of Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Shiraz, Iran. Second, a proficiency test, KET-for schools, was conducted to select 80 elementary 10-12 year-old students. A KET-for-school test (reading part) was given to all participants as pre-test. Then they were given a Persian version of Impulsivity Subscale of Barrett's (1995) Impulsiveness Questionnaire to divide the participants into two groups of impulsive and reflective, each containing 25 students as experimental groups and a group of 30 as the control group. Students in experimental groups were taught using different techniques of visual scaffolding during 12 sessions. At the end, a KET-for-school test (Reading part) was given to both experimental and control groups as post-test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions raised for the purpose of this study, the data were analyzed in both control and experimental groups.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of post-test scores for control and experimental groups

Group	Mean	Std .deviation
Control group	44.12	5.75
Impulsive group	45.48	4.64
Reflective group	48.40	3.92
Total	46	5.09

To investigate the data normal distribution, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used . The result is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Results of Kolmogrove-Smirnov test

Group	Z	Sig.
Control group	1.010	0.251
Impulsive students	1.048	0.222
Reflective students	0.567	0.905
Total	11.49	0.143

As seen in table 2, sig. for all tests is bigger than α ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore data is normally distributed. Hence, data is parametric and can be used for the purpose of t-test.

Q1: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of EFL young learners?

To answer the third question, as shown in table 3, regarding the results of independent t-test, p is smaller than alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore there is a significant difference between post-test scores of experimental group and control group. It is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has an effect on students' reading comprehension.

Table 3: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of experimental and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value
Reflective	46.32	48	-2.67	0.002
Control	44.12			

Q2: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of impulsive EFL young learners?

To answer the second question, as shown in table 4, regarding the results of independent t-test, it is observed that there isn't a significant difference between post-test scores of impulsive group and control group ($p > 0.05$), it is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has no effect on impulsive students' reading comprehension.

Table 4: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of impulsive and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value(sig)
Impulsive	45.48	48	-0.919	0.362
Control	44.12			

Q3: Does teacher's visual scaffolding have any effects on reading comprehension of reflective EFL young learners?

To answer the third question, as shown in table 5, regarding the results of independent t-test, p is smaller than alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$), therefore there is a significant difference between post-test scores of reflective group and control group. It is concluded that utilizing visual scaffolding techniques has an effect on reflective students' reading comprehension.

Table 5: Results of independent t-test of post-test scores of reflective and control groups

Group	Mean Difference	DF	t-value	p-value
Reflective	48.40	48	-3.07	0.003
Control	44.12			

Q4: Which one is more influenced by utilizing visual scaffolding, impulsive young learners or reflective ones?

To answer the fourth question ,as seen in table 6 and regarding the results of the independent t-test , it is observed that there is a significant difference between impulsive and reflective groups ($p < 0.05$). In other words, the effect of utilizing visual scaffolding on reflective group is more than impulsive group. So, all null hypotheses were rejected.

Table 6: Results of t-test for mean of post-test scores of impulsive and reflective groups

Group	Mean	DF	t-value	p-value
Impulsive	45.48	48	-2.40	0.020
Reflective	48.40			

By rejecting the first hypothesis, it was concluded that visual scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension. This is, to a great extent, in line with Hogan and Pressley (1997) study in which the researchers found a significant positive relationship between scaffolded instruction and answering the follow-up questions after reading a text.

The three next hypotheses were related to students' learning style. The findings of this part of study seeking the effect of impulsivity and reflectivity on responding to scaffolding techniques are consistent with those carried out by Morgan (1997). In mentioned study, results indicate that reflective students are more affected by visual techniques. Concerning the effect of visual scaffolding on reflective learners, the finding is consistent with some researchers' view (Clarck & Roof, 1988; Salmani, 2006) that reflective learners perform better than impulsive ones in learning tasks that require analysis and attention to details, like reading .

On the whole, the findings of the present study supported the findings of Sudzina(1993), Abu Romman (2005) researches. They reported that the overall language learning can be enhanced when students' cognitive style is matched with the teaching methods. They are also consistent with Daoud's (2008) claim that the only factor affecting individuals' language learning is matching instruction with learners' cognitive style. How ever the findings of the present study is not in line with El-Koumy's (2001) study which showed that students' achievement in reading comprehension increases when there is a mismatch between learners' cognitive style and teaching method. Furthermore, it should be born in mind that the contradictory findings of some studies regarding the effectiveness of utilizing scaffolding techniques can be due to the fact that learners' other individual differences have been neglected in most of these studies.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the present study was supposed to answer four questions about the effect of utilizing visual scaffolding on impulsive and reflective young EFL learners' reading comprehension. Before the outset of the study, four null hypotheses were developed. The results of the study revealed that using visual scaffolding has a positive effect on reading comprehension of young students in general, then judging by students' learning style it was observed that reflective students' reading comprehension is more influenced by utilizing visual scaffolding than impulsive ones, which is in line with the study done by Collier and Combs (2003) on adult learners. The findings seem to have important implications for L2 teachers. If they know and learn more about different kinds of scaffolding, visual in particular, as well as different learning styles, they can change and adapt their teaching procedures to the needs of the learners more effectively.

Limitations of the study

The technique requires the teacher to give up control as fading occurs, but as this research is taking place in kid's classes, giving up control is not fully implementable. Scaffolding is time-consuming. Teachers might encounter lack of sufficient time due to institutional restrictions. Teachers may be occupied by daily teaching activities - has to teach a course book, therefore she will devote only a part of class time to scaffolding programme. As a result, the face-to-face teacher scaffolding to weaker students might not be possible every session.

Topic selection can not be broad, due to learners' low level of general knowledge. Although this study aims at studying the impact of teacher's visual scaffolding and its effects on students' subsequent drafts, the results of this study cannot be generalized because of the small number of the participants. Only 55 males and females 10-12 year-old students, will be enrolled from a private English institute, the sample might not be representative of the target population of L2 elementary students.

REFERENCES

- Applebee, A.N., & Langer, J. (1983). *Instructional scaffolding: Reading and writing as natural language activities*. Language Arts, 60(2), 168-175.
- August, D., Hakuta, K. (Eds) (1997). *Improving schooling for language minority children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Beed, P. L., Hawkins, E. M., & Roller, C. M. (1991). *Moving learners toward independence: The power of scaffolded instruction*. The Reading Teacher, 44, 648-655.
- Bransford, John, Ann Brown, and Rodney Cocking, eds. (2000). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Benson, B. (1997). *Scaffolding* (Coming to Terms). English Journal, 86(7), 126-127.
- Greene, L. R. (1972). "Psychological Differentiation and Social Structure." *Journal of Social Psychology*, 109:79-85.
- Herrell, A. L., & Jordan, M. (2012). *50 strategies for teaching English language learners* (4th ed.). Columbus: Pearson.

- Hogan, K., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (1997). *Scaffolding student learning: Instructional approaches and issues*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline.
- Joy, M. R. (1995). *Learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom* Heinle & Heinle Publishers., P 15, 16, 17.
- Kame'enui, E. J., Carnine, D. W., Dixon, R. C., Simmons, D. C., & Coyne, M. D. (2002). *Effective teaching strategies that accommodate diverse learners* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Lange, V. L. (2002). *Instructional scaffolding*. Retrieved on September 25, 2007 from <http://condor.admin.ccny.cuny.edu/~group4/Cano/Cano%20Paper.doc>.
- Maloch, B. (1990). Scaffolding student talk : One teacher's role in literature discussion groups. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37 , 94-112.
- Morgan, H. (1997). *Cognitive Styles and Classroom Learning*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Pressley, M., Hogan, K., Wharton-McDonald, R., Mistretta, J., & Ettenberger, S. (1996). *The challenges of instructional scaffolding: The challenges of instruction that supports student thinking*. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 11(3), 138-146.
- Pressley, M., Hogan, K., Wharton-McDonald, R., Mistretta, J., & Ettenberger, S. (1996). The challenges of instructional scaffolding: The challenges of instruction that supports student thinking. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 11(3), 138-146.
- Reichgelt, H., Shadbolt, N., Paskiewicz, T., Wood, D., & Wood, H. (1993). *Implementing more effective tutoring systems*. *Prospects for Artificial Intelligence*. (pp. 239-249). Amsterdam: IOS Press.
- Rodgers, A., & Rodgers, E. M. (2004). *Scaffolding literacy instruction : Strategies for K-4 classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann.
- Salkind, N. J., & Wright, J. (1977). "The Development of Reflection-Impulsivity and Cognitive Efficiency." *Human Development*, 20, 377-387
- Tokoro, M., & Steels, E. L. (2003). *The future of learning: Issue and Prospects*. Netherlands: IOS Press.
- Verenikina, I. (1998). *Understanding scaffolding and the ZPD in educational research*. Retrieved March 12, 2004 from <http://www.aare.edu.au/03pap/ver03682.pdf>.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society : The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press.
- Witkin, H. A., & Goodenough, D. (1981). *Cognitive Styles: Essence and Origins*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Woods, D. , Bruner, J. S. & Ross, G. (1979). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 17 , 89-100
- Zhao, R., & Orey, M. (1999). *The scaffolding process: Concepts, features, and empirical studies*. Unpublished manuscript. University of Georgia.

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN METADISCOURSE MARKERS AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Bahador Sadeghi

*Department of foreign language, college of Humanities, Takestan Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Takestan, Iran*

Pejman Javanmardi

*Department of foreign language, college of Humanities, Takestan Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Takestan, Iran*

ABSTRACT

By increasing people who speak and learn English, it is necessary to do research in different skills of this language. Although extensive studies have been done in reading and writing; the share of listening is tiny. This poor share would be clear enough when our focus goes to metadiscourse markers and their impact on listening comprehension, so this study's aim was investigating the impact of these markers on listening comprehension. To do so, 240 English as a foreign language (EFL) learners through administering a proficiency test (TOEFL) were selected and divided into two levels of low and high language proficiency. Sixteen listening tasks-eight for each level-were selected based on the number of metadiscourse markers and also their readability values. So as to test the impact of metadiscourse markers on listening comprehension Independent Samples T-test was utilized. The results showed that metadiscourse markers had a positive impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners at both levels. In fact, not only learners but also teachers can benefit from metadisocurse markers as failitative devices to ease the process of understanding of English, a language which learning it is a must in today's world.

KEYWORDS: Metadiscourse, Metadiscourse markers, Listening comprehension, Language proficiency

INTRODUCTION

Discourse is the communication that happens in a specific context. For example, we can talk about the discourse of science, legal discourse, and so on (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 7); however, it is not the whole story. Crismore (1985) believes that discourse has two levels: *primary and metadiscourse*. Primary discourse transfers just the information about subject matters to the audiences and it does not have any comments by the author, whereas another level of discourse which is called metadiscourse annexes another proposition to the message, in fact, despite prepositional meaning, an author tries to convey his thoughts, personalities and attitudes by this level of discourse. An example of primary discourse is: *The test is so difficult* and an example of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: *My idea is that this test is so difficult*.

Metadiscourse has been broadly defined as "discourse about discourse" (Vande Kopple, 1985, p. 83) or narrowly as "the language used to express the author's explicit awareness and management of the discourse as process; which includes awareness and of the organization of the text, of the participants of the discourse process: the reader and the self, and of the author's attitude toward the discourse process" (Burneikaite, 2008, p. 39).

Furthermore, Vande kopple (1985) gives the broad definition to metadiscourse and mentions that metadiscourse transfers *interpersonal* and *textual* meaning. Interpersonal metadiscourse assists authors to show their attitudes, personalities and thoughts toward what is being transferred by them, whereas textual ones "helps writers relate and connect bits of ideational material within a text and helps the text makes sense in a particular situation for readers" (Crismore & Abdollehzadeh, 2010, p. 196).

On the other hand, Crismore (1985) has divided metadiscourse into two types: *informational* and *attitudinal*. Informational metadiscourse is "explicit rhetorical devices that signal the presence of an author" (p. 12). In fact, informational metadiscourse makes the statements clear to the readers and helps them know more about the author's personality, attitude and so on. An example of this kind of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: "I am arguing that it is not progress to produce more and more goods". However, attitudinal metadiscourse is "rhetorical means that signal the author's attitude about the subject matter" (p. 12). As a matter of fact, these devices tell us about the attitude of the author toward the content. An example of this kind of metadiscourse is the underlined parts of this sentence: "It is possible that it is not progress to be the biggest or go the fastest" (p. 12). In fact, the purpose of communication is not just transferring information. The speaker/writer not only wants to send the message but also tries to facilitate his ideas and purposes toward what is being transferred, so metadiscourse can help speaker/writer shape messages to make them clear enough for his recipients.

An investigation into metadiscourse brings us to old Roman written texts, poetry and old Greek as well (e. g., Plautus, Virgil, Ovid, & Aristotle). This means that from the past, writers have been fond of using metadiscourse in order to facilitate the process of understanding for their audiences. Besides, the importance of using metadiscourse has been discussed by many scholars in different cultures, genres, and disciplines because they have believed in using metadiscourse as facilitative tools for better understanding of author's intention (Crismore & Hill, 1988).

Vande Kopple (1985) believes that it is obligatory to us to write on two levels of discourse. He says: "On one level we supply information about the subject of our text and on the level of metadiscourse, we help our readers organize, interpret, evaluate, and react to such material" (p. 8). To Hyland (2005) metadiscourse is important in teaching and learning language and students should be familiarized with metadiscourse because learning metadiscourse helps them know that language has different functions and there are different possible interactions in different situations. They would know that a text is not simply a text but it has addresser, addressee and a text itself, in fact, all these elements should be taken into account for communication. Turning to listening, it has been claimed that metadiscourse markers help students understand better (Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Jung, 2003; Smit, 2006; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Hashemi

et al. 2012; Tajabadi & Taghizadeh, 2014). In the field of reading and writing, many studies have been done to test the impact of metadiscourse markers but the share of studies on listening comprehension in this case is poor. The impact of discourse markers on listening, first of all, tested by Hron et al. (1985, cited in Jung, 2003). They tested the impact of discourse signaling cues in L1 and concluded that these cues result in better understanding. Bearing this finding in mind, the researchers hypothesized that these cues can also help the L2 listeners.

To test this hypothesis, Chaudron and Richards (1986) were the pioneers. They classified discourse markers into two parts of macro and micromarkers. To them, macromarkers “signal the macro-structure of a lecture through highlighting major information and the sequencing or importance of that information” and micromarkers “indicate links between sentences within the lecture, or which function as fillers” (p. 116). They concluded that macromarkers help listeners more than micromarkers.

Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) also investigated the role of micromarkers on listening comprehension and claimed that they can help the listeners too. The lack of support for the results of previous studies, forced Jung (1999) to test the impact of discourse cues more empirically. His study demonstrated that these cues help listeners because a group that listened to a lecture with discourse markers recalled more information than a group without facing discourse cues.

Four years later, Jung (2003) again conducted a study aimed at investigating the impact of discourse markers on L2 listening comprehension. Through the use of language proficiency test 80 Korean learners were selected and divided into two groups of signaled and nonsignaled. Two lectures, one with discourse markers and the other one in which these markers had been deleted were given to both groups. Signaled group received a lecture with discourse markers and nonsignaled group received the next version. In comparison with nonsignaled group, the signaled group recalled more information.

Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007) also studied the role of discourse markers. To do their study, they selected three texts from textbooks and asked an educated native speaker to give a lecture on them (some discourse markers were included in this lecture), this version was used as an original lecture and in the next one, those discourse markers were deleted. Two other experienced native speakers were asked to check these two lectures to confirm their authenticity. 72 intermediate students were selected by using of TOEFL proficiency test and randomly divided into two groups. One group received the original lecture and the next one received the modified lecture. The result showed that a group which listened to a lecture with discourse markers had better comprehension.

Hashemi et al. (2012) also tested the influence of metadiscourse markers on listening comprehension of EFL learners. By a derived form of a proficiency test of TOEFL, 120 students at intermediate and advance levels were selected and divided into 4 groups, each with 30 members. Using a native-like voice to record, five monologues from section four of IELTS were got and assumed as original listening texts and deleting their metadiscourses provided other five

monologues. At each level control groups received modified monologues and experimental groups listened to the original ones. Although no noticeable difference was seen at the intermediate level; the performance of high proficient learners on listening tasks with metadiscourse markers was better than those in a control group.

In a recent study, Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014) attempted to study the impact of discourse cues on listening comprehension as well. Like Chaudron and Richards' study, they examined the impact of micro, macro and a combination of micro and macro-markers. The difference of their study from Chaudron and Richards's comes back to their focus on the function of markers for selecting micro and macro markers not the length of them. 105 upper-intermediate adult L2 learners through a test of proficiency were selected and made the final participants. 3 expository reading texts from upper-intermediate level were selected and three sets of tests for each, with micro, the next with macro and the last with a combination of both were prepared and then a native speaker was asked to record them. In contrast to Chaurdon and Richards (1986) they found that micro markers had more facilitative roles rather than macro markers.

What was explained as studies in the realm of discourse markers and listening comprehension suffer from fundamental problems. Generally, the faults of discussed studies can be categorized into four areas. The first one comes back to detemining the level of language proficiency. Except Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995), Eslami and Eslami-Rasekh (2007), and Hashemi et al. (2012), other studies such as Smith (2006) and Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014) did not utilise standardized tests of language proficiency and some like Chaudron and Richards (1986) and Jung (2003) just relied on listening section of a standardized proficiency test to put the participants at correct level. Neither the first and second group nor the third were not successful in detemining the correct level of participants because the first group just paid attention to the language proficincy level and neglected the level of listening comprehension and the third group determined the participants' litsening comprehension ability without detemining their lanaguge proficiency level. Needless to say, calculating both is a need to listening comprehension studies.

The seconnd category which can be discussed is using authentic materials. Except Jung (2003) who used lectures in which because of deleting discourse markers they are also unnatural non of the other studies used authentic materials. What were used were read-aloud texts which were got from reading books.

The third category which can put the findings of above mentioned studies aside is definitely related to implementing and deleting discourse markers. All mentioned studies suffer from this point and it is clear that this policy removes naturalness, so it can be clamied that all studies which have been done so far suffer from unnaturalness. The last but not certainley the least, calculating text difficulty (readability) is another major fault of discussed studies. Non of them except Tajabadi and Taghizadeh (2014), which is somehow vague, considered this important point and it is not clear that utilised texts in other studies were appropriate for the aprticiapants or not. The concept of metadiscourse and offering it to the world of English language teaching and also Applied Linguistics has been an attempt to say that communication and also language is not just exchanging of information but it gets involved in the personality, ideas, and thoughts of those

people who do the act of communication (Hyland, 2005). In sum, using of metadiscourse differs, based on rhetorical context, and as Crismore (1985) says; these means can be utilized on the level of word, phrase, or clause and can signal the covert or overt presence of an author. What is clear is that metadiscourse markers play an important role in language because they facilitate and help our understanding.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on above mentioned studies and also their inconsistencies this study addressed the following question:

1. Do metadiscourse markers have any significant impact on the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students?

And the null hypothesis was:

1. Metadiscourse markers have no important impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The total number of participants who took part in this study was 300 Iranian EFL students at both BA and MA levels from three universities in Sanandaj (the capital city of Kurdistan province in the west of Iran) namely: Kurdistan, Payame Noor, and Islamic Azad University. Utilising a proficiency test of TOEFL, participants' levels of language proficiency were specified and 240 students selected to both levels. To determine the listening tasks' reliability and validity, 120 out of 240 students were used and to answer the research question, the next 120 students made the final participants. What's more, in order to be sure about participants' listening comprehension level, the **researchers** used one-way ANOVA for the scores got from listening section of the used TOEFL. The results showed no great difference among selected students for the study.

Materials

The first instrument which was used in this study was a proficiency test of TOEFL (2003) consisting of 140 items: Listening: 50 items; structure: 40 items; and reading comprehension passages: 30 items. This test was utilized to determine the levels of language proficiency of the participants.

The second instrument which was utilized was sixteen listening tasks, eight for each level. These were taken from different editions of TOEFL tests including PBT and IBT editions. The first criterion for selecting these listening tasks was the number of metadiscourse markers and the second criterion was their readability values.

Procedure

So as to do this study, 240 students out of 300 were needed. To gain this aim, a language proficiency test, i.e., TOEFL (2003) was given to the total participants. The criteria for assigning the participants to high and low level was the Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of scores

obtained from the administration of aforementioned TOEFL test. Those who scored +1SD above the Mean were assigned to high level group and those who scored -1SD below the Mean were assigned to low level group. After analyzing the data more than 40 students were discarded because they fell between -1SD and +1SD. The total number of participants who met the criteria at this phase of research was 240. Then participants were divided into two 120-member groups. The first group included the participants of high level of language proficiency and the second group included the participants of low level of language proficiency. 120 out of 240 students were selected for the main phase of the study in which the participants of high level of language proficiency were randomly divided into two 30-member groups, and the participants of low level of language proficiency were also randomly divided into two 30-member groups. Furthermore, 120 students out of the above population (240) were selected for the purpose of establishing reliability and validity of the tests.

In the next step, sixteen listening tasks-eight for each level- were taken from different editions of TOEFL tests including PBT and IBT editions. The first criterion for selecting these listening tasks was the number of metadiscourse markers. Over 50 listening tasks were meticulously investigated and their metadiscourse markers were identified. The number of their metadiscourse markers was between 0 to 14 so that those listening tasks containing less than 7 metadiscourse markers were considered as listening tasks with low metadiscourse markers and those listening tasks which had 7 or more than 7 metadiscourse markers were considered as listening tasks with high metadiscourse markers. It is noteworthy to say that the selected taxonomy of metadiscourse for this study was Crismore's because of its being explicit and comprehensive.

The second criterion for selecting these listening tasks was their readability. Using Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level their readability was calculated. Then the Mean value and the Standard Deviation were also calculated. Those listening tasks which had readability values over +1SD were considered suitable for the students of high level and those listening tasks which had readability values less than -1SD were considered appropriate for the students of low level of language proficiency.

Since these listening tasks were taken from different editions of TOEFL, calculating the validity and reliability of them was a must. For this purpose, 120 out of 240 students were selected based on the criterion used to select the main participant for the main phase of the study, and were given these listening tasks. To estimate the reliability of the test, Cronbach Alpha method of estimating reliability was used. Cronbach's Alpha estimated the reliability of the whole items as 0.823, as displayed by table 1. The reliability of each of tests was also examined as follows: Test 1 (14 items): 0.749, Test 2 (15 items): 0.752. Test 3 (14 items): 0.781, Test 4 (11 items): 0.723.

Table 1: Reliability of the test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.823	54

To estimate the concurrent validity of the test, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used between the test of pilot study and the final test. The concurrent validity of the test is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: The correlation between the test of pilot study and the final test

		the test of pilot study	the final test
The test of pilot study	Pearson Correlation	1	.869^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
The final test	Pearson Correlation	.869 ^{**}	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

^{**}. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Farhady et al. (2003) suggested, “validity and reliability coefficients below .50 are considered low, .50 to .75 are considered moderate, and .75 to .90 or above are considered high” (p. 154). Therefore, the test used in this study had high reliability ($r = 0.82$) and high validity (0.86). Finally, after establishing the validity and reliability of the tests, they were given to the main participants of the study in the following way:

HH: participants of high level with high metadiscourse markers listening tasks

HL: participants of high level with low metadiscourse markers listening tasks

LH: participants of low level with high metadiscourse markers listening tasks

LL: participants of low level with low metadiscourse markers listening tasks

Design of the Study

Indeed selecting the group at both levels of this study was done randomly, however, the factors aside from language proficiency and also metadiscourse markers which might have affected the results were not controlled. In this case, participants got no treatment, so a controlled design named Ex Post Facto Design was utilized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To testify the truth or falsity of the research hypothesis, the relevant data were analyzed. Table 3 shows Mean and Standard Deviation of two types of metadiscourse.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of the two types of metadiscourse

	metadiscourse	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Listening comprehension scores	high	60	11.23	1.442	.186
	low	60	8.47	1.535	.198

Table 3 represents the Mean and Standard Deviation for high metadiscourses ($M=11.23$, $SD=1.44$) and low metadiscourses ($M=8.47$, $SD=1.53$). The total number of students participated in the study was 120. On the other hand, the results obtained from the Independent Sample T-test revealed the significant difference between metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners.

Table 4: Independent samples T-test for metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
listening comprehension scores	Equal variances assumed	.90	.342	10.1	118	.000	2.767	.272	2.228	3.305
	Equal variances not assumed			10.1	117	.000	2.767	.272	2.228	3.305

Independent Sample T-test offers two lines as displayed by Table 4. With reference to the Table, the Sig. value is larger than .05, therefore, the first line should be followed which refers to Equal variances assumed. That is to say, since in this table, the significant value is .342 which is larger than .05; the first line is used to report findings. To discover if there is a significant difference between metadiscourse markers and listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students, the researcher checked column labeled Sig. (2-tailed). Since the Sig. (2-tailed) value is *less* than .05 which is .000, then there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the metadiscourses. Thus, the research question of the study was rejected.

To determine the effect size between the groups, the researcher used eta squared, as the most commonly used formula. Eta squared can range from 0 to 1 and represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent (group) variable. SPSS does not provide eta squared values for t-tests. Therefore, the researcher calculated it manually. The procedure for calculating eta squared is provided below.

The formula for eta squared = $t^2 / t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2)$

As the table shows, in this study, $t=2.21$. Therefore:

$$(10.1)^2 / (10.1)^2 + (60+58) = 102.01/220.01 = \mathbf{0.463}$$

The guidelines (proposed by Cohen, 1992) for interpreting this value are:

.01=small effect,

.06=moderate effect,

.14=large effect.

Therefore, the effect size of .463 is *large*.

CONCLUSION

Bearing the results in mind, we concluded that the participants at high and low levels of language proficiency benefited from the presence of metadiscourse markers in the listening tasks which were given to them. This is in line with Crismore and Abdollehzadeh (2010) who believe

“learners at different language proficiency levels benefit from effective metadiscourse instruction and awareness-raising in their comprehension and written production” (p. 214). So, the null hypothesis which states that metadiscourse markers have no important impact on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL students was rejected. Findings of this study confirm (Crismore, 1985; Crismore & Hill, 1988; Rubin, 1994; Dastgoshadeh, 2001; Jung 2003; Smit, 2006; Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Parvaresh, 2007; Crismore & Abdollezadeh, 2010) who unanimously believe that metadiscourse markers facilitate the process of comprehension and assist students to get the intended meaning easier.

Giving a further explanation, the presence of metadiscourse markers in listening tasks makes them more understandable and helps the listeners understand the propositional content of the listening tasks without expanding the propositions. As Rubin (1994) asserts, discourse signaling cues are one of those effectual factors which influences on listening comprehension and must be taken into account. This statement is also confirmed by Dastgoshadeh (2001) and Parvaresh (2007) who say, knowledge of metadiscourse can compensate learner’s inadequate pragmalinguistic competence and elevate their comprehension.

Additionally, the benefits of metadiscourse markers are not just limited to the students and learners. By teaching metadiscourse markers and their functions to students, teachers help the students grasp the intended meanings. Teaching metadiscourse can be a primary teaching activity in class due to the significant roles of these elements in breaking the rigid blocks formed by propositions and moving beyond what is written in surface structure. As Smit (2006) says, teaching metadiscourse help students understand and communicate better.

Furthermore, material developers while preparing listening tasks, writing textbooks, and also preparing class materials can benefit from metadiscourse markers too. In fact, they can consider the crucial roles of metadiscourse markers by providing the students with opportunities to make them aware of metadiscourse, different functions of metadiscourse, and the way they are employed by lecturers/writers to convey specific intentions. Lastly, as Mauranen (2010) says, metadiscourse “is a distinctive characteristics of language, ubiquitous in our speech, and it deserves close attention from linguists.” (p. 18). So, accentuating on this important facet of our speech is a must because it is definitely helpful to facilitate the process of understanding of English which is a wish to everyone.

REFERENCES

- Bloor, M., & Bloor, T. (2007). *The Practice of Critical Discourse Analysis: An Introduction*. Great Britain: Hodder Education.
- Burneikaite, N. (2008). Metadiscourse in linguistic master’s theses in English L1 and L2. *Kalbotyra*, 59(3), 38-47.
- Chaudron, C., & Richards, J. C. (1986). The effect of discourse markers on the comprehension of lectures. *Applied Linguistics*, 7(2), 113-127.
- Crismore, A. (1985). The case for a rhetorical perspective on learning from texts: Exploring metadiscourse. *Technical Report*, 342, 1-31.

- Crismore, A., & Hill, K. T. (1988). *The interaction of metadiscourse and anxiety in determining children's learning of social studies textbook materials*. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, xx(3), 249-268.
- Crismore, A., & Abdollezadeh, E. (2010). A review of recent metadiscourse studies: The Iranian context. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 9(2), 195-219.
- Dastgoshadeh, A. (2001). The relationship between the use of metadiscourse markers in texts and reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners at different levels of language proficiency. Unpublished master's thesis, Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran.
- Eslami, Z., & Eslami-Rasekh A. (2007). Discourse markers in academic lectures. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(1).
- Farhady, H. Jafarpour, J., & Birjandi, P. (2003). *Testing language skills: From theory to practice*. Tehran: SAMT Publications.
- Flowerdew, J., & Tauroza, S. (1995). The effect of discourse markers on second language lecture comprehension. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 17, 435-458.
- Hashemi, M. R. Khodabakhshzade, H., & Elahi Shirvan, M. (2012). The Effect of Metadiscourse on EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(3), 452-457.
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse exploring interaction in writing*. London/New York: Continuum.
- Jung, E. H. (1999). The evidence of discourse-marking devices in second language comprehension. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, Stamford, CT.
- Jung, E. H. (2003). The role of discourse signaling cues in second language listening comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, 87(iv), 562-577.
- Mauranen, A. (2010). Discourse Reflexivity - A Discourse Universal? The Case of ELF. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 9(2), 13-40.
- Parvaresh, V. (2007). Metadiscourse and reading comprehension: The effects of language and proficiency. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.
- Phillips, D. (2003). *Longman preparation course for the TOEFL test: The paper test*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Rubin, J. (1994). A review of second language listening comprehension research. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(ii), 199-221.
- Smit, T. C. (2006). Listening comprehension in academic lectures: A focus on the role of discourse markers. Unpublished master's thesis, University of South Africa, South Africa.
- Tajabadi, F., & Taghizadeh, M. (2014). The impact of discourse signaling devices on the listening comprehension of L2 learners. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 10(2). 73-88.
- Vande Kopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition Communication*, 36(1), 82-93.

THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT TEACHING OF COMMON ERRORS ON EFL LEARNERS' WRITING ACCURACY

Mahza Jalilzadeh

Department of English Language, Kurdistan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

Vahid Gholami

Department of English Language, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

Mahza Jalilzadeh1 Email: moony11322@YAHOO.COM, vahidgholami20@gmail.com2, adastgoshadeh@gmail.com3

ABSTRACT

With the rapid expansion of technology, globalization and cyber-communication, the focus on writing accuracy in English as the lingua franca has recently been emphasized. The explicit teaching of grammar to enhance students' writing skills has been revived to tackle the issue. The present study, as an initial attempt in the context of Iran, examines the role of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors in improving writing accuracy. In so doing, a pool of 30 students who are studying English at Kimia English Institute participated in an experimental study. The study aimed at: 1) examining the effect of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors on the EFL learners' writing accuracy studying at an English Institute in Sannandaj, 2) investigating the significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and 'simple past vs. present perfect', and 3) exploring the learners' reactions towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy. The results obtained from the study, using Independent Sample T-test, One-way ANOVA and Semi-structured Interview rejected the null hypotheses of the study, and therefore, teaching explicitly common errors proved to be effective in students' development and among four grammatical rules, students had a better performance on tenses of English following the treatment phase of the study. A further implication of the study is for language teachers to raise student' awareness regarding the common errors and help them notice the common errors in order not commit the common errors but apply the grammatical rules correctly in their writing.

KEYWORDS: Explicit Teaching, Accuracy, Common Errors

INTRODUCTION

Explicit teaching is a kind of instructional approach to language teaching in which the focus is on form. It is intended to give students explicit instruction about the forms and raise their

awareness. It moves systematically from extensive teacher input and little student responsibility to total student responsibility and minimal teacher involvement. So the last and most important aim of the study is to help students to reach self-dependency and self-correction stage. This study intended to shed light on the efficiency of explicit teaching especially when the focus was on the EFL learners' most occurring grammatical errors in writing.

Those who are concerned with language teaching and learning have always tried to find alternative methods and approaches to increase quality second language acquisition (SLA). In order to fulfill the above-mentioned goals many linguists and researchers interested in topics like EFL, raised awareness and consciousness and introduced explicit instructions and feedback in order to increase students' accuracy and fluency in language skills. Writing has been one of the most different skills for learners to develop being a recursive process. It takes several times for learners to revise their writings before submitting their final drafts (White & MacGovern, 1994).

Received feedback and critical comments from teachers help language learners breakthrough in the process of composing an essay with the least errors as well as the maximum accuracy and clarity. Therefore, the necessity of teachers' support and frequent monitoring regarding how to fulfill different writing assignments correctly is of importance from educational point of view (Cremes Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987; Krol, 2001).

Noting that grammar teaching is usually treated separate from the teaching of writing, this study presents one of the first attempts to use explicit focus on forms instruction to increase Iranian EFL learners writing accuracy. The study's focus is on students most common writing errors and its aim is to help students overcome these problematic forms and also concerns the extended use of explicit feedback and awareness raising activities in order to fulfill this aim.

Theoretical background

Continuing in the tradition of more than 2000 years of debate regarding whether grammar should be a primary focus of language instructions, should be eliminated entirely or should be subordinated to meaning-focused use of target language, the need for grammar instruction is once again attracting the attention of second language acquisition researchers and teachers. This focus has been motivated in part by debates in the field of cognitive psychology over the role of explicit vs. Implicit language learning and whether such learning occurs through conscious manipulation of information or primarily through unconscious process when people are exposed to language input (Bialystok, 1990, 1994; N. Ellis, 1994; Rober, 1967, 1989, 1993). Theoretically the debate was represented by Krashen's (1981) distinction between conscious learning and unconscious acquisition of teaching approaches where the focus is primarily on meaning-focused communication and grammar is not addressed so there is reconsideration of grammar teaching in L2 classes as the result of the evidence of the positive effects of grammar instruction. This evidence comes from a large number of laboratory classrooms based studies as well as extensive reviews of studies on the effects of instruction over the past 20 years (R. Ellis, 1985, 1990, 1994, 2001, 2002a, Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991; Long, 1983, 1988, 1991). As

the result from focused instruction (FFI) is taken as an alternative that has been received much attention recently.

The term Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) is defined by Ellis (2001, p. 2) as any planned or incidental instruction activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form. It served as a generic term for analyzing teaching on form, focus on forms, correction feedback/error correction, and negotiation of form. Research shows that traditional instruction on isolated grammar forms are insufficient to promote learners' acquisition (Long, 1991; Long & Robinson 1998), yet purely communicative approaches have been found inadequate for developing high levels of TL accuracy (Harley & Swain, 1984; Swain 1985, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Two general solutions have been proposed in the research literature: one is to encourage the students to attend to target forms by noticing them in input (Schmidt, 1990, 1993; Doughty and Williams 1998a; Ellis 1994a, 2001a), thus assisting in their processing. The other is to provide learners with opportunities to produce output containing target forms, again enabling learners to notice the gap between their current TL ability and the correct use of the target form (Swain, 1985, 2005).

One of the first classifications that has been widely cited and has had a considerable impact on our understanding of the concept of FFI, is the distinction that Long (1991) made between focus on form and focus on forms. FoFs according to Long (1991;2000; Long & Robinson, 1998) is based on traditional structure and synthetic approaches to language teaching (Wilkins, 1976) in which language is segmented into discrete items and is then presented to the learners in an isolated and de-contextualized manner. FoRs on the other hand involves drawing the learners' attention to linguistic forms, as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning and or communication (Long, 1991, p. 46).

Error correction is a response either to the content of what a student has produced or to the form of the utterance (Richards & Lockharts, 1996, p. 188). As Truscot (1996, cited in Ferris, 2003, p. 42) states, 'the correction of grammatical errors can help students improve their ability to write accurately'. In addition, numerous researches indicate the importance of correction feedback which impacts learners' writing accuracy. (Lalande, 1982; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Robber, 2001).

In terms of output as FFI, Swain (1985,1995, 2005) emphasized that importance of production to develop learners' awareness of the gap between current TL production ability and the TL. Input enhancement has also been used to develop learners' awareness of target forms. Structures have been made salient through high-lighting, underlining or other treatments (Folos, 1993, 1994; Williams & Evans, 1998; Nassaji Press). The term consciousness raising has been widely used in SLA research; in formal instruction it was frequently used to refer to any attempt to focus learners' attention on a specific target structure. Several recent literature reviews provide an overview concerning the role of a number of related concepts such as conscious, awareness, attention, noticing and focus on form in second language learning (Doughty & Williams, 1998; Long & Robinson, 1998; Norris & Ortega, 2000, Spada, 1997). As this literature show, a considerable amount of work suggests there is a positive role for some kind of attention to form

that is either through explicit teaching of grammar and explicit error correction, or at least through indirect means such as input enhancement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to find appropriate answers to the following questions:

- 1) Do teaching grammatical errors have any significant effect on EFL learners' writing accuracy?
- 2) Is there any significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to' for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and 'simple past vs. present perfect'?
- 3) How do the learners react towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A pool of 30 female students participated in the study at Kimia English Institute in Sannandaj, Kordestan province. They were EFL learners, and all of them had studied English Conversation Courses for three years in the institute. They had two sessions of English per week, with an English instructor. In order to make sure about the homogeneity of the subjects in terms of their language proficiency, the teacher included those students who had already passed Interchange Series (Intro & 1) by Richards, Hull and Proctor (2005). Moreover, they were asked to participate in Nelson Proficiency test which includes 50 items consisting of vocabulary, structure, and close passages in multiple choice format. Students whose score were one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected for the study. The mean of the scores was 30.80 and the standard deviation was 12.53. Therefore, students whose scores were between 18 and 42 were selected to participate in the study. Out of 36 students, 30 students had scores between 18 and 42. The learners were randomly assigned to one condition: Experimental group and control group and each group had 15 students.

Instrumentation

The first major instrument used in the study was Nelson English Language Proficiency Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1978) (Appendix A) for the purpose of making the sample homogeneous in terms of language proficiency level. This multiple-choice test contained cloze passages, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. The reliability coefficient of this proficiency test was high, Cronbach Alpha = 0.82 (Hashemian, Roohani&Fadaei, 2012). The researcher also determined the reliability of the test using Cronbach Alpha as 0.81 that is acceptable. As Farhadi, Jafarpur and Birjandi (1994) suggested, "validity and reliability coefficients below .50 are considered low, .50 to .75 are considered moderate, and .75 to .90 or above are considered high" (p. 154). Therefore, the test used in this study had high reliability ($r = 0.81$).

The second major instrument distributed to the participants to assess their grammatical knowledge was from the Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test, version A and version B developed by Lesley, Hanson and Zyukowski/ Faust (2005). Version A was used as the pre-test and Version B was used as the post-test. This placement test contains three main sections including listening, reading, and language use. The section used here was language use and from this section, the questions that referred to Interchange intro, 1 and 2 (units 1 -4) were taken out from Version A by the researcher and distributed to the students to measure their grammatical knowledge. As for the post-test, questions referred to interchange 2 (unit 1-4) were taken out from Version B. The reliability and validity of the test were already measured by the authors of the test and were reported high including 0.87 and 0.81, respectively. Moreover, the researcher calculated the reliability of tests as 0.83 and 0.78. For ease of calculation, students' scores on pre-test and post-test were calculated from 50.

Procedure

Before Mediation Phase

Since the study was experimental research, the researcher, first, divided the learners into two equal groups and each group included 15 female EFL learners. The learners were required to take the conversation course, and the researcher, as the teacher of both classes, introduced Interchange 2, written by Richards, Hull and Proctor (2005). The course included 15 sessions to teach the first four units of the textbook. The textbook contained 16 units, and each 4 units was worked during a single term with the learners. The class started in December, 2013 during which the learners were required to attend the class two sessions per week and each session lasted 1:30 minutes.

One week prior to the beginning of the treatment phase, during the first session, the pretest was administered to the two groups during regular class time in order to determine their grammatical knowledge. The test consisted of 60 question items in multiple-choice format taken from the grammar section of Interchange Objective Placement Test, Version A. Some of these items were taken from interchange 2 (Unit One to Unit Four) which the researcher intended to use in the experiment. The pre-test condition was identical in the two groups. This activity took about 40 minutes.

During Mediation Phase

The treatment phase lasted for 12 sessions during which the teacher in the two classes allocated 20 minutes of his classes to teaching writing. Each group received a different treatment, in accordance with the experimental condition it was assigned to. As for the control group, the teacher followed the regular method of teaching writing accuracy during which the learners were exposed to the grammatical rules and the grammatical rules were explained and exemplified by the teacher, and then, the students were required to complete the exercise, and finally, they were asked to write sentences and short paragraphs. The teachers corrected their writings and provided them with direct corrective feedback.

However, as for the students in experimental group, the teacher, first, presented the grammatical rules and exemplified them, and then, she taught the common errors committed by the EFL learners with respect to the grammatical item. The teacher used her previous experience regarding the common errors pertinent to the grammatical rule under study and he also already consulted with three experts who have had more than 10 years experience in teaching grammar at university and private institutes. Moreover, during the first presentation of the rules, the teachers asked the learners to write their own sentences and short paragraphs and, in this way, he collected their mistakes and errors and worked on them several times during the next session. There were four units and the teachers worked on the grammatical rule of each unit during the class hour and he finished each unit in 4 sessions. For example, as for the grammatical rule presented by the teacher regarding the use of *used to* for habitual actions, common errors by the learners were as follows:

- 1) Learners' mistake in distinguishing between *use* and *used to*: For example, the use of "Mike *use to play* hide and seek" instead of "Mike *used to play* hide and seek".
- 2) Learners' mistake in differentiating between *used to* for past actions and *be used to* for present actions: *Used to* is followed by infinitive, but *be used to* is followed by gerund. For example, "Mike *used to study* late at nights" and "Mike *is used to studying* late at nights".
- 3) Learners' mistake in using infinitive not bare infinitive after *used to*. For example, "Mike *used to read* loudly" instead of "Mike *used read* loudly".

In experimental group, the students were bombarded with the common errors practices and exercises, and they were asked to attend to the mistakes in order not to repeat the same error in their own writings. The teacher tried to help students raise their consciousness and followed the focus on error strategy. She brought some examples for the students that contained mistakes writing by students at previous term. Interchange textbooks include writing tasks apart from grammatical exercises; therefore; the teacher used the writing tasks in each unit asking students' to apply what they have learned during the class time. In control group, the teacher did not expose the students to common errors and the students were asked to learn the grammatical rules and apply them in writing tasks.

Students' mistakes mainly resulted from:

- 1) Interference from their native language, here Persian language. They made mistake in distinguishing count nouns from non-count nouns resulting from negative transfer. For example, some of the students thought that transportation is countable so that they used the sentence *few transportation* instead of *little transportation*. Therefore, the teacher paid attention to interference as teaching common errors to the students.
- 2) Insufficient application of rules in their production. They were accustomed to memorize the grammatical rules and when asked to do the writing task, they were unable to use the structure they memorized in practice accurately. Thus, the teacher engaged students in writing exercises and tasks and asked them to write as much as they could. In so doing, he assigned some assignments for them to do at home, too.

3) Lack or inadequate knowledge of collocations. They did not know the precise word combination and because of this, they made mistakes. For example, some students while doing the writing task of unit 2 (section 6) regarding the traffic problems, made collocational errors. For example, there were instances of the sentence: “The problem is that the traffic is not quick” instead of writing “The problem is that the traffic is not fast”.

The word traffic collocates with fast but not with quick. The teacher also tried to help student’s focus and notice such errors resulting from lack of collocational knowledge in her explicit teaching of common errors.

After Mediation Phase

Having finished the treatment phase, the researcher distributed the post-test containing questions regarding the first four units. The questions were in multiple-choice format and students were required to choose the correct answer from the four alternatives. The test was taken from Interchange/Passages Objective Placement Test, version B. The students were asked to participate in the test in session 14, when the teacher completed the teaching of the first four units.

Following this step, to gather data for the second research question regarding the significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules, the teacher distributed for writing tasks to the students in session 15, and asked them to write a short paragraph for each of the topic. The researcher chose the topics so as to elicit students’ grammatical knowledge with respect to the four aspects of grammatical use that she taught during the mediation phase to the experimental group.

Finally, during the last step of the study, the teacher interviewed with four students to find out their reactions towards the application of explicit teaching of common errors and its influence on their writing accuracy. In so doing, these learners were interviewed in face-to-face interaction with the researcher. They were selected based on purposive sampling so that qualitative data were collected through interviews from these four students who were in experimental group. A semi-structured interview has a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as suggested questions while, at the same time; there is openness to changes of sequences and forms of questions in order to follow up the answers given (Dörnyei, 2007).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Homogeneity of the Participants

To homogenize students with respect to their language proficiency, the researcher just included those students whose scores on Nelson Proficiency Test were one standard deviation below and above the mean.

Table 1: Nelson Proficiency Test

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		30.8056
Std. Deviation		12.53753

The mean of the scores is 30 and standard deviation is 12. Therefore, given one standard deviation above and below the mean, students whose scores obtained from Nelson Proficiency Test are between 18 and 42 are selected to take part in the study. Therefore, out of 36 students, 30 students were remained to participate in the study.

Explicit Teaching of Common Errors and Students' Performance on Writing Accuracy
Pre-test between Two Groups:

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the two groups before treatment

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test scores				
Control	15	20.33	4.337	1.120
Experimental	15	22.07	3.731	.963

Table 2 represents the mean and standard deviation for control group (M=20.33, SD=4.33) and experimental group (M=22.07, SD=3.73). The total number of students participated in the study was 30.

Table 3: Independent samples T-test for the two groups before treatment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pre-test scores	Equal variances assumed	.67	.41	-1.17	28	.251	-1.733	1.47	-4.75	1.29
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.17	27.3	.251	-1.733	1.47	-4.76	1.29

Independent Sample T-test offers two lines as displayed by Table 3. With reference to the Table, the Sig. value is larger than .05, therefore, the first line should be followed which refers to Equal variances assumed. That is to say, since in this table, the significant value is .41 which is larger than .05; the first line is used to report findings.

To figure out if there is a significant difference between the control and experimental groups, having checked the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), the researcher discovered there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the two groups. Because the value in the Sig. (2-tailed) column is more than .05 (which is .25), there is *no* significant difference between the two groups before the treatment phase.

Post-test between Two Groups

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation of the two groups after treatment

Group Statistics		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
post-test scores	Control	15	23.33	4.624	1.194
	experimental	15	27.33	3.331	.860

As displayed by Table 4, the mean and standard deviation for each of the groups differ from those of pre-test. The results obtained showed that students at experimental class ($m=27.33$) performed better than the students at controlled class ($m=23.33$).

Table 5: Independent samples T-test of the two groups after treatment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
post-test scores	Equal variances assumed	2.85	.102	-2.71	28	.011	-4.00	1.47	-7.01	-.986
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.71	25.44	.012	-4.00	1.47	-7.02	-.972

Since the Sig. value in Table 5 is larger than .05 so that the first line is used to report the data, which refers to Equal variances assumed. To discover if there is a significant difference between the two groups, we refer to the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed).

Since the Sig. (2-tailed) value is *less* than .05 which is .01, then there is a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the two groups.

In Table 5, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is .01. As this value is *less than* the required cut-off of .05, we conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores for the two classes. Thus, the first research hypothesis of the study was rejected.

Calculating the Effect Size for Independent-samples t-test

To determine the effect size between your groups, the researcher used eta squared, as the most commonly used formula. Eta squared can range from 0 to 1 and represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent (group) variable. SPSS does not provide eta squared values for t-tests. Therefore, the researcher calculated it manually. The procedure for calculating eta squared is provided below:

The formula for eta squared = $t^2 / t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2)$

As the table shows, in this study, $t=2.71$. Therefore:

$$(2.71)^2 / (2.71)^2 + (15 + 13) = 7.34/35.34 = 0.20$$

The guidelines (proposed by Cohen, 1988) for interpreting this value are:

.01=small effect,

.06=moderate effect,

.14=large effect.

Therefore, the effect size of .20 is large. It means that experimental class performed better than control class, the effect size was considerable.

Students' Performance on Writing Accuracy with Respect to Aspects of Grammatical Rules

Table 6: Mean and standard deviation of students' scores on aspects of grammatical rules

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
used to for habitual actions	15	15.80	1.320	.341
adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	15	14.73	1.387	.58
evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	15	15.80	1.146	.296
simple past vs. present perfect	15	13.27	1.387	.358
Total	60	14.90	1.654	.214

Table 6 represents the mean and standard deviation for students' scores on grammatical rules under study. The mean score of the students on *used to for habitual actions* is 15.80, that of *adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns* is 14.73, that of *evaluations and comparisons with adjectives* is 15.80 and that of *simple past vs. present perfect* is 13.27. The table also gives the number of people in each group which is 20.

Table 7: Test of Homogeneity of Variances for scores on grammatical rules

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.537	3	56	.659

Checking the significance value (Sig.) for Levene's test, since this number is *greater* than .05, the assumption of homogeneity of variance has not been violated. As Table 7 shows, the Sig. value is .659 and as this is greater than .05, the homogeneity of variance assumption is not violated.

Table 8: On-way ANOVA for scores on grammatical rules

Scores					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	64.733	3	21.578	12.500	.000
Within Groups	96.667	56	1.726		
Total	161.400	59			

Using the statistical formula of one-way between-groups ANOVA, the researcher examined the significant difference between the students' scores on grammatical rules, as measured by the Grammar Post-test. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(3, 57) = 12.50, p = .01$] (See Table 8). Therefore, the second research hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9: Post-hoc test for grammatical rules

Scores

Tukey HSD

(I) levels	(J) levels	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
used to for habitual actions	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	1.067	.480	.129
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	.000	.480	1.000
	simple past vs. present perfect	2.533*	.480	.000
adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	used to for habitual actions	-1.067	.480	.129
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	-1.067	.480	.129
	simple past vs. present perfect	1.467*	.480	.017
evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	used to for habitual actions	.000	.480	1.000
	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	1.067	.480	.129
	simple past vs. present perfect	2.533*	.480	.000
simple past vs. present perfect	used to for habitual actions	-2.533*	.480	.000
	adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns	-1.467*	.480	.017
	evaluations and comparisons with adjectives	-2.533*	.480	.000

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Post-hoc comparisons are used to conduct a whole set of comparisons, exploring the differences between each of the groups or conditions in the study. Having calculated the overall F ratio and finding the significant differences among aspects of grammar, the researcher went on and performed additional test to identify where these differences occur. The post-hoc test is used to exactly determine where the differences among aspects of grammar occur. Look down the column labeled **Mean Difference**, we look for any asterisks (*) next to the values listed. If an asterisk is found, this means that the groups being compared are significantly different from one another at the $p < .05$ level. The exact significance value is given in the column labeled **Sig.** As displayed by Table 4.9, Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for grammatical rule, *simple past vs. present perfect* was significantly different from other grammatical rules.

Calculating the Effect Size for Grammatical Rules

Since SPSS does not generate the effect size formula, the effect size can be calculated using eta squared, as one of the most common effect size statistics. The formula is:

Eta squared = Sum of squares between-groups / Total sum of squares

In this study, the researcher divided the Sum of squares for between groups (64.73) by the Total sum of squares (161.40). The resulting eta squared value is .40, which in Cohen's (1988) terms would be considered a *great* effect size. It means that the effect size between the three groups is great.

Cohen classifies .01 as a small effect, .06 as a medium effect and .14 as a large effect.

Results from Interview

As for the last research question, the researcher employed Semi-structured Interview, following the guidelines proposed by Dornyei (2007) through which initially the researcher acting as a facilitator posed open-ended questions in English language and let students express their ideas while taking notes, and using audio-tape recorder. The researcher finally came up with common themes employing the techniques of open-coding, axial-coding and selective coding to analyze data. Here are the questions and some common statements elicited from the responses by the students:

Question 1: What are the major problems in writing skills?

The results from the interview revealed that students mostly complain about their grammatical mistakes and they do not know how to write accurately. They believed that structural issues are important in arranging the sentence correctly and making the sentence well-formed and vocabulary is important in writing fluently. They like to gain mastery over grammatical rules and apply what they learn to other context and written communication.

Question 2: What do think of exposing to common errors before starting writing?

The students interviewed mentioned that the technique was useful because when we learn the rules and mostly we memorize them, we cannot apply the rules and we indeed forget the correct rule when we start writing in practice. Being exposed to the common errors regarding the issue under question, help us much because we do not need to just memorize the rules. In this way, we become aware of the mistakes we may commit. So while engaging in doing writing tasks, we review the common errors in our mind and avoid committing those mistakes.

Restatement of the Problems

In this study, the major problem addressed was to examine the relationship between explicit teaching of common errors and students' performance on writing accuracy with regard to 30 students studying at Kimia English Institute in Sannandaj, Kordestan province. The difference between students' performance on writing accuracy with respect to the aspects of grammatical rules was also investigated. The results from semi-structured interview were also reported by the researcher. The first and second questions in this study were quantitative and the last question was qualitative. Therefore, this study is seeking to answer the following three major questions:

- 1) Is there any relationship between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and EFL learners' writing accuracy?
- 2) Is there any significant difference between explicit teaching of common grammatical errors and aspects of grammatical rules including 'used to for habitual actions', 'adverbs of quantity with count and non-count nouns', 'evaluations and comparisons with adjectives', and

'simple past vs. present perfect'?

3) How do the learners react towards the implementation of explicit teaching of common errors in improving writing accuracy?

These are the main topics addressed in the study and readers are asked to reflect on them.

Summary of the Findings

In the previous chapters, a complete report of the findings of the study has been presented with respect to the three questions posed in the first chapter. In this section, the findings of the study are summarized briefly as follows:

To answer the first research question of the study, 30 female students in two groups (15 in control group and 15 in experimental group) were asked to participate in the study. Following the treatment phase, the results obtained from Descriptive Statistics revealed that students in experimental group ($M=27.33$, $SD=3.33$) outperformed students in control group ($M=22.33$, $SD=4.62$). Moreover, the results from Independent Sample T-test showed that there was a significant difference in scores obtained from the post-test of explicit teaching of common errors in writing accuracy [$t_{(28)} = -2.71$, $p < 0.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was large ($\eta^2 = .20$). Thus, the effect size of .20 was large.

The current study is in line with the earlier studies on explicit teaching of errors. A more common finding among these earlier studies is that teachers' error correction occurs frequently, irrespective of pedagogical focus and classroom setting and that explicit error treatment is desired by most L2 learners (Leeman, 2003; Leki, 1991). These studies, however, also reveal that teachers' provision of explicit feedback is often arbitrary, idiosyncratic, ambiguous and unsystematic, which in turn invites the question as to whether error correction in the classroom is of any value (Loewen, 2002). More current investigation undertaking the role of negative feedback and the relative effects of different types of explicit feedback in the context of language teaching (e.g., Doughty, 1994; Han, 2001) has sometimes been more explanatory and experimental. The results from Han (2001) findings showed that explicit teaching of grammar contribute more to the success of the students in writing performance. Classroom-based studies mainly center on correction provided by the teacher; for example, whether the feedback is immediate or delayed.

As for the second research question of the study, the researcher, first, checked homogeneity of variance, using Levene's test, and found that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated. Then, she generated one-way between-groups ANOVA to examine the significant difference between the students' scores on grammatical rules, as measured by the Grammar Post-test. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in students' scores for the three age groups [$F(3, 57) = 12.50$, $p = .05$]. The significant F test indicated that the null hypothesis could be rejected; however, since it did not indicate which of the levels differ, post-hoc test was conducted. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test demonstrated that the mean score for grammatical rule, *simple past vs. present perfect* was significantly different from other grammatical rules.

As for the last research question regarding students' reactions towards the use of explicit teaching of common grammatical errors, the researcher explored the issue using semi-structured interview containing two open-ended questions. The results reported that the students were mostly eager to work on explicit teaching of common errors since although they learn grammatical rules, they learn them by heart. They are not able to apply the rules accurately in writing; however, through working on the common errors, they practically try to avoid grammatical mistakes and write well-form sentences. They believed that while engaging in the process of writing, they have in their mind common error regarding the issue and this helps them much not to do the same mistakes.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, major conclusions can be drawn from the present study. The results of this experimental study revealed that, when second language learners receive explicit teaching which enhances their awareness and draws their attention to the common errors committed by L2 learners, and when they are provided with the opportunity to interact, and discuss these common errors with their peers and the teacher, in the revised and redrafted version, they move progressively towards greater accuracy in producing the target-like forms. As a result of following explicit teaching of common errors, the students not only could improve their written accuracy in the short term but also develop their internalized grammatical system and improve their level of proficiency in general.

Comparing the performance of the experimental group with that of the control group, it can be concluded that raising students' consciousness of different types of errors performs a more effective role than just raising students' awareness by explicit teaching. Traditionally, among language skills, writing has been regarded as the most difficult in second language acquisition, and today it is the most practical language skill that can be used by learners to interact internationally, especially with the rapid expansion of globalization and cyber-communication. Therefore, using writing accurately is influential in this regard. Prominent researchers in second language writing mention that form-focused feedback can be effective, especially when accompanied by classroom explicit instruction (White, Spada, Lightbown & Ranta, 1991). According to Ferris (2002), learners who are provided with explicit teaching over a period of time can improve their language accuracy. A case in point is the study conducted by Chandler (2003) who tracked students' writing over one semester and found that both underlining and direct teaching of errors reduced grammatical and lexical errors in subsequent writing.

Since recent findings on SLA, focusing on form-focused instruction (Long, 1991; Ellis, 2001) and noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990), put emphasis on instructed SLA, explicit teaching of grammatical errors is in line with such perspectives, and learners can promote in writing accurately by means of direct instruction presented by the teacher. In this way, students' awareness is activated while listening to the teacher and reactivated while engaging in writing tasks assigned by the teacher. Students can comprehend the rules more deeply and apply them more precisely. It can be concluded that explicit teaching has a significant effect on improvement

of writing accuracy of the experimental group and the current study confirms the positive effect of direct teaching of common errors on students' writing skills. Point taken, the scholarly literature on the effectiveness of explicit grammar instruction in writing accuracy, especially in L2 settings, should be well investigated to reveal more in-depth information. Although in English language classrooms, grammar has been the topic of hot debate and controversy in public and academic arenas for more than 50 years, it has not been examined widely to be more confident in generalization issues. For example, in a current study undertaken by Penn, Park and Lim (2013), the content analysis of 238 empirical research studies involving Korean participants was found that not even a single study with respect to Korean participants was published in the previous 20 years exploring this relationship between explicit grammar instruction and writing (Penn, Park & Lim, 2013). Unfortunately, with reference to the short list of articles in this regard, unlike much interest in the role of corrective feedback in L2 writing, it seems that there has almost been no interest in investigating the role of explicit grammar instruction in second or foreign language writing (Andrews et al., 2006). Therefore, it can be concluded that more valid and reliable evidence is wanting in this area of investigation (Tomlinson, 1994; Wyse, 2001).

REFERENCES

- Andrews, R., Torgerson, C., Beverton, S., Freeman, A., Locke, T., Low, G., & Zhu, D. (2006). The effect of grammar teaching on writing development. *British Educational Research Journal*, 32 (1), 39–55.
- Batstone, R. (1994). *Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chandler, J. (2003). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12, 267–296.
- Cordor, S.P. (1974). Error analysis. In J.P.B. Allen, & S.P. Cordor, (Eds). *Techniques in applied linguistics*, (pp. 3-21). London: Oxford University Press.
- Crème, P. & Lea, M.R. (1997). *Writing at university*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Doughty, C. J. (2001). Cognitive underpinnings of focus on form. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 206-257). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, N. (1994). Implicit and explicit processes in language acquisition: An introduction. In Ellis, N. (Ed), *Implicit and explicit learning of language* (pp. 1-32). San Diego, CA: academic Press.
- Ellis, R. (2001). Form-focused instruction and second language learning. A supplement to *Language Learning* 51, supplement 1.
- Ellis, R. (2002). Does form-focused instruction affect the acquisition of implicit knowledge? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24, 223-236.
- Ennis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford; Oxford University Press.
- Farhadi, H., Jafarpur, A., & Birjandi, P. (1994). *Testing language skills: From theory to practice*. Tehran: SAMT.
- Ferris, D.R. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 1-10.

- Ferris, D. R. (2002). *Treatment of error in second language student writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Ferris, D.R. (2003). *Response to student writing*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.
- Ferris, D.R., & Roberts, B. (2001). Error feedback in L2 writing class: How explicit does it need to be? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10, 161-184.
- Freeman, L. & Long, M. (1991). *An introduction to second language acquisition research*. London: Longman.
- Han, Z. H. (2001). Fine-tuning corrective feedback. *Foreign Language Annals* 34, 582-99.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching*. Edinburg; Pearson Education Ltd.
- Klein, W. (1986). *Second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and language learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Krashen, S. D (1987). *Principles and practices in second language acquisition*. Hertfordshire: Prentice-Hall International Ltd.
- Lalande, J.F. (1982). Reducing composition errors: An experiment. *Modern Language Journal*, 66, 140-149.
- Leeman, J. (2003). Recasts and L2 development: Beyond negative evidence. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 25, 37-63.
- Loewen, S. (2002). The occurrence and effectiveness of incidental focus on form in meaning-focused ESL lessons. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. de Bot, R. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (Eds), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2011). *Teaching grammar in second language classrooms: Integrating form-focused instruction in communicative context*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Penn, S., Park, E. H. & Lim, H. W. (2013). A content analysis of empirical research on English writing using Korean subjects. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, 19 (1), 203–228.
- Richards, J. C., & Lockhart, C (1996). *Reflective teaching in second language classroom*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press.
- Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp. 3-32). Cambridge: CUP.
- Tomlinson, D. (1994). Errors in the research into the effectiveness of grammar teaching. *English in Education*, 28 (1), 20–26.
- Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46, 327-369.
- Truscott, J. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing class: A response to Ferris. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8, 111-112.
- White, L., Spada, N., Lightbown, P. M., & Ranta, L. (1991). Input enhancement and L2 question formation. *Applied Linguistics*, 12, 416–432.

- White, R., & McGovern, D. (1994). Writing. In E. D. Jimena (Ed.), *Error correction: Bridge to grammatical accuracy in L2 writing* (pp. 43-58). Hertford shire: Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd.
- Wyse. D. (2001). Grammar for writing? A critical review of empirical evidence. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 49 (4), 411–427.
- Rassaei, E. Moinzadeh, A., & Youhanaee, M, (2012). The Effect of Corrective Feedback on the Acquisition of Implicit and Explicit L2 Knowledge, *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 59-75.
- Farrokhi, F., & Sattarpour, S. (2012). The Effects of Direct Written Corrective Feedback on Improvement of Grammatical Accuracy of High- proficient L2 Learners, *World Journal of Education*, 2 (2).

“PASSAGES” IN PERSPECTIVE

Mehrnush Ebrahimi

Department of TEFL, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran

E-mail: m.ebrahimi_job@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

It is beyond doubt that English language has become the platform of communication all over the world. In fact, it is one of the main reasons why English is taught as a foreign language in many countries. Moreover, it has already become a medium of communication in many educational settings such as public schools. Among the teaching and learning materials, textbooks or course books play a crucial role. A textbook should aim to provide as much as possible in one book and should be adequate to meet the needs of the students during the course. The English as foreign language (EFL) instructors then face the challenging task of opting a textbook not just based on fads and fashions. Another feature that blurs the instructors' judgement may be the publisher's reputation. In order to select an effective and appropriate textbook, they are bound to implement material evaluation following certain guidelines and criteria. This article tries to evaluate an English textbook series, namely Passages (Richards & Schmidt, 2002), based on Tomlinson (2003)'s criteria. The textbook was examined according to two broad criteria (reliability and validity) by which one can have a bird view of most of all its vices and virtues. Based on the data collected through the checklist, the English textbook series, Passages, do not enable the students so much to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life. That is, they are not based on learner needs. However, the textbooks encourage independent language learning. It is hoped that this textbook evaluation provides the necessary insight for all language teachers to conduct such a procedure in their own practice of textbook selection. Both teachers and material developers should notice that a variety of factors should be taken into account in designing and selecting a book. Moreover, the needs of the students as well as the course objectives need to be considered in the very beginning stages of evaluating a textbook.

KEYWORDS: English Language Teaching (ELT); English text books; Material Evaluation; Checklist

INTRODUCTION

English language instruction has many important components but the essential constituents of many ESL/EFL classrooms and programs are the textbooks and instruction materials that are often used by language instructors. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) suggest:

"The textbook is an almost universal element of English language teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in various countries...No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook."
(p.315).

The choice of language teaching materials can determine the quality of learning-teaching procedure. As a part of the materials used in the language classroom, the textbook can often play

a crucial role in students' success or failure. Therefore, particular attention must be paid to evaluate such materials based on valid and reliable instruments. One of the common methods to evaluate English Language Teaching (ELT) materials is the checklist. An evaluation checklist is an instrument that provides the evaluator with a list of features of successful learning-teaching materials. According to these criteria, evaluators like teachers, researchers as well as students can rate the quality of the material. (Mukundan, Nimehchisalem & Hajimohammadi, 2011)

Evaluation is a process of inquiry in which data are gathered through different instruments and from different sources. This information is interpreted to make important decisions based on the research results. These decisions might require a change and effect a drastic alteration in the outline and process of a language program instruction. All these efforts are made to the betterment of a course of study and bringing about satisfactory results. Rea-Dickens and Germaine (1994) defined Evaluation as a dynamic process which investigates the suitability and appropriateness of an existing practice.

To do this appropriately, books have to bear certain characteristics in their every aspect including physical and thematic considerations. With this respect, in last decades a movement known as "textbook evaluation" began to emerge whose goal was to construct checklists based on which a book could be analyzed in detail in order to assure its usefulness and practicality with such factors as proficiency level of students, learners' needs, course objectives, gender, and other contextual factors. All these factors have to be properly met through textbook's content. So textbooks greatly influence how content is delivered. (Sarem, Hamidi & Mahmoudie, 2013)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of Textbooks in English Language Teaching

A textbook has always been the most preferred instructional material in ELT. They are best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set concerning learner needs (Cunnings worth, 1995). Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching /learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to make the existence knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected easy and organized way.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) argued that the textbook has a very important and a positive part to play in teaching and learning English. They state that textbooks provide the necessary input into classroom lessons through different activities, readings and explanations. Thus, they will always survive on the grounds that they meet certain needs. Allwright (1981) added a further dimension to the role of the textbook by characterizing the lesson as an interaction between the three elements of teacher, learners and materials. This interaction enhances the opportunities to learn.

Regarding the multiple roles of textbooks in ELT, Cunnings worth (1995) identified textbook as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and the activities. They also provide the learners with a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. What is

more, textbooks serve as a syllabus and a self-study source for learners. They also serve as a support for the beginning teachers who have yet to gain in confidence.

Richards (2001) stated that textbooks act as a key component in most language programs. They provide the learners with the necessary input that the learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the class. They also serve as the basis for the language content and skills to be taught and other kinds of language practice that the learners take part in. Regarding the advantages, Richards (2001) stated that without textbooks a program may have no path, therefore they provide structure and a syllabus.

Besides, the use of a textbook in a program can guarantee that students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way. In other words textbooks provide the standards in instruction. Moreover, they include a variety of learning resources such as workbooks, CDs and cassettes, videos, etc., which makes the learning environment interesting and enjoyable for the learners. As for inexperienced teachers, Richards (2001) stated that textbooks can serve as a tool to train them.

Similarly, Grant (1987) presented the opinions of teachers about the textbook in his book. Most teachers state that a textbook shows the order what is to be taught and learned and in which order it is to be taught and learned. They guide the teachers as to what methods to be used and as Richards (2001) stated above, a textbook saves the teacher an extraordinary amount of time.

Despite the impact of new technologies, textbooks will doubtless continue to play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners. What is more it has significant impact on the learners' meeting their language learning objectives. The role of the textbook in the language classroom is undeniable. Both teachers and students need a framework on which to build and textbooks definitely provide this.

Approaches to Materials Evaluation in English Language Teaching

Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1994) stated that 'evaluation is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning' (p.4) Evaluation plays a key role in education and it is important for the teacher since it can provide valuable information for the future going of classroom practice, for the planning of courses, for the management of learning tasks and students. Finally, evaluation is essential for the use of instructional materials such as textbooks.

Jones (1985) emphasized that "evaluation in LL (language learning) and LT (Language Teaching), evaluation generally refers to the theoretical or empirical assessment of the curriculum itself and its components from various perspectives: assessment of teacher performance, learner achievement, materials and so on" (p.21). As mentioned, evaluation is quite an important part of the educational process. It is as the means by which we can gain a better understanding of what's effective, what's less effective and what appears to be no use at all.

Ellis (1997) distinguished two types of materials evaluation, namely, predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation. A predictive evaluation is designed to make a decision regarding what

materials to use. Teachers who are required to carry out a predictive evaluation determine which materials are best suited to their purposes.

Ellis (1997) indicated that there are two principles ways in which teachers can carry out predictive evaluation. One is to rely on evaluations carried out by expert reviewers who identify specific criteria for evaluating materials. However, in reviews of individual course books the criteria can be inexact or implicit. The other way is that teachers can carry out their own predictive evaluations by making use of various checklists and guidelines available in the literature. The idea behind using such guides is to assist teachers carry out a predictive evaluation systematically, yet the author points out that ‘there are limits to how scientific such an evaluation can be’ (p.37).

It is for the reason mentioned above that there is a need to evaluate materials retrospectively because such an evaluation provides the teacher with feedback so as to determine whether it is worth using the material again. Thus, Ellis (1997) stated that ‘a retrospective evaluation serves as a means of testing the validity of a predictive evaluation and what is more, it may point to ways in which the predictive instruments can be improved for future use (p.37). As can be understood from the above definitions, both predictive and retrospective evaluations aim at making the teaching/-learning environment more effective. They both help teachers to make appropriate judging concerning the effectiveness of their teaching.

Moreover, as Hutchinson (1987) pointed out materials evaluation not only serves the immediate practical aim of selecting teaching materials but also plays a critical role in developing teacher’s awareness in a number of ways which are providing teachers to analyze their own presuppositions about the nature of language and learning, forcing teachers to set their prerequisites and helping them to see materials as an essential part of the whole teaching/learning situation.

There are two main approaches that have an important role for the purpose of selecting, improving and modifying materials to suit the needs of learners and teachers in a particular teaching/learning context. These are called as macro and micro approach to evaluation of materials. A macro evaluation focus on an overall assessment of whether an entire set of materials has worked in relation to the needs identified. In a micro evaluation, however, the focus is on the evaluation of effectiveness of the tasks. A micro evaluation of a task can both show to what extent a task is appropriate for the particular group of learners and reveal certain weaknesses in the design of a task for future. (Ellis, 1997)

Empirical Studies on Textbook and Materials Evaluation

There are some empirical studies carried out on the evaluation of textbook and materials evaluation. Ayman (1997) conducted a materials evaluation study which involved a macro level evaluation of an in-house textbook in relation to the perceptions of the instructors and students on the overall effectiveness of the textbook after the implementation of it. The purpose of the study was to find out how the students and the instructors evaluate a textbook which was based on English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The results of the study revealed that both the students and instructors were generally positive about textbook. However, there were some aspects that they felt negative about the textbook. These were insufficiency of some activities, inappropriateness of content/topics and ineffectiveness of the teacher's book. The results obtained from the study indicated that the instructors were more positive about the textbook than the students. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher suggested that those aspects of the textbook that both the students and teachers viewed negatively should be improved. Ayman (1997) made some further recommendations about the instructors that they should be well trained in how to use the textbook effectively in their classes and they should also find ways to raise students' awareness in using the textbook.

Yumuk (1998) also conducted an evaluation study and investigated the effectiveness of English Language Support (ELS) 210 Course Materials for Bureau Management and Secretarial Studies (BMS) at Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL). This case study was conducted through both macro and micro level evaluations on the basis of five criteria developed. These were content, organisation of content, consideration of perceptual learning style differences, integration of learning training elements to develop autonomy, and physical appearance to enhance learning.

Data were collected through questionnaires administered to 41 students and interviews carried out with two curriculum level coordinators, two instructors and nine students. Also, content description of the materials was provided to obtain information about the materials in relation to the criteria developed.

The data collected from the curriculum level coordinator, instructors and student interviews and the observations were also analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study revealed that the materials were effective to some extent in relation to content, organisation of content and Physical appearance of the materials. However, to a large extent the materials were not effective due to the fact that they did not consider perceptual learning style differences in general and failed to integrate learning training elements to develop learner autonomy.

Yakhontova (2001) conducted an evaluation study on an EAP textbook called Academic Writing for Graduate Students by Swales and Feak in the Ukrainian University classroom. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the intellectual and emotional reactions of the students toward a new kind of textbook. The subjects of the study were 12 students whose reactions and opinions were based on three sources. First of all, the students were asked to express their opinions of the textbook by providing the answers to a short questionnaire at the end of the course.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1-What are the pedagogic values of the 2nd edition of Passages series?
- 2- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the 2nd edition of Passages series?
- 3-Is the English textbook, Passages based on learner needs?

- 4-Does the textbook encourage independent language learning exploit learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments to some extent?
5-Does the textbook offer opportunities for cooperative learning?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In this study, only the researcher and two other teachers played the role of the participants. They have taught *Passages* for some years and accordingly they are familiar with it. One of the researchers teaches passages private for students ages 20 to 25.

Instruments

This study employed a checklist (Appendix A) to collect data on the points of view of the researchers about the mentioned textbook. The checklist was developed by the researchers according to Tomlinson (2003)'s criteria and it was used to obtain quantitative data. It is composed of two dimensions: reliability and validity of the aforementioned textbook. It is also consisted of 106 items related to five criteria to conduct a macro level material evaluation.

Procedure

The participants were asked to complete the textbook evaluation checklist by checking a point on the Likert scale which best shows their perception. Also they were asked to write a number between 0 to 4 which shows what they exactly feel about the textbook. The checklist was expected to take approximately 30 minutes for the participant to complete. The closed questions required respondents to choose from a five-point Likert scale indicating varying degrees of agreement or disagreement (4 = complete agreement, 0 = No agreement). 0 indicates learners' disagreement, 1 indicates learners' agreement as limited, 2 indicates learners' agreement moderately, 3 learners' agreement extensively, and 4 indicates learners' agreement completely. Seven open-ended questions tapped into subjects' conceptions of learning and their interpretations of a specific learning context.

Data Analysis

The checklist evaluates the English textbook *Passages* from two aspects: reliability and validity. Each of these dimensions consists of items grading the textbook on a scale of 0_4, representing the criterion strongly available (level 4) to strongly unavailable (level 0). These items relates to five criteria, namely Psychological Validity, Pedagogical Validity, Process and content validity, Educational validity and Reliability, through which the researcher conducts a macro level material evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the evaluations are presented in the tables.

Tables 1 to 4 evaluate the aforementioned textbook series regarding their validity.

Table 1: Psychological Validity

Psychological Validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Rationale/learner needs		Yes			
Independence and autonomy			Yes		
Self-development				Yes	
Creativity			Yes		
Cooperation			Yes		

Based on the data collected through the appended checklist, the textbook Passages has moderately process and content validity.

Table 2: Pedagogical Validity

Pedagogical Validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Guidance					Yes
Choice	Yes				
Reflection/innovation			Yes		

Regarding pedagogical validity, the textbook has proved to be complete in this respect.

Table 3: Process and content validity

Process and content validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Methodology				Yes	
Content	Yes				
Appropriacy				Yes	
Authenticity	Yes				
Cultural sensitivity	Yes				
Layout-graphics					Yes
Accessibility	Yes				
Linkage					Yes
Selection/grading					Yes
Sufficiency		Yes			
Balance/integration/challenge			Yes		
Stimulus/practice/revision			Yes		
Flexibility		Yes			

Table 4 indicates that the mentioned textbook series have extensive educational validity.

Table 4: Educational validity

Educational validity	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
Educational validity	Yes				

Table 5 evaluates the aforementioned textbook series regarding their reliability.

Reliability

Table 5: Reliability

Reliability	Zero	limited	moderate	extensive	complete
	Yes				

The data collection related to reliability indicates that the mentioned textbook series are completely reliable.

Discussion

Based on the data collected through the checklist, the English textbook series, Passages, do not enable the students so much to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life. That is, they are not based on learner needs. However, the textbooks encourage independent language learning, exploit learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments to some extent. Not only the mentioned textbooks offer opportunities for cooperative learning, through pair and group work activities and information exchange tasks; they also involve the learners as human beings rather than just as language learners.

In these text books, there is enough guidance for teachers and students. Also they encourage teacher creativity, imagination and exploration and foster him to add, delete, change and improvise the content of the material. Although the level and the intended audience are clearly spelt out, the text generates limited 'real-life' communication processes. That is, the material does not provide extensive exposure to authentic English through purposeful reading and/or listening activities.

The units and exercises are well linked in terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development or grammatical/lexical progression. The selection and grading of tasks and activities are based on a clearly discernible system. But the books are complete enough to stand on its own to be workable. Therefore, the teacher should use other supplementary material to expose students to real-life situations.

The activities in these textbooks allow the learner to go beyond a merely superficial understanding of the text/discourse. However, the materials do not allow for flexible use of tasks/texts/activities, permitting them to be exploited or modified as required by local circumstances.

The textbooks also accord with broader educational concerns extensively (e.g., the nature and role of learning skills, concept development in younger learners, the function of 'knowledge of the world', etc.), and they have the same effect with different groups of target learners. So, they are completely reliable.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, according to Wang (2011), the case study of one particular EFL course book gives us more insights into the understanding of our teaching materials. Through the process of evaluation some important issues have appeared. By evaluating the teaching material teachers can understand more about language learning and this leads to new concepts and ideas, which in turn contribute to the adjustment, modification and eventually improvement of their own teaching. Furthermore, we should have the right attitudes towards textbooks. The underlying message being that we should not regard a textbook as an absolute authority and depend on it too much, but rather take whatever is beneficial to teaching and learning and adapt, complement or modify what's not satisfactory. In this way we are making use of the textbooks to achieve our own purposes. As we have seen from the analysis and discussion, our textbooks may have problems of various kinds. Much therefore needs to be done on the part of the teacher is to apply creativity and imagination in bringing out the most effective results of teaching and learning. Finally, I conclude with Cunningsworth's remark,

No course book will be totally suited to a particular teaching situation. The teacher will have to find his own way of using it and adapting it if necessary. So we should not be looking for the perfect course book which meets all our requirement, but rather for the best possible fit between what the course book offers and what we as teachers and students need.(1984:89)

Limitations of the study

Like the other survey studies, the present had some limitations. The first limitation is that due to the time limitation, only the English textbook series, namely Passages were selected. Therefore, the results are context dependent and they should be generalized with great care. The second limitation is about the number of the participants. The number of teachers who participated in the study is limited and this may have affected the results of the study.

REFERENCES

- Allwright, R.L. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *English Language Teaching Journal*,36(1),5-18
- Ayman, B. (1997). *Evaluation of an English for academic purposes textbook: A casestudy*. Unpublished master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara,Turkey.
- Archibald, J .(2004) A Review of the Literature on English as a Second Language (ESL).Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/?id=ED491537>

- Bryd, P. (2001). Textbooks: Evaluation for selection and analysis for implementation. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or a foreign language (3rd ed.)*, pp. 415-427. Boston: Hienle & Hienle Publishers.
- Çakit, I. (2009). *Evaluation of The Efl Textbook " New Bridge to Success 3" From the Perspectives of Studnts and Teachers*, represented by the Minister of Education
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Dougill, J. (1987). Not so obvious. In L. E. Sheldon (ed.) *ELT Textbooks and Materials: Problems in Evaluation and development*, (pp. 29-35). Oxford: Modern English Publications.
- Ellis, R. (1997). The Empirical Evaluation of Language Teaching Materials, *ELT Journal*, 51(1), 36-42.
- Grant, M. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. London: Longman.
- Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal*, 48(4), 315-328.
- Huthchinson, T. (1987). What is underneath? An interactive view of the materials evaluation. In L. E. Sheldon (ed.), *ELT textbooks and materials: Problems in evaluation and development*, (pp. 37-44), Oxford: Modern English Publications.
- Jones, L. (1985). *Use of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Litz, David R. A. (2000, 2001). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A south Korean case study. *Asian EFL Journal*
- Mukundan, J., Nimehchisalem, V., & Hajimohammadi, R. (2011). Developing an English Language Textbook Evaluation Checklist: A Focus Group Study Journal. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1 (12), 100-106.
- Rea-Dickens, P., & Germaine, K. (1994). *Evaluation*. In Candlin and Widdowson (ed.), Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge university press.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Passages 2 (2nd Ed)*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sarem, S., Hamidi, H., & Mahmoudie, R. (2013). A Critical Look at Textbook Evaluation: A Case Study of Evaluating an ESP Course-Book: English for International Tourism. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 4 (2), 372-380.
- Shafiee Nahrkhalaji, S. (2012). An Evaluation of a Global ELT Textbook in Iran: A Two-phase Approach, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(3), 184-191.
- Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(4), 237-246
- Tomlinson, B. (ed.). (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. London: Continuum Press.
- Yakhontova, T. (2001). Textbooks, contexts and learners. *English for specific purposes*, 20 (3), 397-415.
- Yumuk, A. (1998). *A case study on evaluating the effectiveness of English language Support 201 course materials for Bureau Management and Secretarial Studies at Bilkent University*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, METU, Ankara, Turkey.
- Wang, J. (2011). Evaluating an EFL Textbook-A New English Course, <http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/groups/crile/.../crile31wang.pdf...>

APPENDIX A: CHECKLIST

A.1. Validity

A.1.1. Psychological Validity

Rationale/Learner Needs

1. Have the aims and objectives of the materials been clearly spelt out? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Are the materials appropriate and are they likely to be effective in helping learners to acquire English?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials make a positive contribution to heightening and sustaining learner motivation?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials give the learner confidence to initiate communicative events and persist with the attempted communication despite difficulties? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials cater for the development of language skills that would enable them to operate effectively in their future academic or professional life? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.1.Independence and Autonomy

1. Is the learner a decision-maker or just a receiver of information? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials encourage independent language learning? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials encourage learner to guess, predict, discover, take risks, or try out several alternatives?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Do they give learners plenty of opportunities to make choices which suit their linguistic level, their preferred learning styles, their level of involvement in the text and the time available to them?
0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials involve the learner in thinking about the learning process and in experiencing a variety of different types of learning activities? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do they allow sufficient time to think and reflect on their learning? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Do the materials help individual learners discover their learning styles and preferences, study habits and learning strategies? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials provide explicit instruction on various language learning strategies and suggest ways of using and developing them? 0 1 2 3 4
9. Is a sufficient range of strategies provided? 0 1 2 3 4
10. Do they encourage learners to evaluate the strategies or the learning activities or its content?
0 1 2 3 4
11. Do the materials allow self-monitoring and feedback? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.2.Self-Development

1. Do the materials/texts engage the learners both cognitively and effectively? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials credit learners with a capacity for rational thought and problem-solving? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they also involve the learner's emotions in the learning process? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials allow for the development of creative and critical thinking skills? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the materials allow scope for the development of a desirable set of attitudes? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials allow the individual to develop his or her talents as fully as possible? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Do the materials involve the learners as human beings rather than just as language learners? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials help build personality and learner voice and give learners an understanding about themselves?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.3.Creativity

1. Do the materials exploit the learner's prior knowledge and experience and provide opportunities for further developments? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials allow sufficient opportunities for student inventiveness and energy and encourage their participation in resource generation? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials provide additional challenging activities for highly motivated learners? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Have opportunities been built into the materials for learners to contribute? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.1.4.Cooperation

1. Do the materials offer opportunities for cooperative learning, through pair and group work activities and information exchange tasks? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Are students encouraged to learn from and help one another and, more importantly, able to work in a less stressful atmosphere in the classroom? 01 2 3 4
3. Do they encourage positive interdependence by giving each individual a specific role to play in the activity allowing him/her to contribute actively to the group interaction?
0 1 2 34

A.1.2.Pedagogical Validity

A.1.2.1Guidance

1. Are the teacher's notes useful and explicit? 0 1 2 34
2. Is there enough guidance for teachers and students? 01 2 3 4
3. Are the transcripts, answer keys, vocabulary lists, structural/functional inventories and lesson summaries provided in the teacher's book? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is allowance made for the perspectives, expectations, and preferences of non-native teachers of English?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.2.2Choice

1. Are teachers encouraged to present the lessons in different ways? 01 2 3 4
2. Do the materials offer the teacher scope for adaptation and localization? 01 2 3 4
3. Do they encourage the teacher to add, delete, change and improvise? 01 2 3 4
4. Do they foster in teachers a sense of choice and control in exploiting the content? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.2.3Reflection/Exploration/Innovation

1. Do they foster teacher receptivity to innovation and experimentation? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do they encourage teacher creativity, imagination and exploration? 01 2 34
3. Do they help to raise the teacher's critical consciousness by facilitating reflection about the materials themselves and the methods implicated in them? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is the teacher encouraged to evaluate each lesson? 012 3 4

A.1.3.Process and Content Validity

A.1.3.1.Methodology

1. Does the course book reflect the insights and findings from current theory and research on second language acquisition? 0 1 2 34
2. Do learners need to know what the sentences/texts mean or simply to manipulate forms? 0 1 234
3. Do the materials make use of what we know about the value of permitting a silent period at the beginning stages or in the learning of a new feature? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the materials help develop both the declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge of the learners as well as contribute to broader educational goals? 0 1 2 34
5. Is there a sufficient balance between analytical and experiential modes of learning? 0 1 2 34
6. Is there an explicit and conscious focus on rules and explanations or are there opportunities for the learners to discover the patterns in the first place? 012 3 4
7. Is there existing knowledge which learners expected to bring to the materials? 0 1 2 34
8. Is learner's knowledge of communication exploited? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.2.Content

1. Do the materials provide a rich, varied and comprehensible input in order to facilitate informal acquisition as well as conscious attention to linguistic and pragmatic features of the texts? 0 1 2 34
2. Are the topics/texts current and cognitively challenging? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the topics/texts help enrich the learners' personal knowledge and experience and foster a positive personality?
0 1 234

4. Are there varied activities at different levels of task difficulty? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Are the materials well contextualized? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials call for a sufficiently good mix of closed and open-ended responses? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Are the grammatical explanations adequate? 0 1 2 3 4
8. Do the materials use complex metalanguage? 0 1 2 3 4
9. Do they suffer from terminological looseness? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.3.Appropriacy

1. Are the level and the intended audience clearly spelt out? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is it pitched at the right level of maturity and language and at the right conceptual level? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Is the material interesting, varied and topical enough to hold the attention of learners? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is the author's sense of humour or philosophy obvious or appropriate? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Is the authorial voice friendly and supportive or patronizing? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.4.Authenticity

1. Do the materials provide extensive exposure to authentic English through purposeful reading and/or listening activities? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is the content realistic, reflecting topics and events and texts from real-world situations? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the activities relate to pupils' interests and 'real-life' tasks? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Do the tasks exploit language in a communicative or 'real-world' way? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Do the texts generate 'real-life' communication processes? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.5.Cultural sensitivity

1. Are the materials relevant/suitable/appropriate to the learners' cultural context and sensitive to their values and beliefs? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Do the materials reflect awareness of and sensitivity to sociocultural variation? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Does the book show parallels and contrasts between the learners' culture and others? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is this done in a non-patronizing way? 0 1 2 3 4
5. Does the coursebook enshrine stereotyped, inaccurate, condescending or offensive images of gender, race, social class or nationality? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Are accurate views of the USA or Britain presented; e.g., are uncomfortable social realities (for instance, unemployment, poverty, family, breakdowns, and racism) left out? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.6.Layout-Graphics

1. Is there clarity of design and layout? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Is there an optimum density and mix of text and graphical material on each page? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Are the artwork and typefaces functional and colourful? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Is there enough white space on each page? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.7.Accessibility

1. Are there indexes, vocabulary lists, section headings and other methods of signposting the content that allow the student to use the material easily, especially for revision or self-study purposes?
0 1 2 3 4
2. Is the learner given clear advice about how the book and its contents could be most effectively exploited?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Are the instructions for carrying out activities clearly and concisely but adequately articulated?
0 1 2 3 4
4. Can learners navigate with ease their way through the material in order to have a clear view of the progress made?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.8.Linkage

1. Are the units and exercises well linked in terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development or grammatical/lexical progression? 0 1 2 3 4
2. Does the textbook cohere both internally and externally (e.g. with other books in a series)?
0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.9.Selection/Grading

1. Is the linguistic inventory presented appropriate for the students' purposes, bearing in mind their L1 background?
01 2 34
2. Is the selection and grading of tasks and activities based on a clearly discernible system (e.g., frequency counts for vocabulary, cognitive load for tasks)? 01 2 3 4
3. Do the introduction, practice and recycling of new linguistic items seem to be shallow/steep enough for the intended students? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.10.Sufficiency

1. Is the book complete enough to stand on its own to be workable? 01 2 34
2. Can the course be taught using only the student's books? 0 1 234

A.1.3.11.Balance/ Integration/Challenge

1. Do the activities allow the learner to go beyond a merely superficial understanding of the text/discourse?
0 12 3 4
2. Is there a good balance between receptive and productive knowledge, skills and abilities? 0 1 2 34
3. Is focus on the process of learning/product or both? 012 3 4

A.1.3.12.Stimulus/Practice/Revision

1. Are there sufficient opportunities for students to use and practice their conversational strategies and skills?
01 2 34
2. Is there sufficiently rich exposure to language data through opportunities for extensive reading?
0 1 2 3 4
3. Do the materials provide for recycling of content, of vocabulary and structures? 0 1 2 3 4
4. Are self-checks provided? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.13.Flexibility

1. Do the materials allow for flexible use of tasks/texts/activities, permitting them to be exploited or modified as required by local circumstances? 012 3 4
2. Is it too rigid format, structure and approach? 0 1 2 3 4
3. Do they allow for alternative sequences/routes/paths? 0 1 2 34
4. Is the order of activities in the curriculum and the pace at which they must be done quite fixed? 01 2 34
5. Do the materials make too many demands on teachers' preparation time? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Do the materials expect students to spend too much time on their homework? 0 1 2 3 4
7. Is there a wide range of supplementary materials and teaching aids available? 0 1 2 3 4

A.1.3.14.Educational Validity

1. Does the textbook accord with broader educational concerns (e.g., the nature and role of learning skills, concept development in younger learners, the function of 'knowledge of the world', etc.)? 0 1 2 34

A.2. Reliability

1. Would they have the same effect with different groups of target learners? 0 1 2 34

THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS' INDIVIDUAL VERBAL FEEDBACK AND PRAISE ON EFL LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Abbas Abbasi

Persian Gulf University, Assistant Professor, ababbasi2012@gmail.com

Dr. Nasim Ghanbari

Persian Gulf University, Assistant Professor, btghanbari@gmail.com

Mohammad Hossein Zare'

Persian Gulf University, MA student in TEFL, zare2080@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Teachers use different methods to enhance students' motivation and hence their achievements. One method is giving individual verbal feedback and praise which is used to encourage students and provide remediation. This study aimed to explore the effects of teachers' verbal feedback and praise on students' achievements. A pre-post test was used as the research tool and two groups of female students participated in this study (N=30) under two conditions: no feedback, feedback and praise provided by the instructor. The findings showed that teachers' verbal feedback and praise had a significant positive impact on the learners' motivation and hence their achievements. As a result of giving feedback and praise to the students and their effects on motivation and achievements, it can be argued that the more motivated students are, the more and the better they will learn. This study has implications for instructors, learners and researchers especially in Iran both to do more serious researches on the teachers' perceptions as the most involved actors of Foreign Language Teaching regarding various aspects of feedback, motivation and their roles in language teaching and to make changes in the manner of feedback giving and even the method of teaching English.

KEYWORDS: individual verbal feedback – motivation – praise - achievement

INTRODUCTION

Background

The enhancement of student motivation and interest is an issue of major concern and focus to most teachers and education researchers. Educators are often concerned about the low motivation level of students in learning a second language. As reviewed by Dörnyei (1994a, 1994b, 2001a, 2001b), there are motivation strategies teachers can adopt in a language classroom. One of the effective motivational teaching strategies is the provision of motivational feedback and praise by teachers.

The present study arises from our own experiences in working with English teachers in secondary schools and English Institutes in Jahrom, Iran. Over teaching career, the researchers had an ideal opportunity to work in different schools and English Institutes with students of different backgrounds and levels, but most teachers from these different schools and institutes indicated that they faced similar problems with learners having low level of motivation and interest. Teachers were concerned that their students had little interest and motivation in class, failed to remember completely or partially what their teachers had taught, performed poorly academically and had little or no desire to improve. From our teaching experiences and observations of other teachers' practices, the researchers felt that motivation was a wide area of concern that had considerable impact on the students' learning outcomes. A comprehensive understanding of learners' motivation could make a significant contribution to the educational field. This study was designed to investigate how teachers can improve students' motivation and hence their achievements in learning English through more effective verbal individual feedback and praise. Since class assessment and class participation are carried out each session regularly and continuously, the researchers saw them suitable vehicles for exploring teacher feedback in Navid English Institute.

Statement of the problem

In the realm of education, many variables can affect learning and determine whether instruction will be effective or not. Many of these effective factors are related or intertwined with one another. One of the most critical pieces of the educational puzzle is motivation. If students are not motivated enough to learn, they are unlikely to learn, and there is little chance that instruction will be effective.

Verbal individual motivational feedback as an immediate and direct response to student academic performance is one of the most powerful classroom interventions that teachers can use to foster learning and improve student motivation and achievements. Effective feedback plays an important role in motivating further learning as it informs learners about the degree of their learning or their needs for improvement (Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). Effective feedback is essential for improving both teaching and learning. It enables the students to close the gap between the actual and the desired performance. (Carless, Joughin & Lui, 2006 as cited in Lee, 2007).

Praise is also considered to have beneficial effects on learners' motivation and performance. One group of researchers and teachers claim that normally a feedback message of praise increases motivation and leads to improvement in learners' performance (Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Dev, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Some researchers state that feedback which contains praise can be more effective since it causes a positive affective reaction, which is often linked to increased motivation and higher goals (Delin & Baumeister, 1994; Ilies & Judge, 2005).

The researcher hopes the results of this study would provide educators and language teachers in Iran with evidence concerning the effectiveness of teachers' motivational verbal feedback and praise in L2 classes.

Significance of the study

The concept of motivation within educational systems has been studied for many years. The domain of educational motivation is a continually evolving area of thought; therefore, the viewpoints regarding the significance of motivational factors within the educational realm are continually changing. To be able to provide the most suitable and best suited instruction for learners in each of the domains to be explored in this study, instructors, curriculum designers, and student advisors must understand the motivations of the students they teach. In addition, these professionals should be provided with contemporary, research-based and reliable information about relationships among motivators and specific academic ability domains. Effective individual verbal feedback and praise as two important motivational factors can take a great part in this regard.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Based on Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is conceptualized as information provided by an agent with regard to aspects of one's performance or understanding. The present study focuses just on teacher feedback. According to Black, and Wiliam (1998) having a desired aim is one of the three essential elements in feedback: 'When a learner is trying to learn, feedback about the effort has three main elements: recognition of the final goal, evidence about the present position, and clear understanding of a way to close the gap between the two situations' (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p.141). To close this gap, students need to improve their knowledge and receiving enough constructive feedback is the means to this goal. They strongly stress the significance of feedback to students to improve their current performance.

The following discusses two kinds of feedback and their effectiveness. They include 'traditional' feedback and dialogic feedback.

'Traditional' teacher feedback-giving practice

'Traditional' refers to a summative method of feedback delivery by teachers where feedback is from time to time and only given at the end of a summative assessment, in a written form on the report card.

In 'traditional' feedback-giving, teachers often perceive feedback as a simple acquisition process. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) state that, feedback is often conceptualized by teachers as a transmission process where 'they 'transmit' feedback messages to learners about what is right or wrong in their academic work, about its weaknesses and strengths, and learners use this information to make improvements' (p.200). As a result, feedback delivery is mainly controlled by and seen as the responsibility of teachers, so undermining the active engagement of students.

These basic arguments against the sole use of point scale without appropriate descriptors can pave the way for a detailed discussion of the use of other sorts of feedback in the next section. They include constructive feedback – feedback with suggestions, and evaluative feedback, which are discussed more in the section that follows.

The process of conducting dialogic feedback

Most criticisms of the 'traditional' way of feedback-giving have given teachers deep insight into what makes educator feedback more 'constructive' and effective. As proposed in the previous section, the two-way dialogic feedback is always more effective and motivating than the 'traditional' way of feedback-giving practice. The sections that follow first explore the ways to conduct dialogic feedback properly, then its content and tone. Below are three different methods to deliver dialogic feedback: verbal, written and non-verbal non-written feedback:

Verbal feedback

In the conduct of verbal feedback, an effective motivational feedback strategy is 'prompting an exchange of comments between educator and student. In this process, a two-way direct interaction between students and teacher is facilitated while at the same time helping educator-assessors check to what extent learners understand their learning goals. This can inform both teaching and learning regularly.

As stated by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), to conceptualize feedback as a mutual dialogue rather than as information transmission can enhance the effectiveness of feedback because learners can play a more effective and active role and use the feedback to develop and regulate their performance. What is important is to generate a formal or informal discussion between learners and educators so that learners can develop a clear understanding of standards and expectations.

Written feedback

Educators can have verbal interaction with learners in the form of a real dialogue; they can also deliver their feedback in written form. It can be done in a structured manner with success criteria and rubrics; with open positive comments embedded with praise, suggestion and criticism.

When examining the role of written feedback, Hyland and Hyland (2001) came upon the point that feedback can function well as praise, criticism and/or suggestion. They recognized in their research that praise was generally used to soften suggestion and criticism. Their survey also shows that learners vary significantly in what they want from educators in the form of feedback, so that there is a great need for teachers to change their feedback to fit specific learners and their personalities and needs. This gives importance to the issue of the need to deliver 'individualized feedback'.

Non-verbal and non-written feedback

This section investigates feedback that is neither written nor verbal. It takes the form of gestures, facial expression, rewards, etc. Tunstall and Gipps (1996) propose that there are four types of evaluative feedback - rewarding, punishing, approving and disapproving. Rewarding as a type of evaluative feedback can be provided in the form of symbols (e.g. stickers). Approving is a positive type of feedback, joined with the normative in relation to social and educational values. Non-verbal means of approving feedback embraces physical touch like holding learners' arms and a tap on the shoulder. Disapproval can be demonstrated in using physical gestures and a firm tone like pointing while speaking.

Content of dialogic feedback

Constructive feedback – feedback with suggestions

As mentioned above, knowing about one's weaknesses and strengths is not enough. Konold, Miller and Konold (2004) stress that learners need to be helped to progress suitable strategies to gradually improve their performance. One of the suggested ways is to give constructive feedback. This means students should be given as much help and guide as they need to employ their knowledge.

In sum, constructive feedback assists learners to find their weaknesses and provide them with the strategies and skills in making improvement.

Evaluative feedback

As stated by Tunstall and Gipps (1996), evaluative feedback is judgmental which is opposite if just being descriptive. It is either positive or negative and the judgments are made based on implicit and explicit norms. Moreover, evaluative feedback relates more to affective aspects of learning than do descriptive kinds.

Below is a brief discussion of the tone of two-way dialogic feedback which includes positive and negative feedback:

Positive feedback

One prevalent way to classify feedback is whether it is positive or negative. 'Positive feedback is seen as pleasing, complimentary, and consistent with the learner's self-image' (Nicols, 1995, p.289). While receiving positive feedback, students are more likely to feel supported since it improves the students' self-esteem.

A popular type of positive feedback is 'praise'. Salili (2001) maintains that praise is a positive feedback stating teacher's approval of learners' behavior or academic work. It is also claimed that praise is more than just a simple feedback on performance as it shows educators' positive affect and provides information about the value of the learner's behavior. This explanation emphasizes that praise is a type of positive feedback which is embedded with the teachers' positive affection and it is rich enough in information. A more significant aspect of praise is that it also consists of information telling students the positive value of their performance.

Moreover, it is discussed that positive feedback in the form of praise has a motivating function in maintaining students' learning. Nonetheless, it is vital to mention that praise can have negative effects on learners' motivation if it is misused or overused. Brophy (1981) proposes that 'praise delivered to the wrong student, or in the wrong way, or under the wrong circumstances may be not only ineffective but counterproductive' (p.21).

Negative feedback

Negative feedback refers to feedback that is 'critical that may be rejected if not delivered skillfully' (Nicols, 1995, p.289). This section examines the facets and functions of criticism in addition to its relationship with learners' motivation to learn.

Criticism is a type of negative feedback. As stated by Salili (2001): ‘Criticism is described as showing disapproval of learners’ academic work or behavior’. (p.81). With regard to the application of criticism by educators, Brophy (1981) proposes that criticism and praise would better be used together. Teachers do so to reinforce learners systematically.

As reviewed above, positive feedback does not necessarily motivate learners. If it is used inappropriately, it can have negative effects on learners' motivation to learn. In the same way, negative feedback such as criticism does not necessarily bring harmful effects to learners' motivation.

The above has examined the tone of feedback – positive feedback and negative feedback, including praise and criticism respectively.

Motivation

The significance of motivation in improving foreign/ second language learning is undeniable. Lifrieri (2005, p. 4) reports that “most people would defiantly mention motivation among the factors which affect individual levels of success in any activity – like language learning –”. In the same way, Gardner (2006, p. 241) reports that “learners with stronger motivation will do better and more successful than learners with lower levels”. He also claims that “if a learner is motivated, he/she has enough reasons (motives) for being involved in the same activities, puts more effort, persists in the activities, pays attention to the tasks, has more desire to reach the goal, enjoys the activities more and more, etc.” (Gardner, 2006, p. 243).

Research Studies concerning individual variables in L2 learning also show the close relationship between motivation and achievement. In one research study, Gardner et al (1997) claim that language learning causes motivation, and this motivation in turn affects attainment.

A large number of research studies have demonstrated that motivation is vital for L2 learning since it directly influences how much effort learners make, their level of proficiency and how long they maintain and persevere in L2 skills after completing their language study (Cheng & Dornyei, 1998; Trang & Baldauf, 2007). Cognitive skills in learning the target language are not a guarantee that a student can successfully master that language. In fact, in many cases, learners with greater L2 learning motivation get better grades and achieve better language proficiency (Wu & Wu, 2009).

Praise

Praise has been considered as “favorable interpersonal feedback” (Baumeister, Hutton, & Cairns, 1990, p. 131) or “positive evaluations made by an individual of another’s products, performances, or attributes” (Kanouse, Gumpert, & Canavan-Gumpert, 1981, p. 98). In general, praise is considered to have beneficial effects on learners’ self-esteem, motivation, and performance. Therefore, educators are encouraged to use praise effectively as a reinforcer of a desired behavior (Dev, 1997).

Feedback which contains praise can be more effective since it causes a positive affective reaction, which is often linked to increased motivation and higher goals (Delin & Baumeister, 1994; Ilies & Judge, 2005).

Evidence of a direct or mediated positive effect of praise on performance and motivation is abundant but not without flaws. There are also instances of the negative effect of praise on individuals' learning. An early study by Baumeister's et al. (1990) presented evidence that praise can both facilitate and impede students' performance. The analyses demonstrated that although positive feedback improved learners' performance on effort tasks, it led to impairment in skilled performance.

Studies on Feedback, Praise, Motivation and achievement

In an action research case study, Magilow (1999) suggests that once positive affect is enacted—by use of humor, etc.—the teacher will be able to correct learners' errors without damaging their self-perception. The survey conclusion is that the issue of feedback may be inseparable from that of rapport. When a teacher-student rapport is created, explicit error correction may be completely effective.

Kubota (1994) (as cited in Burrell's literature review, 2000, p.26) finds that an experimental group receiving explicit linguistic and metalinguistic feedback performs better on language learning tasks than a group receiving no feedback. In this survey both implicit and explicit feedback are found to facilitate SLA.

Imai's (1989) thesis aim is to find whether praise or correction is more likely to improve oral L2 proficiency. In brief, Imai hypothesizes that Japanese EFL university students' grammar and pronunciation improve by error correction, but fluency would improve by praise.

Moskowitz (1976) reports teacher techniques related to feedback giving practices. Moskowitz (1976) claims that effective feedback should be immediate and direct. This kind of feedback is best given in a warm, accepting classroom climate. He also stresses that effective praise for learners' behavior is frequent, varied, and often nonverbal.

Some researchers (Fadzil et al., 2011) conducted a research to examine the relationship between various socio-psychological variables like motivation, attitude, anxiety and instrumental orientation on performance in English as L2. The findings demonstrated that these variables were significantly correlated with students' performance. Furthermore, the regression analysis indicated that all the variables except for personal motivation had significant effects on performance with attitude and instrumental orientation having positive effects while anxiety having a negative effect.

Based on Gardner and Lambert (1972), in acquiring a foreign language, motivation is affected by attitude. Evidence for positive correlation of English proficiency with positive attitude and being highly motivated towards learning English as a second language has been accumulating, for both

integrative (Nida, 1956; LoCastro, 2001) and instrumental motivation (Gardner, 1960; Brown, 2000).

Liu's (2007) survey on Chinese university students' motivation and attitude to learn English and the correlation of both variables with the learners' English proficiency also indicated similar findings. Moreover, correlation analysis indicated that learners who had more positive attitudes towards learning English tended to score better in the proficiency test. Accordingly, Liu proposed that higher instrumental and travel orientations and more positive attitudes might also be the result of students' higher English proficiency.

According to Haitema (2002) and Saracaloğlu (2000), there is a positive relationship between foreign language achievement and affective characteristics. In her survey, Saracaloğlu (2000) refers to the learners' attitudes that they differ in.

Bartley (1970) reported that his studies have indicated that there was a direct relationship between high achievement and positive attitudes as well as low achievement and negative attitudes. That positive attitudes enhance achievement has been insisted on and explained by Lambert et al. (1963), and Spolsky (1969).

Gardner (1985) maintained that motivation has close relationship with students' achievement. He analyzed the role of motivation and attitude in second language acquisition through his previous survey. The findings revealed that the attitudinal-motivational factors were significantly related to learners' achievement.

RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to explore the effects of individual motivational verbal feedback and praise on Iranian EFL learners' achievements, the study addressed the following research question:

- 1) Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

Hypothesis

H₀: Teachers' verbal feedback and praise have no effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements.

METHODOLOGY

Setting

This study was conducted at Navid English Institute in Jahrom. The Institute contains a student population of 1400 students in total. Classes in this institute ranges from KIDS 1 (age 7) to FCE (advanced level). 25 English teachers are teaching English in this Institute (10 MA, 14 BA and 1 PHD students).

Participants

The participants of the study were all EFL learners of Navid English Institute in Jahrom. The researcher randomly selected two female classes. The number of the participants was 15 in each class. All the participants were native speakers of Persian and their age ranged from 17 to 24. The participant students were all at a high intermediate proficiency level. Some of them were High school students and some others had completed 12 years of schooling while a few of them had graduated from different universities in Iran at BA level and some were following their education at the university. The teacher participant was an English-major holder and had a master degree in education. Mr. Jafarian, the teacher participant, has been teaching in this Institute for 10 years. He is one of the most successful instructors in this institute.

Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect the data required for the fulfillment of the objectives of this study, one of the teachers agreed to participate in the study. Two classes were selected randomly. Both classes were the same in terms of their level of English proficiency and gender and also they had the same English teacher. One class was considered as the control group (class A) and the other one was the experimental group (class B). The students' achievements were measured twice by the prepared pre and posttest. The teacher was provided with a list of positive sentences and praise which had to be used as motivational tools during the semester while giving feedback to the learners. All the participants in class A received motivational supportive feedback and praise along with required help and guidance individually and regularly. The teacher helped the learners know where they were going, how they were going and what to do next. In this way they would feel confident enough to follow the teacher's guidance closely.

Research Design

The research design for this study was an analytical (quantitative) survey which provided a numerical description of the variables.

In the process of the study, teacher motivational feedback and praise were considered as the independent variable that was expected to bring about changes in students' motivation, and hence their achievements which would be the dependent variable. The change in students' motivation and hence their achievements depended on the positive motivational feedback and praise they received.

Instrument

In order to meet the objectives of this study, the following instrument was used:

- Pre and posttests: The tests were prepared by a group of experts and university professors in Central Navid Institute in Shiraz and then they piloted the tests in some classes and calculated their reliability. When they were sure of their reliability and validity, they passed them to other branches and classes to be used regularly. Each test was composed of 50 items in reading, listening and writing based on the students' course book, the second edition of Top Notch, in Navid Institute.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data in the present study is quantitative. The quantitative data of the pre and posttest was analyzed in terms of means, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To report, describe, and summarize the important general characteristics of the sets of the obtained data, descriptive statistics were used.

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the pretest and posttest before and after the treatment and to check whether the teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise had improved the participants' achievements or not, both the paired samples *t*-test and the independent samples *t*-test were run.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preliminaries

The purpose of this section is to provide the analysis of the data collected for the study designed to address the research question, "Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?" The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of praise and feedback on changing motivation toward the English language and hence their achievements.

Descriptive Statistics

To report, describe and summarize the important general characteristics of the sets of the obtained data, descriptive statistics were used.

Table 1 reports the descriptive statistics for the achievements of the experimental group. The mean scores and standard deviations are illustrated as well.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for achievements of Experimental Group

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	75.9333	8.81935	62.00	94.00
Posttest	90.8667	3.54293	86.00	98.00

As Table1 shows the mean score of the achievements of the experimental group is 75.93 in the pretest and 90.86 in the posttest. The participants in the experimental group have the standard deviation of 8.81 in the pretest whereas that of the participants in the posttest is 3.54. Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for the achievements of the control group. The mean scores and standard deviations are illustrated as well.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Achievements of Control Group

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
pretest	82.6000	5.90157	74.00	94.00
Posttest	84.2667	5.48331	76.00	96.00

As Table 2 shows the mean score of the achievements in the control group is 82.60 in the pretest and 84.26 in the posttest. The participants in the control group have the standard deviation of 5.90 in the pretest whereas that of the participants in the posttest is 5.48.

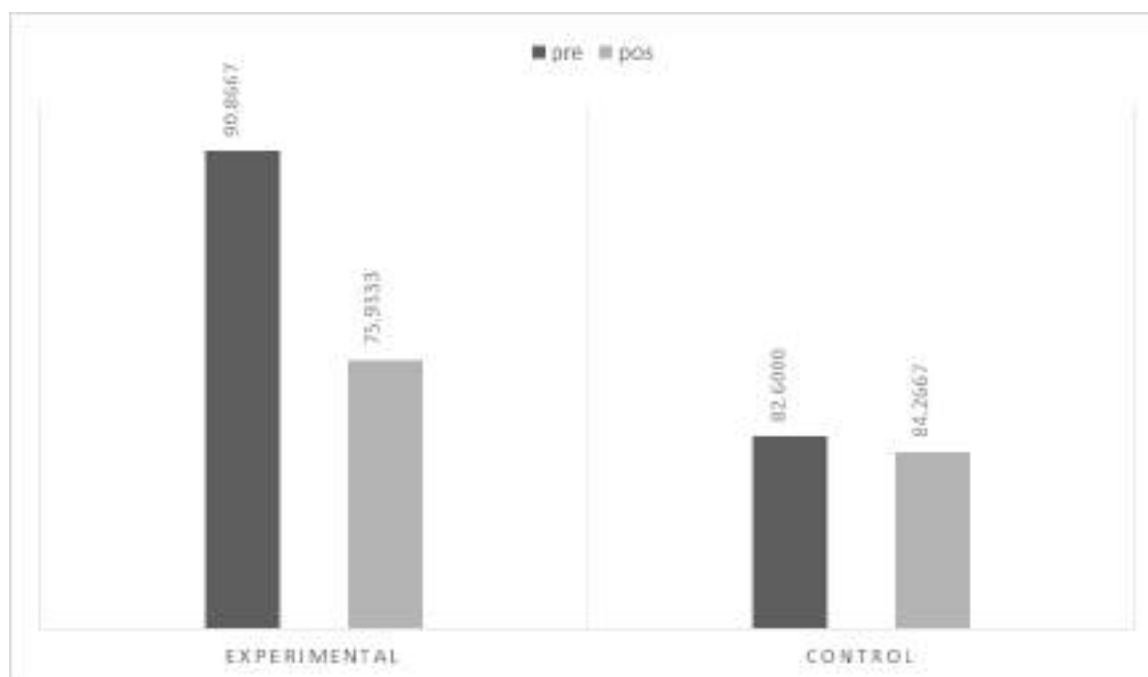


Figure 1: Mean differences of achievements between pretest and posttest of experimental and control Group

Inferential Statistics

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the pretest and posttest before and after the treatment and to check whether the teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise improved the participants' achievements or not, the paired and independent samples *t*-test were run.

In order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group in pre and posttest, a paired samples *t*-test was run.

Table 3: Paired samples statistics for the effect of verbal feedback on the achievements of the experimental group

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre and posttest	-14.93333	7.27488	1.87836	-18.96202	-10.90464	-7.950	14	.000

According to Table 3, there was a significant difference in the scores for no verbal feedback in pretest ($M=75.9333$, $SD=8.81935$) and verbal feedback in posttest ($M=90.8667$, $SD=3.54293$), $t(-7.950) =$, $p < .05$

Table 4: Paired Samples Statistics for the effect of verbal feedback on achievement of the control group

	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the			
				Lower	Upper			
precon – postcont	-1.66667	4.62395	1.19390	-4.22733	.89399	-1.396	14	.184

According to Table 4 there was not a significant difference in the scores for lack of verbal feedback in the pretest ($M=82.6000$, $SD=5.48331$) and posttest ($M=84.2667$, $SD=5.90157$), t (-1.396), $p > .05$. In order to find out if there was a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control groups in pretest, an independent samples t -test was run.

Table 5: Independent Samples t -Test for Difference between Treatment and Control Group in Pretest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	1.852241	0.1843	2.4331	28	.0816	-6.60000	2.739946	1.054143	12.279191
	Equal variances not assumed			2.4331	23.9	.0826	-6.60000	2.739946	1.017125	12.316209

An independent-sample t -test was run to see if there was a significant difference in achievement scores of control group ($M=82.6000$, $SD=.75.9333$) and experimental group ($M=75.9333$, $SD=8.81935$), t (23) = 2.4331, $p = 0.08$. The results suggest that there is no significant difference between the experimental and control group in pretest. In order to find out if there is a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control group in post-test, an independent samples t -test was run.

Table 6: Independent Samples t -Test for Difference between Treatment and Control Group in post-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Interval of the Difference	Confidence of the
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	2.667	.114	-3.916	28	.001	-6.60000	1.68561	-10.05281	-3.14719
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.916	23.955	.001	-6.60000	1.68561	-10.07927	-3.12073

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the difference in achievement scores in oral feedback and no oral feedback conditions. There was a significant difference in the scores for oral feedback ($M=90.8667$, $SD=.91478$) and no oral feedback ($M=84.2667$, $SD=1.41578$), $t(23) = -3.916$, $p < 0.05$. As Tables 5 and 6 show, the results suggest that giving verbal feedback really does have an effect on students' achievements. Specifically, our results suggest that when the participants receive feedback, their achievements in tests increase.

Discussion on Research Question

In discussing the findings, this part answers the research question raised in this study:

1) Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

Research Question

This section addresses the research question: Do teachers' verbal feedback and praise have any effect on Iranian EFL learners' achievements?

The research question asked whether teachers' verbal feedback and praise affect Iranian EFL learners' achievements. To this end, a paired and an independent samples *t*-test were performed. The result of the paired samples *t*-test revealed that the difference between the experimental group in the pretest and posttest, when the experimental group received teacher's verbal feedback and praise, was significant. There were also changes in their achievements. The control and experimental groups were equal in all conditions, so the difference between them was due to the teacher's verbal feedback and praise. The learners' achievements in the experimental group were significantly improved in learning English. After the treatment many participants got better scores in the posttest.

The above findings support Latif, et al., (2011) research findings. The results indicated that socio-psychological variables like attitude and motivation were significantly correlated with learners' performance in the English course conducted at Open University of Malaysia.

The findings echoes clearly what researchers previously found. It was found that evidence for positive correlation of English proficiency with positive attitude and being highly motivated towards learning English has been accumulating, for both instrumental (Brown, 2000) and integrative motivation (LoCastro, 2001). Liu's (2007) study on Chinese university students' attitudes and motivation to learn English and the correlations of both variables with the students' English proficiency also revealed similar findings. In addition, correlation analysis showed that students who had more positive attitudes towards learning English tended to score higher in the proficiency test.

In line with the findings of this study Bartley (1970) stated that his studies showed that there was a direct relationship between positive attitudes and high achievement as well as negative attitudes and low achievement. That positive attitudes enhance achievement has been confirmed and described by Lambert et al. (1963), and Spolsky (1969).

The findings of the study are also in line with the results of previous studies by Haitema (2002) and Saracaloğlu (2000). They revealed that there is a positive relationship between affective characteristics and foreign language achievement.

Finally, the findings supports Catano, 1975, 1976 who states that praise improve adults' performance greatly at skilled tasks, comparing the performance of a control group. In another study by Henderlong and Lepper (2002), in line with the findings of the present study, they report the positive effect of praise on students' performance. Although the findings of the present study seem contradictory to what was reported by Baumeister's et al. (1990). They presented evidence that praise can both facilitate and impede students' performance. A possible explanation for such a result may be over-use or under-use of praise or using praise for a wrong person.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is information provided by an agent (e.g., parent, teacher, peer, book, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. It occurs typically after instruction that seeks to provide knowledge and skills or to develop particular attitudes. Feedback is among the most critical influences on student learning.

On the other side, feedback can have negative effects on the learners if the teachers do not pay enough attention to the students' emotional feelings. As a solution to this threat, this study followed a new strategy to overcome this danger to the students' motivation and feelings. Therefore, the writer took the benefit of the positive effects of praise and positive feedback in order to sugar the pill and enhance the positive effects of feedback on the students' motivation and achievements.

The second strategy which the writer took in conducting this research study was giving the feedback verbally and individually. Accordingly, the verbal feedback which is given individually can help the students to speak about all aspects of teaching and learning face to face with the teacher and this can help both the teacher and the learner to have a real comprehension. Moreover, learners can play a more proactive role in the learning process by participating in feedback-giving practice, building up the habit of self-evaluation, communicating with the teachers and making open dialogue with them. Teachers can also offer support to students in this respect to enhance their self-regulating skills and guide them step by step. Finally, when the feedback is given verbally and individually, teachers can improve their communication strategies, enrich and polish the content of feedback and build rapport with their students.

To respond to the research question, the learners' achievements in the experimental group were significantly improved in learning English. After the treatment, many participants got better scores in the posttest. The control and experimental groups were equal in all aspects, so the difference between them was due to the teacher's verbal feedback and praise.

The instructors, student advisors, curriculum designers, and all other educators involved in the teaching, instructing, and, consequently, motivating of students, must understand the motivation of the students they teach. These professionals should be provided with contemporary, research-based information about the relationships among the motivational factors within specific academic ability domains.

The findings in this research began to dissect the motivational factors of students in the hope that educators will be able to design teaching strategies and curricula more effectively to help their students achieve success. This finding can be used by educators in the development of their instruction.

Implications

This research study has its practical implications for various aspects of language teaching profession. These implications can encourage the relatives of the related field, especially in Iran, both to do more serious researches on the teachers' perceptions as the most involved actors of foreign language teaching stage regarding various aspects of feedback, motivation and their roles in language teaching and to make changes in the manner of feedback giving and even the method of teaching English.

Teacher training programs must pay more attention to the elements of motivation, praise and feedback. A course in the role and method of effective feedback-giving skills and motivation can enhance foreign language teachers' awareness and competence.

In order for the teachers to be aware of the more new beliefs, attitudes, and studies about the role of these elements, teacher training programs must be continued to appear as in-service trainings, and it is better to be a lifelong program for the teachers. The last but not the least important group that this study has a lot of words with is the group of language teachers. Iranian foreign language teachers should be aware of the importance of motivation and feedback in the language classroom, and they should try to improve their knowledge of feedback-giving techniques and motivation. This section presents in detail some implications of this study.

Implications for teaching practice

As for pedagogy, this study has revealed the importance of teacher feedback which can motivate students to learn and hence improve their achievements. This section discusses some implications for teaching practice.

This study implies that teachers need to gain some feedback delivery skills to motivate learners. The relationship between teachers and students, and how students perceive their teachers, can also determine how students interpret the corresponding feedback. This study also implies that teachers should acquire some strategies to deliver feedback that is motivating to students. Hence, communication strategies are one of the important areas teachers can focus on.

Feedback strategy is prompting an exchange of comments between teacher and pupil. As a result, it is important for teachers to build up a positive relationship with the students as it is a major facilitating factor for enhancing students' motivation to learn.

The findings of this study also imply that teachers have to be better equipped theoretically in order to make effective use of teacher feedback as a motivating tool. To support teachers' professional growth in this regard, it is suggested that teacher education providers should cover theoretical background knowledge such as motivation theories with different motivation constructs, so that teachers can tailor their feedback to these ends. Training offered to in-service and pre-service teachers should also include feedback-giving techniques as one of the core elements in pedagogy.

Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations to the present study which should be highlighted so as to avoid any overgeneralizations and misinterpretations of the results. Although this study aimed at studying the impact of teacher feedback and praise on motivation and hence on achievement, the results of this study cannot be generalized because of the small number of the participants. Only 30 students in the two groups (experimental and control group) were involved in the study; the sample might not be representative of the target population of EFL students. To determine its broader application, other populations would need to be examined.

Moreover, the study was mostly conducted during the third semester of the academic year; a thorough study should be done to reveal the effects on the long term. Sufficient time and practice were needed to reveal successful results. Finally, various instruments such as teachers' interviews, learners' interviews, class observations etc. should be used to triangulate and validate the results as much as possible.

Recommendations for further research

This study investigated the role of teacher's individual verbal feedback and praise in enhancing student motivation and hence their achievements. Despite the pedagogical significance of this study, I propose several areas for further investigation in the future:

It would be insightful to explore if the results of this study can be replicated in settings such as other schools and institutes of a different background in Iran or even other places outside Iran, where the context and cultural backgrounds are different.

This study did not plan to, and thus had not done any follow-up work in regard to how students put teachers' feedback into action. In any future longitudinal research, this can be done through lesson observations, study of student works, and follow-up interviews, so that student responsibility can be studied. For lesson observation, if teachers find it intimidating or if students find it uncomfortable for a research observer to be present, researchers can use a video-camera instead.

REFERENCES

- Alhmali, R. (2007). *Student attitudes in the context of the curriculum in Libyan education in middle and high schools* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow).
- Baumeister, R. F., Hutton, D. G., & Cairns, K. J. (1990). Negative effects of praise on skilled performance. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 11, 131–148.
- Bateman, G. R. and Roberts, H. V. (1995). Two-way fast feedback for continuous improvement of teaching and learning. *Quality Progress*, 28 (10), 168.
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B. and Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the black box: assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86 (1), 9-22.
- Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B. and Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for learning: putting it into practice*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the black box. *Phi Delt Kappan*, 80 (2), 139-147.
- Brophy, J. (1981). Teacher praise: A functional analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 51(1), 5-32.
- Brown, H. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. New Jersey: PrenticeHall.
- Burrell, J. (2000). *Error correction preferences of Latino ESL students*. Unpublished MA TESOL thesis, Portland State University, Portland.
- Cameron, J. and Pierce, W. (1994). Reinforcement, rewards, and intrinsic motivation: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 64 (3), 363-373.
- Catano, V. M. (1976). Effectiveness of verbal praise as a function of expertise of source. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 42, 1283–1286.
- Catano, V. M. (1975). Relation of improved performance through verbal praise to source of praise. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 41, 71–74.
- Cheng, H.-f., & Dornyei, Z. (2007). The use of motivational strategies in language instruction: The case of EFL teaching in Taiwan. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1, 153-174.
- Conti, R., & Amabile, T. (1999). Motivation/drive. In M. A. Runco & S. R. Pritzker (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Creativity* (pp. 347-392). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Crookes, G., & Schmidt, R. W. (1991). Motivation: reopening the research agenda. *Language Learning*, 41(4): 469-512.
- Cowie, B. (2005). Pupil commentary on assessment for learning. *The Curriculum Journal*, 16 (2), 137-151.
- Deci, E. L., Koestner, R., & Ryan, R. M. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125, 627–668.
- Delin, C. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (1994). Praise: More than just social reinforcement. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 24, 219–241.
- Dev, P. C. (1997). Intrinsic motivation and academic achievement: What does their relationship imply for the classroom teacher? *Remedial and Special Education*, 18, 12–19.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001a). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001b). *The psychology of the language learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1994a). Understanding L2 motivation: on with the challenge. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78, 515–523.

- Dörnyei, Z. (1994b). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78, 273-284.
- Eisenberger, R., & Cameron, J. (1996). Detrimental effects of reward: Reality or myth? *American Psychologist*, 51, 1153-1166.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Galton, F. (1979). *Hereditary genius: An inquiry into its laws and consequences*. London: Julian Friedman. (Original work published 1869)
- Gardner, R. (2006). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition: a research paradigm. *EUROSLA Yearbook*, 6, 237-260.
- Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds) (2001). *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 1-19). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Gardner, R. C., & Smythe, P.C. (1981), on the development of the attitude/motivation test battery, *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 37, 510-525
- Gardner, R. C., Tremblay, P., & Masgoret, A. (1997). Toward a full model of second language learning: An empirical investigation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81, 344-362.
- Gardner, R. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitude and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gardner, R. (1980). On the validity of affective variables in second language acquisition: conceptual and statistical considerations. *Language Learning*, 30 (2), 255-270.
- Gardner, R., & Lambert, W. (1972). *Attitudes and motivations in second language*. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.
- Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gonzales, R. (2010). Motivational orientation in foreign language learning: The case of Filipino foreign language learners. *TESOL Journal*, 3, 3-28.
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-113.
- Henderlong, J., & Lepper, M. R. (2002). The effects of praise on children's intrinsic motivation: A review and synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(5), 774-795.
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Interpersonal aspects of response: constructing and interpreting teacher written feedback. In K. Hyland and F. Hyland (Eds.) *Feedback in ESL writing: contexts and issues*. (206-224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, F., & Hyland, K. (2001). Sugaring the pill: praise and criticism in written feedback. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10, 185-212.
- Ilies, R., & Judge, T. A. (2005). Goal regulation across time: The effects of feedback and affect. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(3), 453-467.
- Imai, J. (1989). *Comparative study on effectiveness of corrective/noncorrective techniques in EFL classes at college level in Japan*. Unpublished MA TESOL thesis, Portland State University, Portland.
- Jacques, R. S. (2001). Preferences for instructional activities and motivation: A comparison of student and teacher perspectives. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* (pp. 185-199). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kanouse, D. E., Gumpert, P., & Canavan-Gumpert, D. (1981). The semantics of praise. In J. H. Harvey, W. Ickes, & R. F. Kidd (Eds.), *New directions in attribution research* (Vol. 3, pp. 97-115). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Karahan, F. (2007). Language attitudes of Turkish students towards the English language and its use in Turkish context. *Journal of Arts and Sciences Say*, 7 May, 73-87.
- Konold K. E., Miller S. P., & Konold K. B. (2004). Using teacher feedback to enhance student learning. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36 (6), 64-69.
- Kormos, J., & Csizér, K. (2008). Age-related differences in the motivation of learning English as a foreign language: Attitudes, selves, and motivated learning behavior. *Language Learning*, 58(2), 327-355.
- Latif, L. A., Fadzil, M., Bahroom, R., Mohammad, W., & San, N. M. (2011). The role of motivation, attitude, anxiety and instrumental orientaion in influencing learners' performance in English as a second language in OUM. *Global Confrence on Learning and Technology*. Melbourne, Australia: Global learn Asia Pasific. Retrieved from <http://eprints.oum.edu.my/56>
- Leahy, S., Lyon, C., Thompson M., & Wiliam, D. (2005). Classroom assessment minute by minute, day by day. *Educational Leadership*, 63 (3), 14-28.
- Lee, I. (2007). Feedback in Hong Kong secondary writing classrooms: assessment for learning or assessment of learning? *Assessing Writing*, 12, 180-198.
- Lifrieri, V. (2005). *A sociological perspective on motivation to learn EFL: The case of escuelas plurilingües in Argentina*. M.A thesis, University of Pittsburgh.
- Liu, M. (2007). Chinese students' motivation to learn English at the tertiary level. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(1), 126-146.
- LoCastro, Virginia (2001) Individual differences in second language acquisition: attitudes, Learner subjectivity, and L2 pragmatic norms. *System* 29/1, pp.69-89.
- Magilow, D. (1999). Case study #2: Error correction and classroom affect. *UP* 32 (1999), 125—129.
- Martin, J. L. O., & Escabias, E. R. (2007). Motivating factors in the students of FLL (English) at the Faculty of Education University of Granada. *International Journal of Learning*, 13(9), 1-15.
- Miller, S. P. (2002). *Using effective teaching behaviors: validated practices for teaching students with diverse needs and abilities*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Mish, F. (Ed.). (1993). *The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed.). Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster.
- Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (2001). *Second language learning theories*. Routledge.
- Moskowitz, G. (1976). The classroom interaction of outstanding foreign language teachers. *Foreign Language Annals*, 9, 135—157.
- Nicol, D. J. and Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self- egulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31 (2), 199-218.
- Nicols, F. W. (1995). Feedback about feedback. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 6 (3), 289-296.
- Pintrich, P. R., & Schunk, D. H. (2002). *Motivation in education: Theory, research and applications* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Reid, N. (2003). Getting started in pedagogical research in the physical sciences.

- Salili, F. (2001). Teacher-student interaction: attributional implications and effectiveness of teachers' evaluative feedback. In D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (Eds.) *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. (77-97).
- Shanab, M. E., Peterson, D., Dargahi, S., & Deroian, P. (1981). The effects of positive and negative verbal feedback on the intrinsic motivation of male and female subjects. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 115, 195–205.
- Starks, D., & Paltridge, B. (1996). A note on using sociolinguistic methods to study nonnative attitudes towards English. *World Englishes*, 15 (2), 217-224.
- Stein, J. (Ed.). (1990). *The Random House College Dictionary* (8th ed.). New York: Random House.
- Tang, S.-H., & Hall, V. C. (1995). The overjustification effect: A metaanalysis. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 9, 365–404.
- Tella, A. (2010). The impact of attitude on student's academic achievement and learning outcomes in English among secondary school students in Nigeria. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science & Technology Education*, 3(2), 149-156.
- Trang, T. T. T., & Baldauf, R. (2007). Demotivation: Understanding resistance to English language learning - the case of Vietnamese students. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 4(1), 79-105.
- Tunstall, P., & Gipps, C. (1996). Teacher feedback to young children in formative assessment: a typology. *British Educational Research Journal*, 22 (4), 389-404.
- Vigil, N., & Oller, J. (1976). Rule fossilization: A tentative model. *Language Learning*, 26, 148—162.
- Visser, P. S., (2008). Attitudes in the social context: the impact of social network composition on individual-level attitude strength. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 87(6), 779.
- Wiggins, G. (2004). *Assessment as feedback. New horizons for learning*. Retrieved 18 Sept 2007, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/assess/wiggins.htm>
- Wu, W. V., & Wu, P. N. (2009). Creating an authentic EFL learning environment to enhance student' motivation to study English. *Asian EFL Journal*, 10(4), 212-226.

IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' LOGICAL INTELLIGENCE AND THEIR USE OF SPEAKING STRATEGIES IN COMMUNICATION: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

Elham Sadripour (Corresponding Author)

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e-Heidarieh Branch, Iran

Email: elhamsadripour@gmail.com

Khalil Motallebzadeh

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e-Heidarieh Branch, Iran

Email: k.motalleb@iautorbat.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

Improving language learning process has been the main concern of educational authorities during the past decades and many researchers have been looking for the effective methods and techniques which may lead to the improvement of this process. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between Iranian intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication. To this end three hundred and sixty undergraduate EFL learners from several universities in Iran were provided with McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory and oral communication strategy inventory (OCSI). A semi-structured interview was also conducted to collect qualitative data and twenty-five participants were randomly selected to participate in this section. Results of data analysis indicated significant relationship between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English strategies. Qualitative data analysis revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategies among both male and female learners. This study has encouraging implications for EFL teachers, EFL learners and syllabus designers. EFL teachers and syllabus designers are recommended to have a special attention to the instruction of different strategies.

KEYWORDS: Language Learning Strategies; Speaking Strategies; Logical Intelligence; Gender

INTRODUCTION

Individual differences have been one of the most important research topics in language learning area. According to Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory, all individuals are genius but in different ways. Howard Gardner introduced theory of Multiple Intelligences in early 1980s and defined intelligence as a composite of different abilities or aptitudes and proposed that intelligence is not a single universal unchangeable entity; rather, it is made up of seven subcategories that every individual possesses to different extents and can be nurtured and developed through education (as cited from Hashemian & Adibpour, 2012, p.26).

Gardner introduced seven intelligences in 1983 (i.e. logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical and spatial intelligences). Then in 1999 he added naturalist intelligence and existential intelligence as the eighth and ninth intelligences to this list. Different studies were conducted in order to investigate the relationship between Multiple Intelligences and other learning variables for instance Motallebzadeh & Manouchehri, (2009), in their study investigated the relationship between EFL learners' Multiple Intelligences and their scores on the reading section of IELTS and found a positive relation between logical-mathematical intelligence and reading score of EFL learners. The issue of learning strategies plays a crucial role in language learning area. According to Oxford (1990), "learning strategies are behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable" (Cited from Davar Asl Bandarabbasi & Karbalaie, 2013, p. 144). Speaking strategies are important parts of language learning strategies. Speaking as a specific language skill is very important especially in communication, but many [English as a Foreign Language (EFL)] learners believe that it is more difficult than other skills. Using some strategies can help students to overcome linguistic difficulties.

Although there are variety of studies which have investigated the relationship between individual variations and other variables such as use of language learning strategies but a limited number of researches have focused on speaking strategies especially in the context of Iran, consequently this study aims to investigate the existence of any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

During the last few decades, a large body of research in language learning area has been devoted to individual differences. It seems that the learners' performances are different based on their multiple intelligences.

Multiple Intelligences

Introducing multiple intelligences theory challenged the traditional view about intelligence. Traditional intelligence view, considered intelligence as a single, fixed ability and focused on verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences, leaving the other types of intelligence disregarded. Early IQ tests just measured individuals' ability on these two intelligences, so students who were better logically or verbally were considered as intelligent.

Language Learning Strategies

Studies about second language learning strategies were prominent in 1970s when the researchers were very interested to know why some learners were more successful in their learning. Then the researchers tried to discover the characteristics of "good" learners and subsequently strategies which were used by these learners. According to Stern (1992), language learning strategies are broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques employed by learners when they consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals. In this section some related studies on multiple intelligences and speaking strategies will be reviewed.

Related Studies on Multiple Intelligences

Spirovska (2013) in a study reviewed Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and definition of different types of intelligences. He exemplified some activities and tasks which are appropriate for different students based on different intelligences. Spirovska (2013) further mentioned that implementation of multiple intelligences theory is important because students can use their strengths to foster learning. She concluded that there are not enough tests in order to measure different types of intelligences. Furthermore, before implementation of MI theory practically, there is need for trainings and workshops in order to raise instructors' awareness of multiple intelligences. Preparation for choosing enough activities and tasks which cater different types of intelligences is another issue; however, benefits of implementation of MI theory should not be ignored. Enhancing learner centeredness in class, using diversity of activities which are appropriate for different intelligences, and raising teachers' awareness about diversity of potentials in the classroom are beneficial issues in implementation of MI theory in the classroom (Spirovska, 2013).

Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014) conducted a study with the purpose of investigating the relationship between multiple intelligences, self efficacy, and students' academic achievement. Total participants in this study were 85 Saudi female third intermediate students including 43 gifted and 42 regular students. Instruments which were used in this study consisted of Multiple Intelligences Inventory, Self-efficacy Scale and Language Achievement Test. Findings revealed that interpersonal intelligence was the leading intelligence among both gifted and regular groups. Also it was found that gifted students had higher level of self efficacy in comparison with regular students. Among gifted students, significant positive correlations were found between logical intelligence and their grammar scores, interpersonal intelligence and their speaking scores, but negative significant correlations were found between bodily intelligence and their listening scores, intrapersonal and their listening scores and musical intelligence and their reading scores. Furthermore, for regular students there was not significant correlation between MIs and their achievement in different language skills. There wasn't any significant relationship between self efficacy and EFL achievement.

Related Studies on Language Learning Strategy

A study was conducted by Roohani and Rabiei (2013) in order to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' LLS on one hand and their multiple intelligences, L2 proficiency on the other hand. Participants in this study were ninety undergraduate EFL learners (males and females), who were presented by Strategy Inventory, Multiple Intelligences Scales, and Test of English as a Foreign Language. Data analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between learners' LLS and their MI and a positive but not significant relationship between L2 proficiency and LLS. The result of further analysis indicated significant correlations between some strategy types and several individual intelligences. The highest correlation was found between intrapersonal intelligence and cognitive strategies and the lowest one was found between naturalist intelligence and affective strategies. Shangarffam and Zand (2012) in their study investigated the relationship between Communicative Strategies (CS) and three of the Multiple Intelligences. To this end participants of this study, who were senior English language students majoring in English Literature or English Translation at Islamic Azad University in Iran

were presented with two questionnaires including MIDAS as Multiple Intelligences inventory and OCSI as the inventory for Communicative Strategies. Findings revealed a significant correlation between using oral communication strategies and these three types of intelligences. Moreover, a significant correlation was found between interpersonal intelligence and OCSI speaking strategies while interpersonal intelligence had the lowest correlation with listening strategies.

In sum, review of the literature indicated that individuals with different characteristics have different performances in EFL context. It seems that students' performance is different based on their multiple intelligences. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of different speaking strategies?

Q2. Are there any significant differences between Iranian male and female EFL learners regarding their use of speaking strategies?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Setting

The sample for the current study consisted of three hundred and sixty intermediate undergraduate EFL learners including 188 females and 172 males from several universities in Iran (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan). According to Morgan's table, (Morgan, 1970 "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities", Educational and Psychological Measurement) this study's sample size should be three hundred and sixty four (Considering the 95% of the level of confidence and 0.05 degree of accuracy). The questionnaire was distributed in both forms of paper and via the internet among more than 1000 Iranian EFL learners at these universities (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan) but three hundred and sixty intermediate EFL learners answered the questionnaire completely. All of the participants were native speakers of Farsi, whose age varied from 18-25 years old. They had already studied English as a part of their curricula in their secondary school or high school. These students were from different subfields of the study within English Language field and all of them were studying in public universities. Twenty five participants (14 females and 11 males) participated in post-survey interview.

Instrumentation

Following instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present study.

McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory

To determine the participants' MI scores, McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences (MI) Inventory (1999) was administered. The questionnaire includes nine sections measuring nine types of intelligences including natural, musical, logical/mathematical, intrapersonal, interpersonal,

bodily/kinesthetic, linguistic, existential, and spatial/visual intelligences and each section consists of 10 items. Overall internal consistency of 0.85 to 0.90 was reported for this questionnaire (Al-Balhan, 2006; Hajhashemi & Wong, 2010; Razmjoo, 2008; Razmjoo, Sahragard, & Sadri, 2009) (cited from Khosravi & Saidi, 2014). The items were five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagreed) to 5 (completely agreed). To avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the participants, Persian version of this questionnaire was used. Validity of the Persian version of this questionnaire has been checked in the study of Hajhashemi and Bee Eng (Hajhashemi & Bee Eng, 2010). Hajhashemi and Bee Eng (2010), have reported, a high reliability for the Persian version of this questionnaire. In this study the researcher had a special focus on logical intelligence. The reason for choosing this intelligence was that although study about using language learning strategies and other variables like multiple intelligences has received much attention in recent decades, but it seems that there are not enough studies with a special focus on different types of intelligences. Furthermore the researcher is interested to investigate the existence of possible relationship between this intelligence and EFL learners' use of speaking strategies.

Speaking Strategy Questionnaire

Nakatani (2006) has developed Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI). This questionnaire includes two sections, strategies for coping with speaking problems (32 items) and strategies for coping with listening problems (26 items). Shangarffam and Zand (2012) in their study used Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) and they reported the reliability index of 0.96 for this questionnaire. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication, for this reason speaking strategy section was taken from OCSI. The reliability of speaking section of this questionnaire was calculated via Cronbach's alpha, and it was 0.83. Speaking strategy section consists of eight categories: social affective strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking, fluency-oriented strategies, accuracy-oriented strategies, message reduction and alteration strategies, message abandonment strategies, nonverbal strategies while speaking, attempt to think in English strategies. This is a Likert scale type questionnaire and students should choose their answer based on the frequency which they use speaking strategies ranging from "never" to "always". It should be mentioned that participants were asked to provide some demographic information, such as age, gender, and level of language proficiency.

Semi-Structured Interview

In order to elicit in-depth and open-ended responses, three interview questions concerning speaking strategies were developed. The interview questions were about problems which EFL learners encounter when speak with others, participants' idea about usefulness of speaking strategies and particular useful speaking strategies. Twenty five participants (14 females and 11 males) were selected randomly to participate in post-survey interview. Interview from each individual lasted about 15 minutes. Qualitative data were used as supplement to the quantitative data. The interview questions were:

- What problems do you encounter when you speak English?
- Why speaking strategies are useful?
- What helpful speaking strategies do you use when you speak English?

Procedure

Participants for the current study were three hundred and sixty intermediate undergraduate EFL learners including 188 females and 172 males from several universities in Iran (Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan, Birjand, and Gorgan). These students were from different subfields of study within English Language field and their age varied from 18 to 25 years old. As instruments, McKenzie's MI Inventory (1999) and speaking strategy inventory (Nakatani, 2006) were used to collect the data. In order to be easier on the part of participants, the researcher integrated the two questionnaires in form of one test.

Furthermore, the test included some demographic information, such as age, gender, and level of language proficiency. The reliability coefficient of McKenzie's MI Inventory was calculated via Cronbach's alpha, which was 0.73. Similarly, the reliability of speaking strategy questionnaire was measured with the use of Cronbach's alpha and it was 0.83. To collect the required data the questionnaire was distributed in both forms of paper and via internet among more than 1000 EFL learners, and from all EFL learners who received questionnaire; three hundred and sixty intermediate EFL learners answered the questionnaire completely. The researcher analyzed questionnaires which their participants' levels of language proficiency were intermediate. Participants' level of language proficiency was determined by themselves based on the courses they had passed in language institutes. At the beginning, participants were informed about the purpose of study, also they were assured that their information would be kept confidential. Then they were asked to fill out the questionnaire. The data collection procedure lasted about one month during the academic year of 2014-2015. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS software 20.0.

Twenty-five of the participants (14 females and 11 males) were selected randomly to take part in the interview section of the data collection procedure in order to collect qualitative data. Participants were informed that their answers would be tape recorded. Interview from each individual lasted about 15 minutes. Participants' responses on interview questions were transcribed and then coded for further data analyses. To elicit more valid information from the participants, the interview questions were asked and answered in Farsi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants' Demographic Information

Before presenting the results related to the questions, in this section, participants' demographic information including their number and gender is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Female	188	52.2	52.2	52.2
	Male	172	47.8	47.8	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 1, 360 language learners participated in this study out of which 188 participants are females and the rest (N=172) are males.

Reliability Index of the Instruments

In order to ensure the questionnaires' reliability indexes, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for both of the questionnaires using SPSS 20.0 (Table 2).

Table 2: Results of Reliability

Speaking Strategies	32	.83
Multiple intelligences	30	.735

Table 2 shows that both instruments, Speaking Strategies ($\alpha=.83$) and logical Intelligence ($\alpha=.735$) enjoyed relatively high reliability indexes.

Logical Intelligence

In order to investigate participants' logical intelligence, descriptive statistics including mean, minimum, maximum and standard deviation were calculated. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Logical Intelligence

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Logical	360	22.00	42.00	34.07	3.60123
Valid N (listwise)	360				

Speaking Strategies

Similarly, descriptive statistics related to speaking strategies, e.g. social affective, fluency-oriented, negotiating for meaning, accuracy-oriented, message reduction, nonverbal strategy, message abandonment, and attempt to think in English are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Speaking Strategy

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SA	360	2.17	4.83	3.6542	.49047
FL	360	2.33	5.00	3.8657	.61237
NFM	360	2.25	5.00	3.9368	.69318
AC	360	2.00	5.00	3.8467	.60879
MES	360	3.00	5.00	3.8646	.53301
NVS	360	1.00	5.00	3.9861	.84845
MA	360	1.25	4.25	2.5243	.71562
ATE	360	1.00	5.00	3.2500	.93000
Valid N (listwise)	360				

According to Table 4, nonverbal strategy (NVS) ranks first ($M=3.98$). Then comes negotiation for meaning (NFM, $M=3.93$). Fluency-oriented (FL, $M=3.8657$), Message reduction (MES, $M=3.8646$), Accuracy-oriented (AC, $M=3.84$), Social affective (SA, $M=3.65$), Attempt to think in English (ATE, $M=3.25$), Message abandonment (MA, $M=2.52$) hold third to eighth places respectively. According to these data, it can be concluded that nonverbal strategy was the most preferred strategy among these participants. Accordingly, message abandonment gained the lowest mean among the speaking strategies.

Relationship between Logical Intelligence and Speaking Strategies

Correlation between logical intelligence and each component of speaking strategies was investigated. Data are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Results of Correlation between Logical Intelligence and Speaking Strategies

Correlations		logical	SA	FL	NFM	AC	MES	NVS	MA	ATE
logical	Pearson Correlation	1	.068	.098	-.032	.133*	-.009	.046	-.021	.170**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.195	.064	.550	.011	.869	.384	.685	.001
	N	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360

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

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

Note: SA stands for social affective; FL stands for fluency oriented; NFM negotiation for meaning; AC stands for accuracy-oriented; MES stands for message reduction; NVS stands for non-verbal strategy; MA stands for message abandonment; ATE stands for attempt to think in English.

As table 5 displays, there is a statistically significant correlation between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented strategies [$r=.133$, sig (two-tailed) $=.011<.05$], and attempts to think in English strategies [$r=.17$, sig (two-tailed) $=.001<.05$]. Other speaking strategies are not significantly correlated with logical intelligence (sig $>.05$). It can be concluded that participants who are more logically intelligent make more frequent use of strategies which are in accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English categories.

Results of Semi-Structured Interview

Twenty-five participants (11 males, 14 females) were selected randomly to participate in post-survey interview in order to gather qualitative data about students' speaking difficulties, helpful speaking strategies and the usefulness of speaking strategies. With regard to the first interview question, "What problems do you encounter when you speak English?" most of the males (63%) and females (64%) believed that lack of vocabulary knowledge is their most important speaking difficulty. For example, one interviewee said "I don't have enough vocabulary knowledge,

sometimes I can't find an appropriate word to express what I mean." Lack of grammatical knowledge (males, 54%, females, 50%) and fear of making speaking mistakes (males, 36%, females, 42%) were reported as other important speaking difficulties. Pronunciation and intonation ranked as the two last speaking difficulties.

Table 6: Speaking Difficulties for both Male and Female Interviewees

Speaking difficulty	Frequency (Female)	Percentage	Frequency (Male)	Percentage
Vocabulary	9	64%	7	63%
Grammar	7	50%	6	54%
Fear of making speaking mistake	6	42%	4	36%
Pronunciation	4	28%	3	27%
Intonation	1	7.14%	1	9.09%

As far as helpful speaking strategies are concerned, the analysis of interview data revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategy among interviewees. The majority of interviewees referred to using familiar words and short utterances as the most helpful strategies. For example one of the females said that "I try to use words which are familiar to me to reduce my anxiety." None of the participants referred to strategies of attempt to think in English or message abandonment. Repeating utterances, using gestures, paying attention to rhythm and intonation while speaking were reported as other speaking strategies. Message reduction strategies were the most frequently mentioned strategy among males and females. Females reported message reduction strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies with a higher frequency in compare with males.

Table 7: Helpful Speaking Strategies for both Male and Female Interviewees

Strategies	Frequency (Females=14)	Percentage	Frequency (Males =11)	Percentage
MES	9	64%	6	54%
FL	5	35%	4	36%
AC	3	21%	3	27%
NFM	7	50%	3	27%
NVS	6	42%	5	45%
SA	1	7.14%	1	9.09%
ATE	—	—	—	—
MA	—	—	—	—

Discussion of the Results

The present study was conducted in order to investigate the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication.

According to the results of this study a positive significant correlation was found between logical intelligence and accuracy-oriented and attempt to think in English strategies. It is similar to the

findings of Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014) who found positive relationship between logical intelligence and students' grammar scores. Since accuracy-oriented strategies concern about grammar and rule and attempt to think in English strategies deal with construction of sentences, it can be concluded that the results of the current study confirm what was found by Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014).

Results of the interview in the case of helpful speaking strategies indicated that message reduction and alteration strategies were reported as the most helpful speaking strategies, which is in line with what was found by Nakatani (2006), Li Lin (2013), and Metcalfe and Nook-Ura (n.d) on oral communication research. It seems that using familiar words and simple expressions are very effective and by using these strategies the speaker will be able to decrease the probability of making errors. Furthermore, it was found that message reduction strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies are mentioned more frequently by females. According to Færch and Kasper (1980), using message reduction strategies helps students to avoid making speaking errors. It seems that females are more worried about making speaking errors and prefer to use familiar words and short utterances instead of taking risk. Negotiation for meaning which happens in the situation of misunderstanding makes the input more comprehensible for the people who are involved in the interaction. Higher frequency of reporting of this strategy by females may be explained in this way that women's main purpose of using the language is to create and maintain social cohesiveness and their activities are generally co-operative rather than competitive, therefore, they feel more comfortable to negotiate with others. On the whole, females are more interested to participate in interactions and are more able to maintain negotiation.

According to the results of the interview regarding speaking difficulties, lack of vocabulary knowledge was reported as the most frequently mentioned speaking difficulty. This finding supports what was found by Li Lin (2013) who referred to insufficient vocabulary knowledge as one of the main communication difficulties. Lack of grammatical knowledge, fear of making speaking mistakes and having problem with pronunciation and intonation were detected as other speaking difficulties respectively among both males and females. Li Lin (2013) explained that negative psychological reactions such as anxiety and fear affect oral communication of college students. No significant difference was observed between males and females with regard to their reported speaking difficulties.

CONCLUSIONS

Current study aimed to explore the relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies in communication. In order to serve the purpose of the study, a null hypothesis was proposed. The null hypothesis which claimed that there is no significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of different speaking strategies was rejected. Results of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' logical intelligence and their use of speaking strategies. It is similar to the findings of Shangarffam and Zand (2012)

which revealed significant correlation between learners' three types of multiple intelligences and their use of oral communication strategies.

Qualitative data analysis in the case of helpful speaking strategies revealed that message reduction strategies are the most frequently mentioned strategies among the participants. Besides, it was found that message reduction and negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies were reported with higher frequencies by females. Most of the participants believed that using speaking strategies is very helpful for them in order to overcome speaking difficulties, also by using such strategies they can equip themselves in case of any speaking deficiencies. Lack of vocabulary knowledge was detected as the main speaking difficulty among these participants which is in agreement with the finding of Lin (2013) who found insufficient vocabulary knowledge as one of the common oral communication difficulties.

Pedagogical Implications

This study has promising implications for EFL teachers, EFL learners and syllabus designers. Since many EFL learners are not familiar with some speaking strategies and the effectiveness of applying such strategies, EFL teachers and syllabus designers are recommended to have a special attention to the instruction of different strategies.

With regards to speaking difficulties, it is suggested that teachers use different techniques of learning vocabulary, encourage language learners to improve their vocabulary knowledge and create a friendly atmosphere in the class so that every individual is able to speak without any fear of making mistakes in order to improve learners' speaking skill. EFL learners are recommended to use different speaking strategies. Using speaking strategies help learners to overcome speaking difficulties and speak more fluently. Learners should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses in applying different strategies. Syllabus designers can use the results of the current study in order to add strategy training to EFL materials.

Suggestions for Further Research

Results of the present study can be a guideline for conducting numerous valuable studies on speaking strategies. Although investigating language learning strategies has been one of the main research topics during the past decades, it seems more studies with a focus on specific strategies are needed. In addition, the current study attempted to focus on speaking strategies, while investigating other strategies including reading, writing and listening may provide more in-depth and rewarding information for EFL contexts. Other studies can also be conducted on the possible relationship between learners' variables such as their field of study, social class and cultural background and their use of speaking strategies.

REFERENCES

- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th Ed.). New York: Pearson Education.
- Davar Asl Bandarabbasi, R., & Karbalaee, A. (2013). The Study of the Relationship between Multiple Intelligences and Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL learners. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*, 2(2), 143-149.
- Færch, C., & Kasper, G. (1980). Processes and Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and

- Communication. *Interlanguage studies bulletin utrecht*, 5(1), 47-118.
- Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st century*.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. Basic books.
- Hajhashemi, K., & Eng, W. B. (2010). A Validation Study of the Persian Version of McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory to Measure Profiles of Pre-University Students. *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. & Hum*, 18 (2), 343-355.
- Hashemian, M., & Adibpour, M. (2012). Relationship between Iranian L2 Learners' Multiple Intelligences and Language Learning Strategies. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics*, 3(1), 25-43.
- Khosravi, M., & Saidi, M. (2014). Investigating the Possible Relationship between Multiple Intelligences and Self-efficacy: *The Case of Iranian EAP Instructors*. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 11(1), 90-97.
- Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educ Psychol Meas*.
- Koura, A. A., & Al-Hebaishi, S. M. (2014). The Relationship between Multiple Intelligences, Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement of Saudi Gifted and Regular Intermediate Students. *Educational Research International*, 3(1), 48-70.
- Lin, H. L. (2013). Perceptions, Difficulties and Strategy Preferences of English Oral Communication for Taiwanese College Students. Retrived from: 140.127.82.166/retrieve/22330/101NPC05741006-001.pdf
- Metcalf, M., & Noom-Ura, S. (n.d). Communication Strategy Use of High and Low Proficiency Learners of English at a Thai University. Retrived from: 164.115.22.25/ojs222/index.php/LEARN/article/view/229
- Motallebzadeh, K., & Manouchehri, M. (2009). On the relationship between multiple intelligences and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Reading scores of Iranian learners. *The Quarterly Journal of Fundamentals of Mental Health*, 11(2 (42)), 135-140.
- Nakatani, Y. (2006). Developing an oral communication strategy inventory. *Modern Language Journal*, 90, 151-168.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York: Newbury House.
- Roohani, A., & Rabiei, S. (2013). Exploring language learning strategy use: The role of multiple intelligences, proficiency and gender. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)*, 5(3), 41-64.
- Shangarffam, N., & Zand, A. (2012). Iranian Foreign Language Learners' Multiple Intelligences and Their Use of Oral Communication Strategies. *The Iranian EFL Journal*, 8(4), 310-328.
- Spirovska, E. (2013). Integrating Multiple Intelligences in Teaching English as a Foreign Language-Seeu Experiences and Practices. *South East European University Review*, 9(1), 9-20.

FROM LACK OF HUMANITY TO SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND VISION IN *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND *BLINDNESS*

Maryam Sadeghi

Department of English, Mahshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mahshahr, Iran
Email: m.sadeghi45@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Civilization and industrialization are two important factors that make people believe they are just depriving of savagery and brutality. But practical studies show exactly something different. How groups of people behave, when they are put in extreme situations is the very unpleasant truth about human being in general. Both Blindness and Lord of the Flies deal with fragility of human society, no matter the people who are playing role are children or grown-ups, who by definition should know better. Both novels have got beautiful plots in which no one enforces rules and laws on the characters, so they begin to show their true nature. The present study is undertaken to investigate the process of a journey from lack of humanity to a sort of self-consciousness which happens at the end of both Blindness by Saramago and Lord of the Flies by Golding. In order to get the best result the two novels have been studied precisely and lots of different articles and critical essays have been analyzed, which shows people drift into cruelty and savagery easily but can also drift out of it. In Blindness losing sight, and being a part from society in a deserted tropical island in Lord of the Flies causes limitation. Limitation in any form makes people to rebel. Although in the process of both novels, any kind of savagery, brutality, filth and social collapse can be observable and both writers believe that human being has the potential of being animal images, but they both also want to show that the very nature of human being is divine. Children's weeping at the end of Lord of the Flies and Doctor's remark at the end of Blindness "I don't think we did go blind, I think we are blind, blind but seeing, blind people who can see but do not see", show exactly the matter of insight at the end of both novels. The fact that divinity exists in the very nature of human being is the indubitable aim that makes this research truly valuable.

KEYTERMS: savagery, animal images, divinity.

INTRODUCTION

Humanity is the most unsolved crucial problem of today's world. Many experts are now wandering to find a reasonable answer to the question of divinity of human nature. Whether human being is essentially divine and is always connected to a powerful source of divinity, or he has been left alone in the world, is the very essential problem human being is trying to answer. Many psychologists, sociologists, writers and humanist experts have long been interested to know, as Gioia (1985) states "how groups of people behave when put in extreme situations". They wanted to reveal an unpleasant truth about society. Many story tellers have asserted their point of views regarding this issue of humanity and human nature through their writings. Some have an optimistic view regarding the very nature of human beings, some have got pessimistic

view. The present paper is intended to investigate a different view regarding human nature in a parallel study on Saramago's *Blindness* and Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Both novels represent people who are left alone to deal with themselves, grown-ups in *Blindness* and young boys in *Lord of the Flies*. In such a situation Chase (2009) believes "without sight, there is an awful disrobing of human nature, a nakedness of the worst kind". Their difference with the boys in *Lord of the Flies* is that "they don't, hoarding food, attacking others, raping and killing." The process from lack of humanity to self-consciousness and vision is going to be discussed step by step and surely with a positive point of view. Although it seems Saramago is much more positive than Golding, due to the fact that characters in *Blindness* are not as wild and cruel as the boys in *Lord of the Flies*, the formers are grown-ups having some experiences and the later are young boys who love power and insurrection. From the publication of both novels lots of different critical essays tried to prove that human being is essentially savage. And will come back to its essence whenever it is appropriate. But the present paper is aimed at proving the fact that man is capable of savagery, but he is also capable of peace and order. How at the end of both novels a sort of vision and self-consciousness takes place is a matter of consideration. What both authors are going to show is a sort of struggle between right and wrong. The very negative view point that "human nature has a wicked side and without punishment to keep it in check, society would degenerate into a barbaric anarchy" would be referred to, investigated, criticized and at last will be rejected to some extent, in the present paper. Both novels have got some common images which lead the characters toward self-consciousness. Images of fire, loneliness, lack of interaction, food are the most important images in both novels. These images portray the gradual decline of morals and a gradual return toward pure humanity in general.

A PASSAGE FROM DEPRAVITY TO HUMANITY

The very essence or nature of human being and his capability of indecency and brutality is a very challenging point which creates an unconscious pessimism regarding human being in general. In both *Blindness* and *Lord of the Flies* the authors want to focus on the fact that there is a fundamental potential in every person to commit evil acts. Chase (2009) states that "people slowly deal with their lack of seeing and lack of insight towards one another.....without sight, life and history fade in favor of death and disease." A gradual decay and shift toward animality is observable during the process of both novels. Losing sight is the very prime image, which lead people to lose their humanity gradually. Pointer (1995) believes that "the blind prisoners, as well as the blind residents of the city depicted after the mental hospital burns to the ground.... Have forgotten how to use toilet, and they defected in the streets which run for filth." What happens that people move toward collapse and while they are at the edge of despair, they can have the power to come back to their pure nature? Basic human needs are the most important points which lead the society toward a so called jungle.

IMAGES WHICH LEAD TO BRUTALITY AND ANIMALITY

Need for food and Love of Power

The first and almost the most important need of a human being is need for food. People need food to be alive and lack of food makes them rebel against one another and against society. As

the story-*Blindness*- goes on the condition and situation of the people is getting worse and worse. At the beginning parts of the novel they share food, but after a while they came to fact that in order to survive, any savagery is acceptable. In such an environment, even the basic necessities of life- food, medicine, and clear water- are often lacking. Snedeker mentions that “they find themselves in a society that no longer functions. Blind people roam the streets looking for food and shelter”. The blind are placed in quarantine without any leader or any rule, so they have to deal with themselves. Their first and most important need is food. So the blinds drifted apart from society are drifting apart from humanity towards animality; self-serving and ultimately geared toward survival.

That is what exactly happened in *Lord of the Flies*, finding food and keeping oneself against wild animals are two important factors which forced the children to gradually disrupt their childhood innocence. Hunting a pig and putting it as a sign of power shows that children are becoming cruel even toward each other. When the children were divided into two groups, the risk of cruelty becomes more and more. Although despite all these movements toward animality, both authors, at the bottom of their hearts believe that human nature is divine and is connected to a source of divinity. Cioia believes “for this author [Saramago], people under extreme conditions are neither unabashedly evil nor purely benevolent. Rather they are unnerving combination of both. In terms of crisis, our response to circumstances are intensified and transformed, but rarely simplified.” Struggle over power is the most crucial issue which made the boys to become almost enemies.

Love of power also made the situation worse and worse for the blinds in *Blindness*. Conditions degenerate, as an armed clique gains control over food deliveries, “subjugating their fellow internees and exposing them to rape and deprivation.” Faced with starvation, internees do battle and burn down the quarantine. And this is the turning point of the story which helps the prisoners to escape that unpleasant condition to a civilized world.

Sexual Desire

Another natural need which treats human society is sex. Although as Chase (2009) mentioned “sex in the novel [*Blindness*] isn’t erotic if anything approaches salacious, it is the cruelty men reap on people they cannot see.” Human being is capable of treating like an animal whenever he understands that no one can see him. Thus he is going to transgress social norms. The blinds acquiesce to send their wives to another ward and instead they can have food. Fortunately sexual desire is not observable in *Lord of the Flies* because they are all boys and they might not experience it before.

Inability to Interact

Human being is to some extent similar to animals. The only power which makes them different is the power of mind and logic. People are able to interact with each other. They can sympathy. They need empathy when they are in need. Losing sight gradually made the blind to lose insight and not having any logic or so they are just by definition human beings. They act exactly like animals due to inability to interact. Conventional rules of behavior no longer apply and a social and behavioral collapse is rapidly spreading. Pointer (1995) believes that “Saramago’s goal was to demonstrate the fragility of human society, using allegory, to show that basic human decency

is, in his view at least, an illusion and that it too would largely vanish, if society collapsed.” What helps the blind to escape quarantine is the murder of hoodlums. After escape something new happens for the prisoners. A new horizon, exactly like what happened in *Lord of the Flies*.

Lord of the Flies starts with a group of innocent boys around fourteen or so, who are left alone on a deserted tropical island and gradually their innocence fade and savagery, replaced it. Both Golding and Saramago have got a dual perspective toward human nature. In *Lord of the Flies*, at the beginning the boys pay more attention to playing than other things and just enjoyed their life. Without grown-ups and without any rules to be controlled by, life was really enjoyable. But after a while finding food and being responsible for one’s own life and survival, changed the innocents to a savage one. As it was mentioned in the previous part, food was the basic need of the boys.

The time when Simon was killed by the other boys is the climax of savagery, brutality, and animality. Hunting Ralph as an animal with other boys, or jacks action to ignite the forest all were symptom of savagery and brutality in *Lord of the Flies*. But the question is why those innocence creatures changed so much and is there any hope they regain their innocence and childhood purity. To some extent Golding believes that people are innately savage or evil, and only the constraints of society of society keep people from exhibiting full savagery. As the novel progresses Golding very professionally and acutely shows how well-behaved, orderly children are longing toward barbarity and cruelty he shows how destructive human being can be. Children in chapter twelve are completely different from the one in chapter three.

Images which lead to humanity

In both novels some images are very important clues which lead the characters and even the readers to a source of divinity and purity.

Fire

In both novels fire became a bridge to let the characters escape the prison like situation. So symbolically they get rid of their inside beasts and enter the civilized world. The signal fire functions as a kind of measurement for the desire of the boys to get rid of that deserted island. At the beginning of *Lord of the Flies* they are all eager to maintain the fire to be rescued as quickly as possible. But in the middle of the novel the boys lost their interest to be rescued and return to a rule based society. But, at the end of the novel, igniting fire everywhere in the forest, symbolically shows their inner wish to get out the present evil centered position. Steinbach (2013) mentions “One of the most vivid and haunting uses of imagery can be found in the description of the patch of island which the boys burn what they intended to be a "small fire." In *Blindness* when internees battled and burnt down the asylum, they could escape and make some basic changes in their condition.

Blindness and loneliness

Blindness as a disease and being on an island both are images for loneliness and demonstrate a sort of internal conflict for the characters. In *Blindness*, the characters do some actions for gaining food and responding to their natural needs which might be against their will and at the end they come to a sort consciousness that being blind is just an excuse for acting against

morality. That's what exactly happens in *Lord of the Flies* where both internal and external conflict can be seen. Ralph as the leader of the civilized group is in conflict with Jack who is the leader of savage group. Literary analysis essay asserts "Golding reveals the growing tension between civilization and savagery in three key moments...he uses the setting, characters, and symbolism in *Lord of the Flies* to give reader a detailed description of these two faces of man." There are also sentences which exactly show how some of the boys suffer from being on that unpleasant island. "...Ralph wept for the end of the innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of a true, wise friend called Piggy (202).

Symbolic Characters in Lord of the Flies and Blindness

Piggy, Jack, Simon, and Ralph can all be seen as symbolic characters in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*. Jack's role in *Lord of the Flies* is to show the desire of power. The change from good to evil is shown in *Lord of the Flies* by the shift from Ralph to Jack as the boys' choice of leaders. Piggy is a very good representation of intellectual aspect of civilization. Simon represents natural human goodness and unfortunately the boys who are getting savage day after day being on that devil island murdered him. They actually sacrifice their own natural goodness for the sake of brutality and animality. Therefore, it is easy to see that the four main characters in *Lord of the Flies* are used by William Golding to symbolize different aspects of the inevitable change from civilization and happiness to primitivism.

In *Blindness* all the people went blind unless the wife of the ophthalmologist who is, like Simon, natural representation of human goodness. It might be the fact that she didn't go blind; to help the blinds survive their bad situation. Fragility of society can be seen in both *Blindness* and *Lord of the Flies*, but the condition of grown-ups seems to some extent better than the situation of the young boys.

Both Golding and Saramago try to design a journey from humanity to brutality and again to humanity. The difference is, Golding uses the children who seem to be more innocent than adults but Saramago uses typical grown-ups, actually without nameless, with generic labels to emphasize the fact that anybody might be the traveler of the so-called journey. At the end of both novels the characters come to a sort of vision. When the boys cry at the time of survival, looking back to the island, and when almost at the end of *Blindness* one of the characters remarks "I don't think we did go blind, I think we are blind, blind but seeing, blind people can see, but do not see." A shift in the people's view point toward humanity and the fact that they regain their sight suddenly and without any reason are all some other images which make a bridge to humanity. Chase (2009) states "the novel's final fading of cruelty makes you suddenly aware of beauty as reprieve. The city may be horrifying, but somehow, it is not hopeless. People drift into cruelty easily, but they can drift out of it. It is as easy as waking up."

CONCLUSION

The present paper aimed at proving the fact that although human being is capable of being evil and committing some devil actions but the very essence of human being is divine and man is connected to a powerful source of divinity. With the use of character, conflict, as well as

symbolism, Golding and Saramago slowly lead up to their theme that, man is born with evil tendencies. Through the boys, Golding attempts to show the true nature of humankind, the good, the evil, and the in between. Saramago's nameless characters are also representation of typical human being in a society, ready to collapse. Through the novel some images and signs like finding food, inability to interact, sexual desire, will of power and loneliness lead the characters toward brutality and filth. While at the same time some other images help them to come to a sort of vision and consciousness. Fire, blindness and loneliness, are all images which show characters in both novels are getting tired of being in a wild life like society. Through the use of symbolic characters both authors signify the path from humanity to brutality and getting back to humanity again. In *Lord of the Flies*, at First, most of the boys were followers of Ralph because of their innocence but after a while when savagery became dominant, they decided to obey Jack who is the real representation of love of power and evil actions- lose of innocence. Simon as a truly representation of goodness was killed by the boys in the middle of the story. Doctor's wife like Simon represents pure nature. She helped the prisoners to wash themselves, finds food for them and protects them from dangers. The hoodlums, one of them possesses a gun, treat exactly like Jack. They abuse the other people and their love of power at the end annihilates them.

The central themes of *Lord of the Flies* and *Blindness* are the conflict between two challenging impulses that exist within all human beings: the instinct to live by rules, act peacefully, follow commands, value the good of the many over the instinct to fulfill one's immediate desires, act violently to gain supremacy over others, and enforce one's will. *Lord of the Flies* and *Blindness* are two novels that exhibit both, the good-hearted nature of humans, along with man's evil flaws. What is really most important is that both novels end with a sort of self-consciousness and getting back to pure natural essence of human being.

REFERENCES

- Chase, Ch. (2009) *Reviewing Jose Saramago's Blindness*. The Daily Gazette.
Gioia, T. (1985). *Blindness by Saramago*. The New Cannon.
Golding, W. (1954) *Lord of the Flies*. New York: Berkley Publishing.
Pointer, G. (1995) *Blindness*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company.
Snedeker, G. (2010) *Between Metaphor and Referent: Reading Saramago's Blindness*. Harvest Books.

MOTIVATION ON LONG TERM MEMORY: A PATH TO INTERACTION ACHIEVING ACTIVITIES

Elham Kavandi

Farhangian University
e.kavandi@cfu.ac.ir

Fateme Akhavan

fateme akhavan.2009@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Today, motivation and learning are joined to each other like music and cooking. Many teachers recognize this and are diligent to better their students' motivation to maintain data on their long-term memory for a long period of time. Because a motivated student practice and practice the learned material more often, which leads to keep in his/her long term memory for a long duration. The present study intended to investigate the effect of motivation on long-term memory of Iranian EFL advanced learners. The participants were 30 female EFL advanced learners at an English Language Institute. To meet the aim of the study, a 40-point Michigan test was administered to the participants as a pretest in the first session and the same test as a posttest at the end of the semester. The results revealed differences in pretest and posttest. Additionally, a motivated strategy for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument was utilized to measure their motivation in English after posttest. The findings of the study affirmed that motivation is a useful and facilitating factor for improving and increasing long-term memory. This research affirmed that motivation can help learners improve their learning and retrieve learned topics in their long term memory. It shows that motivation can affect long-term memory and ZPD increases when the learning environment is stress free.

KEYWORDS: motivation, long-term memory, interaction, achieving activities.

INTRODUCTION

Long-term memory can be defined as maintaining memory of data for a long cycle of time. It is usually divided into two types: conscious (explicit) memory or unconscious (implicit) memory (Baddeley, & Hitch, 1974). We recognize explicit memory for facts, notions and events also known as declarative or conscious memory.

Explicit memory can be subdivided into semantic and episodic memory (Baddeley, 1991). In other words, semantic and episodic memories are two types of long-term memories. In semantic memory, we understand the meaning of different things such as words, the names of colors, the sounds of letters also knowing facts about the world.

The idea of semantic memory was presented in 1972 as the result of cooperation between Endel Tulving of the University of Toronto and Wayne Donaldson of the University of New Brunswick on the impact of organization in human memory.

Tulving, in his book, "Elements of Episodic memory" paid attention to differences between semantic and episodic in how they function and kinds of information for processing. Episodic memory is special events in time in our memory, so it can be different from someone else's memories of the same experience. In other words, in episodic memory we experience personally. In comparison to explicit (conscious) memory, a memory that is repeated for the development of procedures of doing actions over time is implicit (unconscious) memory also known as procedural memory (Tulving, 1985).

For example: exercising skills are one type of implicit memory. You learn the skills and practice them more often, and then unconsciously you are authoritative during a game. Playing a kind of music or practicing for learning are another examples of implicit memory. Doing everyday tasks like cooking, driving a car, riding a bicycle happen automatically and rendered to actions without us realizing it.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Up to lately, researchers did not investigate straightly the approachability and accessibility of information stored in working memory during assembled cognitive processes. Instead, they made deductions about working memory from studies of general memory capacity. The modulus procedure has been to present a list of irrelevant items and to entail reproduction with either urgent free recall or free recall after some interpolated activity. In the common model of human memory (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968), immediate free remind yields items nearly retrieved from an interim short-term memory (STM) and items recovered by retrieval cues from a more durable storage in long-term memory (LTM). STM is supposed to have a finite span of around seven chunks (G. A. Miller, 1956), a chunk corresponding to an intimate pattern formerly stored in LTM. Storage in STM is interim, and when attention is diverted to another requesting task, information originally stored in STM becomes unavailable in a matter of seconds (Brown, 1958). In contrast, the storage span of LTM is supposed to be broad and much more durable than that of STM. The time required for storage of a new retrievable memory trace in LTM has been guessed to be respectively long--about ten seconds (Simon, 1973).

The main pinch for retrieval from LTM is the infrequency of retrieval cues that are connected by association to the desired item, stored in LTM. During free reminding materials are asked to retrieve a list they studied earlier. If some of the cues in the context for recall were still available in the context for study of the list, they should be part of the retention trace and thus serve as retrieval cues for points in the list to be reminded. Once some items have been reminded, they can serve as extra retrieval cues. Constant with this proposed mechanism, free remind in most list-learning experiments is relatively poor and reduces as a function of the number of lists the subjects have previously studied and thus related to the same contextual cues.

In most of the tremendous research on memory, scholars have tried to separate different memory systems and to determine their storage and retrieval characteristics with general measures that are independent of materials and of subjects' specific history knowledge. Researchers have concentrated on estimating maximal capacities by studying memory performance in simple tasks

that examine only memory. It is generally supposed that the same distinctions and capacity limitations observed for simple tasks enforced to working memory in complex cognitive activities.

In criterion theories of memory (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968) data can be stored in LTM just after it has been stored in STM, and even then, storage in LTM is a probable event. Originally, Atkinson and Shiffrin supposed that the likely of storage in LTM is a subordinate of the time an item was preserved in STM. Recently, Anderson (1983) suggested that the probability of storage is a function of the number of times an item enters STM. Subjects' control of the tank of data appears to be limited. Furthermore, in more meaningful tasks subjects' remind of presented information is not progressed when they are instructed to study that information for later recall (Craik& Lockhart, 1972). This discovery mentions that subjects cannot achieve reliable storage of information in many of the standard memory tasks. Anderson (1983) goes even so far as to discuss that subjects' inability to control storage in LTM is beneficial since they cannot predict what information will be useful later on.

In the end, last research has demonstrated that working memory does not consist of a single general span, but rather contains of various subsystems that can be depended on to complete various types of tasks (Baddeley, 1991).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were proposed to manage and control this study:

Is motivation a useful way to increase long-term memory?

Is motivation a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The study addressed the following research hypotheses:

Motivation to EFL learners is a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory.

Motivation is a useful way to increase long-term memory.

MEHODOLOGY

Participants

Thirty (N =30) students took part in this study. They were female EFL learners at an English language Institute. The average age of students was about 18, ranging from 14 to 25. All of them were at the same proficiency level according to the syllabus of English language Institute. The level of students was advanced.

Instruments

In order to have a more homogeneous sample, a pretest was administered to participants to determine their level of their proficiency. Participants took 40 points of Michigan Test of English language proficiency in order to measure their proficiency level.

Procedure

At the beginning of the session of semester, the teacher started with introduction, explanation and motivation. During these sessions, the teacher controlled motivation in all classroom activities particularly in discussions and role-plays. Summit 2A English book, the main book for advanced level was taught.

At the end of the semester, the same test was administered as a posttest to discover that motivation in the foreign language learners is a useful and facilitating factor for improving long-term memory. In order to test the effect of motivation on long term memory, the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument was distributed among the participants after the posttest (A 7 point Likert Scale Questionnaire). The MSLQ is based on a general cognitive view of motivation. McKeachie, Pintrich, Line and Smit (1986) present the general theoretical framework that underlies the MSLQ. The questionnaire included 31 questions for gathering data about changes in learner's long-term memory. The collected data was analyzed by SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the pretest and posttest show that learners performed are better than on posttest to pretest. The mean in pretest was 80/0 and in posttest was 81/8.

Table 1: The results of the pretest and posttest

	Pretest	Posttest
N	30	30
Mean	80.0	81.8
SD	13	12.8
t	2.8	2.8

This study shows that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest, $t\text{-test}=2.8$ and $P<0/05$. This table shows that the means are different and difference between the pretest and posttest is significant. The present study was an attempt to survey the effect of motivation on long-term memory of Iranian EFL learners.

The important duty of EFL/ ESL teachers is to motivate learners to learn in-depth understanding to preserve information for a long period of time in their long-term memory.

The scores of the posttest were higher than the pretest. Within motivation and low anxiety in students, we can achieve more chance to hold information in our long-term memory. Several studies indicate the influence of motivation in reminding or producing personal memories. Specifically, motivation can affect the level of emotional severity experienced when recalling autobiographical¹ memories, and the selection, content, and process of autobiographical memories (Brunot & Sanitioso, 2004). Level of emotional intensity is higher with remembered

memories related to current long-term goals than memories irrelevant to long-term goals (Singer, 1990).

According to the results of the questionnaire which studied the effect of motivation in learners' long term memory, participants selected the options of 47% very true of me (option7), 32% more true (options4,5,6,), 12% less true (options2,3), and 9% not at all true of me (option1).

The results show that motivation can affect long-term memory. The prime learning on long-term memory happens when there is no difficult and afraid situation, and there is a feeling of comfortable and pleasure of the class activities.

CONCLUSION

For measuring the effect of motivation on long-term memory, the instrument used for data collection was a 40-point Michigan test as a pretest at the beginning of the semester to the participants and the same test as a posttest at the end of the semester after motivating them. A 40-point Michigan test was administered to 30 female EFL learners at an English Language Institute.

As shown, the mean scores of the two tests are different, and the result of t-test indicates 2.8. The difference between the means is approximately significant. Therefore, with a 95 percent probability, it may be claimed that there is a statistically significant difference between the two tests (pretest and posttest) on the performance of our language learners in their learning before and after motivating them.

In end, a 7-point Likert scale questionnaire, the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument, was also utilized to measure their motivation level after the end of the semester. The findings of the study confirmed that motivation is a useful and facilitating factor for improving and increasing long-term memory. The present study noticed motivation and its impression on learners' long-term memory of Iranian EFL learners. It is clear that people will learn when they want to learn. Even in the face of bad textbooks, bad schools, bad teachers, whatever, motivated students will learn.

With respect to the research hypotheses, it was perceived that motivation to EFL learners is a facilitating factor to improve long-term memory and motivation is a useful way to increase long-term memory.

Motivation is one of the powerful actions of agent among students. This, in turn causes the information stored in long term memory that leads to a better remembering. Teacher in this study controlled motivation and caused the students acted the classes better. By comparison pretest and posttest, the students were in a better understanding of topics in posttest. Through using motivation and challenging students can improve their learning and retrieving the learned topics in their long-term memory.

Researchers generally believe in two major types of motivation: Intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to do something because one really wants to and takes pleasure or sees value in doing so. Extrinsic motivation is the desire to do something not for the fun of the things itself, but because doing so leads to a certain result (Pintrich, 2003). It is often difficult to divide motivation as merely Intrinsic or extrinsic.

The major findings of this study show that motivation can affect long-term memory. ZPD increases when there is no difficult and afraid situation, and there is a feeling of comfort, pleasure, and fun in the class activities.

The questions related to the intrinsic motivation in the survey are:

In a class like this, I prefer course material that really challenges me so I can learn new things.

In a class like this, I prefer course material that arouses my curiosity, even if it is difficult to learn.

The most satisfying thing for me in this course is trying to understand the content as thoroughly as possible.

When I have the opportunity in this class, I choose course assignments that I can learn from, even if they don't guarantee a good grade.

And the questions related to the extrinsic motivation, the items:

Getting a good grade in this class is the most satisfying thing for me right now.

The most important thing for me right now is improving my overall grade point average, so my main concern in this class is getting a good grade.

If I can, I want to get better grades in this class than most of the other students.

I want to do well in this class because it is important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer, or others.

For being successful, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is very necessary.

This study was limited to female learners and it can be repeated by male students too.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J.R. (1983). *The Architecture of Cognition*. Cambridge Mass. Harvard University Press.
- Atkinson, R.C. & Shiffrin, R.M. (1968). Human memory: A proposed system and its control processes. In K.W. Spence & J.T. Spence (Eds.), *The psychology of learning and motivation: Advances in research and theory*. (Vol. 2). (pp. 742-775). New York: Academic Press.
- Baddeley, A. D., & Hitch, G. (1974). Working memory. In G. H. Bower (Ed.), *The psychology of learning and motivation* (Vol. 8, pp. 47-89). New York: Academic Press.
- Baddeley, A. (1991). *Human memory: Theory and Practice*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Brown, R. W., & Lenneberge, E. H. (1954). A study in language and cognition. *Journal of Aabnormal and Social Psychology*, 49, 545-562.

- Brunot, S., & Sanitioso, A. (2004). Motivational influence on the quality of memories: Recall of general autobiographical memories related to desire attributes. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34, 627-635.
- Craik, F. I. M., & Lockhart, R. S. (1972). Levels of processing: A framework for memory research. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 11, 671-684.
- Miller, G. A. (1990). Linguists, psychologists, and the cognitive sciences. *Language*, 66, 317-332.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2003). A motivational science perspective on the role of student motivation in learning and teaching contexts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95(4), 667-686.
- Simon, H. A., & Barenfield, M. (1969), Information processing analysis of perceptual processes in problem solving. *Psychological Review*, 76, 473-463.
- Singer, J. A. (1990). Affective responses to autobiographical memories and their relationship to long-term goals. *Journal of Personality*, 58(3), 535-563.
- Tulving, E. (1983). *Elements of episodic memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

THE EFFECT OF TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH TRANSLATION APPROACHES VS. USE OF VISUAL AIDS ON VOCABULARY LEARNING OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Nahid Gharehchahi & Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri (corresponding author)

English Department, Faculty of Humanities and Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
nahidgh2418@yahoo.com
bagheries@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to investigate the effect of teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. the use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. To this end, the performance of participants in retention of vocabulary through translation approaches and visual aids was studied. To conduct the study, two types of tests in the form of multiple choice and production test including fill in the blanks, and wh-questions were used as the instruments for both the pre and post-tests to measure the participants' retention of new vocabularies. The participants were 30 Iranian female EFL learners between ages of 13 to 15 studying LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) at a language institute in Shiraz. Paired samples t-test and independent samples t-test were utilized. The results of the study indicated that both approaches (visual aids and translation) were effective regarding vocabulary retention of new vocabularies. The results also showed that students learned vocabulary better through translation approaches. Therefore, translation approaches were more effective than visual aids in retention of new vocabulary items.

KEYWORDS: Vocabulary, Translation, Visual Aids, EFL Learners

INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language needs some skills and components to be mastered. Among those skills and components, vocabulary is one of the most crucial ones in language learning without which communication is not possible. Translation approaches and visual aids are effective techniques that teachers can use to teach vocabulary to their students that can cause long-term retention of newly-learned vocabulary.

According to Kim (1996, p. 3), "teaching vocabulary is an important factor in language teaching." Because through words we can express our feelings, emotions, and ideas to others, language teachers should use the most effective ways to teach vocabulary in their classes. Vocabulary is an important element in every language because without sufficient vocabulary students can't understand each other or express their opinions. Teaching vocabulary helps

students understand and communicate with others in English. Wilkins (1972, p.111) mentioned that “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” Lewis (1993, p. 89) said that “lexis is the core or heart of language”. Swan and Walter (1984) stated that acquisition of vocabulary is the largest and the most essential task facing the language learner.

There are many studies that show translation has a positive effect on acquisition of second language. There is much agreement on the benefits of using translation in learning L2. Ellis (1985) for example, stated that learners can use their first language to overcome their limitations while learning a second language. Auerbach (1993) argued that using translation in L2 classroom will have a positive impact on learner’s second language learning especially in vocabulary area.

Using visual aids should be an important part of the learning process. Teachers should use visual aids in their classes to motivate their students, to help them understand and recall the materials better. As Harmer (2001) maintains, visual aids make the learning process easier. English teachers feel that if they use visual aids such as pictures, charts, realia, etc. in their classes the learning process can be enjoyable and memorable. Most of the time it becomes difficult for students to remember the meaning of some words; therefore, the teachers investigated to increase student’s learning through visual aids. Nelson (1979) argued that visual aids such as pictures and charts are very effective for learners memory as they are various.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning vocabularies of a foreign language has long been emphasized in language teaching. There are many different techniques to teach vocabulary. However, the important issue is which techniques learners should use in order to learn vocabulary effectively so that they can recall them easily. Wilkins (1972, p. 111) states that “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” So if learners do not have a strong base of vocabulary knowledge they cannot communicate their thoughts and ideas successfully.

Henning (1973) stated that from the beginning stage vocabulary should be recognized as a central element in language instruction. Meara (1980, p. 192) stated that “Vocabulary is one of the important parts of language learning which has been neglected for several decades”. According to Allen (1983), “for many years teachers were sometimes told that they ought not to teach many words before their students have mastered the grammar and sound system of the language”(p. 1). He continues that, “pronunciation and grammar were emphasized, but there was little or no emphasis on vocabulary” (p. 1).

Vocabulary is defined by Hubbard (1983) as a powerful carrier of meaning. Hatch and Brown (1995, p. 468) defined vocabulary as “the list of words that speakers of particular language use.” Ur (1999) stated that vocabulary is the words that are taught in a foreign language. Furthermore, Henriksen (1999, p. 303) defined vocabulary knowledge as “ precise comprehension which is

operationalized as the ability to translate the lexical items in to L1, the ability to find the right definition in a multiple-choice task, or the ability to give a target language paraphrase". Allen (1983) stated that knowledge of vocabulary is necessary for communication. Thus, communication breaks down if people do not use the exact words. Moreover, vocabulary plays an important role in the success of foreign language learners (Kasper, 1993; Krashen & Terrell 1983).

Fortunately, most teachers and students agree that knowledge of vocabulary is essential for acquiring other skills of language. According to Thornbury (2002), if learners spend most of their time studying grammar, their English will not improve very much. They will see most improvement if they learn more words and expressions. Thornbury (2002, p. 13) stated that "You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words."

Nowadays, using translation as a way of teaching vocabulary is a controversial issue. Using L1 in L2 classroom for teaching vocabulary might be seen as a negative and unfashionable way. Nevertheless, research has found clear advantages in using L1 to teach vocabulary more significantly at the initial stages of the learning process (Cook, 2003; Jiang, 2002; Liu, 2009; Schmitt, 2008). Vocabulary expert Nation (1982) concludes that if teachers give the meaning of the words through L1 translation first, learning vocabulary becomes easier and faster for many learners. Nation (1982) concludes that if teachers use translation to teach new vocabulary in their classes learning vocabulary becomes faster for many learners. Butzkamm (2003) believes that successful learners usually rely on their mother tongue when they want to learn a second language.

Nowadays it is common for EFL teachers to use the students' mother tongue as a tool to teach both in English language institutes and in the classroom. Research shows that it is not appropriate to delete L1 in L2 classroom. (Butzkamm, 2003; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Schweers, 1999). If teachers use translation appropriately, it can be very beneficial. Schweers (1999) encourages teachers to use the native language in their classes to influence the classroom dynamic, and suggests, "starting with L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves" (p. 7). Brown (2000, p. 68) claims, "first language can be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor".

Research shows that translation is a good way to teach and learn new vocabulary. As Nation (2002) maintains, translation is a technique for teaching vocabulary. If teachers use L1 in EFL classes, they can save their class time. Sometimes using translation of vocabulary items or explanation of a grammar point would be much easier and also more efficient. According to Morahan (2007), whether to use translation in the second language classroom or not has been debated for many years.

Recently, the taboo against using translation in the classroom has shattered, and the attitude and feeling to L1 and translation in language classes has witnessed a positive change due to the fact

that some learners use L1 as a communicative strategy to learn and use the foreign or second language (Cook, 2001; Gill, 2003; James, 1998; Odlin, 1989). In fact, translation is a new teaching method, which can be used in second language classes and can help both teachers and learners. Faltis (1990) cited that translation is the new technique, which requires both teachers and learners to balance the use of the L1 and foreign language.

In language learning situation, a knowledgeable learner is assumed the one who is proficient in all four language skills and also sub-skills. As research findings reveal, L1 use is important in both teaching and learning aspects of these skills. For example, Nuttall (1996) by addressing the reading skill emphasizes the importance and value of translation in training reading-based library skills, for the discussion of students' worksheets and in reading summary test. In relation to the concept of language response, he adds, "inability to express themselves (students) in the target language necessarily limits both the kind and the quality of the responses students give. It is quite possible that students who are permitted to use their L1 in responding will explore the text more accurately and thoroughly than those who are restricted to target language responses" (p. 187).

Visual learners learn primarily through the visual channel and learn best by seeing. They usually think in pictures and prefer to learn materials, diagrams, images, pictures, colors, videos, flipcharts and handouts. They can simply visualize objects and plan in their mind. This type of learners prefer to see an activity rather than just explain about an activity verbally. In general when reading, the visual learner will remember images and pictures in order to understand the text they are reading. They will often remember faces rather than names.

Teaching vocabulary through the use of visual materials is very useful. Goodman (1987) suggested that usually, visual materials were more easily understood by learners of all ages because a picture seemed worth a thousand words and avoided lengthy, difficult and complex word definitions. Harmer (2001) stated that visual aids can help students to learn the materials easier. Abebe and Davidson (2012) point out that students like to learn vocabulary with the help of visual aids, and that the use of visual aids increases the students' ability and opportunity to use language to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Moreover, Hill (1990) states that using different types of visual materials in teaching vocabulary in classroom can increase the intrinsic motivation of the students. When students show interest towards what they learn, they can engage themselves in the activities. In this way, they can learn language meaningfully. Koren (1996) points out that the learning of foreign vocabularies with pictures can be easier and more memorable than vocabularies without pictures. In the same vein, Armstrong (2001) believed that learning vocabulary through the use of visual aids is more helpful and effective than learning vocabulary without perception of visual aids. Horn (1998) stated that visual aids such as pictures and charts can solve many learning problems.

Harmer (2001) also reported that real objects, some books, newspapers or magazines can help students to make the learning process easier. Therefore, teachers use them for better teaching and

learning. Anderson and Shiffrin (1980) cited that using pictures, charts and images for children can be very helpful because in this way they can learn vocabulary items better. Porter and Margaret (1992) assert that visual materials can help teachers to teach more comprehensively to their students. They can make learning process more interesting as well. Allen (1983) adds that children have a strange ability for learning language. In contrast to verbal instruction, teaching vocabulary through visual aids helps teachers to save their class time. So, they can allocate their time for necessary classroom activities such as drills and other exercises. Mayer and Sims (1994) indicate that an increasing body of research evidence supports that presenting words and illustrations or pictures together, affects students' learning in a positive way.

Among all types of visuals, pictures are perhaps the simplest and commonly used. Yet pictures are also very effective and useful. In the language learning of young children. Pictures are often used as to provide associations for the learning of new vocabularies. We cannot use pictures for every unknown word because some words are abstract and cannot be illustrated easily. If a word is concrete then it is easier to find and use a picture for its illustration (Anderson & Shiffrin, 1980).

Using pictures in teaching learning process is an enjoyable activity because pictures keep the students from getting bored. The use of pictures makes the vocabulary material more meaningful, and also helps learners to memorize the new words easily and to represent the real object or things. Furthermore, the use of picture is a fantastic educational tool and makes learning more fun than usual.

There has been much research on pictures in learning generally, and a little also in the area of second language learning. For example, Koren (1999) points out that learning foreign vocabulary with association of pictures can be easier than words without these associations. Indeed many teachers of young children in the English language classrooms use photo dictionaries in order to improve the vocabulary and speaking skills of students.

According to Bush (2007), using picture is a simple way for simultaneous attention to the building blocks of second language learning. Using picture for teaching new vocabulary has been a fundamental principle in many methods in TEFL or TESL (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). For example, in direct method, it is supposed that there should be a direct relationship between form and meaning. According to Doff (1988), demonstration is direct, interesting, and has a great impact in the class. As Shapiro and Waters (2005), hold, "it is well documented within the cognitive literature that visual stimuli create very strong memories" (p. 131).

Flash cards have also been used as an important tool in teaching English as second language (Hart, 1982). They are used not only for teaching vocabulary but also for teaching many different things such as propositions, articles, tenses, sentence structures, and phrasal verbs (Palka, 1988). In addition to teaching vocabulary, flash cards have been used to improve both reading speed and comprehension of learners. (Tan & Nicholson, 1997). As Wright (1990) pointed out, word

flash cards are very useful in teaching reading and writing. Nevertheless, they will find their use in teaching vocabulary too, offering valuable help mainly in teaching the spelling of newly learnt words, which definitely should not be neglected as it often is.

According to Nunan (1999), realia is defined as objects and teaching props which are outside the classroom and are used for teaching and learning. Under this statement, realia is considered as real objects, which are used to help students learn a new language, as a way to present meaningful examples from the real world. Along with this idea, the British Council site states that “realia refers to any real objects we use in the classroom to bring the class to life”.

Richards and Platt (1992, p. 289) regard realia as “real objects and things which are brought in to a classroom as examples or as aids to be talked or written about and used in language teaching such as articles of clothing, kitchen utensils, items of food, etc”. Zukowsky and Faust (1997) defined realia as concrete objects and the apparatus of everyday life. Hunt and Beglar (1998) state that realia can help learners a lot because they can hear the word and also receive visual reinforcement. French (1983) states that whenever we have real objects in the classroom, it is better to use them instead of pictures.

Charts, maps and diagrams are other common visual tools that can be used for learning purposes. Kleinman and Dwyer (1999) examined the effects of specific visual skills in facilitating learning. Their findings indicate that the use of color graphic as opposed to black and white graphics promotes better achievement in the learning of concepts. An earlier study by Myatt and Carter (1979 as cited in Heinich et al., 1999) suggests that most learners prefer color visuals to black and white visuals, but usually there is no significant difference between them in the amount of learning except when color is related to the subject to be learned.

As Cable (1977) mentions drawing on board has an important role in teaching and learning vocabulary. Teachers can draw stick figures to represent people and in this way, they can teach a dialogue or a new word. According to Doff (1988), it is not necessary for teachers and learners to be wonderful artists to draw a picture in order to teach vocabulary, the most important thing is to communicate the message.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1. Is there any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches versus use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners?

Q2. Does translation based approach have any effect on teaching vocabulary?

Q3. Does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on teaching vocabulary?

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research was done within a pretest, treatment, post-test, quasi-experimental design in which the collected data were analyzed quantitatively. There was one independent variable with two levels of translation and visual aids.

Participants

The participants were 30 Iranian female EFL learners (N=30) between ages of 13 to 15 studying LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) at a language institute in Shiraz. The participants were all native speakers of Persian who had learnt English for about two years.

The participants were selected based on convenience sampling and from among two different intact classes. Their scores in the pretest and posttest would not affect their final class activity scores but these tests had a positive effect on students midterm and final scores. However, a bonus was considered for all the participants as a sign of encouragement.

Instruments

Two types of tests in the form of multiple choice, and production test including fill in the blanks, and WH-questions were used as the instrument for both the pre-test and the post-test to measure the participants' retention of new vocabularies. The total number of items was 30 and the number of items of each part is as follows: twenty multiple-choice tests in which students had to find the correct answer to each sentence, five fill-in-the-blank sentences in which students had to write only one word according to the meaning of the sentences, and five WH-questions. Students had to answer these five questions according to the pictures.

Data collection

In order to conduct this study, LET'S GO 4 (3rd edition) was used. This book has eight units each with a title such as Birthdays, The Great Outdoors, Hopes and Dreams, Schools, Indoors and Outdoors, People, Future Plans, and Work and Play. Each unit starts with a conversation, some new vocabularies, grammar points and a reading at the end of each chapter.

First, the teacher divided the book into two parts. In order to teach vocabulary all the new vocabularies were chosen. For ten sessions, the teacher used visual aids in order to teach them. During these ten sessions, she taught four lessons to the learners, which contain 64 new vocabularies by the use of posters, flashcards, board drawings, charts and realia. For the other ten sessions, again the teacher taught four lessons, which contain 66 vocabularies by the use of translation approaches such as teacher translation, student translation, and some translation exercises and activities as their homework to teach new vocabularies. At the beginning of the term, the teacher applied a pretest and after teaching new vocabularies by the use of visual aids, she used the same test as a posttest. In order to determine the effectiveness of translation approaches, the same procedure was employed both for the pretest and for the posttest.

Scoring rubrics

Each learner's paper was corrected. For each multiple-choice test, half mark and for each production question one mark was assigned. The total scores were calculated out of twenty.

Data analysis

After collecting the data, correcting their papers, and giving scores, the SPSS software (version 16) was used and descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, etc were calculated. Moreover, inferential statistics such as paired samples t-tests and independent samples t-test were employed to analyze the data and to find out which approach (translation approaches or visual aids) is more effective in retention of new vocabularies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

Is there any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches versus use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners?

To answer the first research question, an independent samples *t*-test was run.

Table 1: Independent Samples *t*-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Difference	Error 95% Interval Difference Lower	Confidence of the Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.653	0.422	-3.36	58	.001	-3.11667	0.92631	-4.9708	-1.2624
Equal variances not assumed			-3.36	57.7	.001	-3.11667	0.92631	-4.9710	-1.2622

With reference to Table 1, it is obvious that there was a statistically significant difference between these two groups. The sig (.001) was less than 0.05.

Research Question 2

Does translation based approach have any effect on learning vocabulary?

Table 2: Paired Samples t-test for translation condition

	Paired Differences							Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval of the Difference		T	df	
				Lower	Upper			
Pre & post translation	-8.550	3.35885	0.61324	-9.80422	-7.29578	-13.942	29	.000

*= $p < 0.05$

As Table 2 shows, the results of the paired samples *t*-test for translation are statistically significant due to *p* value which is smaller than .05. The sig was (.000) which is smaller than *p* value .05.

Research Question3

Does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on learning vocabulary?

Table 3: Paired Samples t-test for visual aids condition

	Paired Differences						Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T		
				Lower	Upper			
visual aids pre and posttest	-5.00	3.57674	0.65302	-6.33558	-3.66442	-7.657	29	.000

As Table 3 shows, the result of the paired samples *t*-test for visual aids was statistically significant due to the *p* value which is smaller than .05. The sig is (.000) which is smaller than *p* value .05.

Research question 1 was whether there was any statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. use of visual aids on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners? The results of independent sample *t*-test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between teaching vocabulary through translation approaches vs. use of visual aids on vocabulary learning. Research question 2 was does translation based approach have any effect on teaching vocabulary? The results of paired sample *t*-test revealed that the results for translation is statistically significant. Research question 3 was does teaching vocabulary through visual aids have any effect on teaching vocabulary? The results of paired sample *t*-test revealed that the results for visual aids was statistically significant. In general results showed that students learn vocabulary better through translation approaches.

CONCLUSION

According to the grades of participants in the posttest, it is concluded that both visual aids and translation approaches were effective in retention of new vocabularies. So, one may come up with the conclusion that visual aids and translation approaches are essential and helpful for learning new vocabularies.

The final word about these two approaches (translation, visual aids), is that translation is more effective than visual aids in retention of new vocabularies.

Implication of the study

This study shows that it is necessary for teachers to use different strategies to teach new vocabularies in a second language. For example, translation method can be used at the initial stages of learning. Translation strategy is a helpful strategy especially for learning vocabulary for EFL learners who are at the elementary levels of English proficiency. Ellis (1985) states that learners' L1 works as a resource that learners can use for translation to overcome their limitation in learning a second language. Sridhar (1981) believes that the use of L1 in the learning of L2 does not interfere with the learning of the second language in any way as some people thought. Using visual aids is another method that teachers can use in classroom to teach new vocabularies. When students learn new words by visual teaching, it helps them to learn and remember them easily.

This study has a positive effect on teaching and learning process. From this study, teachers may gain insights in to the role of both translation and visual aids in learner's learning process and integrate these two methods in their teaching process. The findings of this study may also encourage teachers to use appropriate techniques for teaching vocabulary. The findings of this study are also useful for students. They can identify the best ways through which they can learn a new vocabulary.

Materials developers can also use the findings of this study. They can design sections of vocabulary in which the learners have to translate sentences, which contain newly learned vocabularies. Therefore, it is recommended that materials developers include exercises in their materials, which require learners to translate some parts that contain new vocabularies.

REFERENCES

- Abebe, T. T., & Davidson, L. M. (2012). Assessing the role of visual teaching materials in teaching English vocabulary. *Language in India*, 12 (3), 524.
- Allen, F. A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language teaching and learning* (4th ed.). White Plains NY: Longman.

- Bush, M. D. (2007). Facilitating the integration of culture and vocabulary learning: The categorization and use of pictures in the classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 40 (4), 727-743.
- Butzkamm, W. (2003). We only learn language once. The role of the mother tongues in FL classrooms: Death of a dogma. *Language Learning Journal*, 28(1), 29–39. doi:10.1080/09571730385200181.
- Cable, R. (1977). *Audiovisual handbook*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57 (3), 402-423.
- Cook, V. J. (2003). *Effects of the second language on the first*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Doff, A. (1988). *Teaching English: A training course for teachers*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Ellis, R. (1985). Understanding second language acquisition. In Ramachandran, S. D., & Rahim, H. A. Meaning recall and retention: The impact of the translation method on elementary level learners' vocabulary learning. *RELC Journal*, 35(2), 161-178, doi: 10.1177/003368820403500205.
- Faltis, C. (1990). New directions in bilingual research design. In Jakobson, R. & Faltis, C. (Eds.), *Distribution issues in bilingual schooling* (pp. 45-57). Clevedon, Multilingual matters.
- French Allen, V. (1983). *Techniques in teaching vocabulary, teaching techniques in English as a second language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gill, S. (2003). *The L1 in the L2 classroom*. Retrieved from <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/sep05/mart03.htm>
- Goodman, L. S. (1987). *Training aids. Training and development* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd ed.). London: Longman.
- Hart, B. H. (1982). *English as a second language: Modules for teaching*. Retrieved from Eric database. (ED 232 470).
- Heinich, R., Molenda, M., Russell, J. D., & Smaldino, S. E. (1999). *Instructional media and technologies for learning* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Henning, G. H. (1973). Remembering foreign language vocabulary: Acoustic and semantic parameters. *Language Learning*, 23, 185-197.
- Henriksen, B. (1999). Three dimensions of vocabulary development. *SSLA*, 21, 303-317.
- Hubbard, P. (1983). *A training course for TEFL*. Oxford: OUP.
- Hunt, A., & Beglar, D. (1998). *Current research and practice in teaching vocabulary*. Retrieved September 02, 2002, from <http://langue.hyper.chubu.ac.jp/jalt/pub/tlt/98/jan/hunt.html>
- James, C. (1998). *Errors in language learning and use: Exploring error analysis*. London: Longman.
- Jiang, N. (2002). Form–meaning mapping in vocabulary acquisition in a second language. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 24(4), 617-637.
- Kasper, L. F. (1993). The key word method and foreign language vocabulary learning: A rationale for its use. *Foreign Language Annals*, 26(2), 245-251.
- Kim, F. (1996). *A book about semiotics*. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Company.

- Kleinman, E., & Dwyer, F. (1999). Analysis of computerized visual skills: Relationships to intellectual skills and achievement. *International Journal of Instructional Media*, 26 (1), 53-69.
- Krashen, S., & Terrell, T. (1983). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Koren, S. (1996). Vocabulary instruction through hypertext: Are there advantages over conventional methods of teaching? *TESL EJ*, 4(1), 1-14.
- Koren, Sh. (1999). Vocabulary instruction through hypertext: Are there advantages over conventional methods of teaching? *Teaching as a Second or Foreign Language*, 4(1), 1-18.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, M., (1993). *The lexical approach*. London: Language Teaching Publications.
- Liu, J. (2009). L1 use in L2 vocabulary learning: Facilitator or barrier. *International Education Studies*, 1, 65-69.
- Mayer, R., V., & Sims, P. (1994). For whom is a picture worth a thousand words? Extensions of a dual-coding theory of multimedia learning. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 86,389-401.
- Meara, P. (1980). Vocabulary acquisition: A neglected aspect of language learning. *Language Teaching Linguistics: Abstracts*, 221-246.
- Morahan, M. (2007). *The use of students' first language (L1) in the second language (L2) classroom*. [Online] Available: Retrieved <http://www.teflbootcamp.com/MorahanL2inL1class.pdf>
- Myatt, B., & Carter, J. M. (1979). Picture preferences of children and young adults. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 27(1), 45-53.
- Nation, I. S. P. (1982). Beginning to learn foreign vocabulary: A review of the research. *RELJ Journal* 13, 14-36.
- Nation, P. (2002). Best practice in vocabulary teaching and learning. In Jack C. Richards and Willy A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. (pp. 267-272). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, P. (2003). The role of the first language in foreign language learning. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 5(2).
- Nelson, D. L. (1979). Remembering pictures and words: Appearance, significance, and name. In Mc Birde, D. M., & Doshier, B. A. A comparison of conscious and automatic memory processes for picture and word stimuli: A process dissociation analysis. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 11(3), 423-460. doi: 10.1016/S1053-8100(02)00007-7
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.
- Nuttall, C. (1996). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Palka, E. (1988). Using cards to revise and practice language items. (ERIC Document

Reproduction Service No. ED 302093).

- Porter, P., & Margaret, G. (1992). *Communicating effectively in English: Oral communication for non-native speakers* (2nd ed.). Boston: Heinle publishers.
- Richards J. (1992) *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3 ed.). England: Longman.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 12, 329–363.
- Shapiro, A. M., & Waters, D. L. (2005). An investigation of the cognitive process underlying the KWM of foreign vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(2), 129-146.
- Tan, A., & Nicholson, T. (1997). Flashcards revisited: Training poor readers to read words faster improves their comprehension of text. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 276–288.
- Thornbry, S. (2002). How to teach vocabulary. *Pearson Educational Limited*. 1(2), 13-4.
- Ur, P. (1999). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wright, A. (1990). *Pictures for language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zukowsky- Faust, J. (1997). What is meant by realia? *Arizona, Aztesol News Letter*, 18(1), 9.

POSSIBLE SELVES DEVELOPMENT OF EFFICACIOUS ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Fariba Khalili

*Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran
Farikhalili2000@gmail.com*

Adel Dastgoshadeh, Ph.D

*Department of English language, Sanandaj Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran*

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the possible selves of efficacious language teachers to know to what extent their ideal, ought-to, actual, and feared selves affect their attitudes towards their effective teaching. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) administered to 50 English language teachers of state schools and institutes to measure their self-efficacy beliefs. The data were analyzed using chi-square test. It should be noted that the efficacious teachers were selected based on the median score of 176.5. Then they were asked to answer The Possible Selves (PSs) questionnaire developed by Dastgoshadeh (2013) which measured four main domains of ideal-self, ought-to-self, actual-self, and feared-self, each of which in turn measured some subdomains. The first research question was analyzed for these 16 subdomains. An analysis of chi-square was run to compare the four domains of ideal, ought-to, actual and feared selves in order to probe the second research question. Based on the results it can be claimed that majority of the respondents indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. Teachers' sense of job satisfaction, teaching efficacy, career identity, and language identity are the most dominant selves of efficacious teachers.

KEYWORDS: Efficacy, Efficacious Teachers, Possible Selves

INTRODUCTION

Teachers always have the most important effect on learning process as the leaders of education path and also their way of thinking and their beliefs pave the way for their students to be successful in their education. Learning a new language is one of the most challenging fields of study that students face at school. Teachers have a very crucial role in the success or failure of each educational system. In fact as Galluzzo (2005) states "one of the most often-expressed statements about teaching is that nothing is more central to student learning than the quality of teacher".

Teachers' sense of efficacy has been related to positive teaching behaviors and student outcomes (Henson, Kogan & Vacha-Haase, 2001), and teachers with high teacher efficacy beliefs tend to implement new teaching ideas and techniques (Ross, 1992). As Bandura (1995) points out 'the task of creating environments conducive to learning rests heavily on the talents and self-efficacy of teachers.' Since teachers' efficacy may lead to students' efficacy and the improvement of educational practices, it is considered salient in the teaching and learning process.

Possible selves are the future-oriented aspect of self-concept; that is, the positive and negative selves one fully believes and expects to become or wants to avoid becoming (Markus & Nurius, 1986). By providing concrete positive expected and negative to-be-avoided future images, possible selves personalize goals and connect current behaviors to future states. In this way, possible selves improve self-regulatory capacity (Cross & Markus, 1994; Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002) and make one's current situation seem meaningful (Cross & Markus, 1991). The present study is an attempt to explore the possible selves' development of teachers who feel success in their job and known as efficacious teachers.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Self-efficacy

The idea of self-efficacy was first proposed by Bandura (1977) within his social cognitive theory and refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (Bandura, 1995). According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007) Self-efficacy beliefs do not necessarily reflect people's actual ability, but show their perception of it. Therefore, they may underestimate or overestimate their real abilities. Self-efficacy is a social-psychological construct and refers to 'people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances' (Bandura, 1986). These judgments, which are affected by a person's previous successes and failures, messages that other people communicate, successes and failures of others and successes and failures of a group as a whole, are central and pervasive to human action since they have the power to determine people's choices, goals, effort, and persistence (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 1995; Ormrod, 2006).

Teacher Efficacy

The construct of teacher efficacy was derived from Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977). Applied to the context of education teacher efficacy has been defined as "the extent to which teachers believe they can affect student learning" (Dembo & Gibson, 1985). Teacher efficacy is seen as a multidimensional construct with Ashton and Webb (1982), for example, identifying two dimensions as "teaching efficacy" and "personal efficacy". The first factor represents a teacher's sense of teaching efficacy or belief that teachers can overcome factors external to the teacher such as the background of students. The second dimension, personal efficacy, is the belief of an individual teacher in their own personal capacity to deliver the necessary teaching behaviors to influence student learning.

Possible Selves Theory

As Lee and Oyserman (2006) mentioned “Self-concept is one's theory about oneself, the person one was in the past, is now, and can become in the future, including social roles and group memberships. A well-functioning self-concept helps make sense of one's present, preserves positive self-feelings, makes predictions about the future, and guides motivation”. The contents of the future-oriented component of self-concept have been termed *possible selves* (Markus & Nurius, 1986). As observed by Higgins (1994), three possible selves are seen as particularly significant in motivating and directing behavior: the *ideal self*, the *ought self*, and the *feared self*. Possible selves are shaped by a given individual's hopes and fears, but they are also reconciled with the individual's social, socio-cultural, and historical context (Norman and Aron, 2003); an individual may, thus, possess a combination of these three for any future domain. Following is a brief description of each self from this model.

Implications of possible self theory for teachers

Oyserman and Lee (2009) noted that “Teachers, parents, and students all have possible selves—images of how things might be in the near and more distal future. These images illustrate that change is possible. Possible selves can undergird self-improvement by showing a path toward the future and by highlighting where one might end up if effort is not maintained. Intervention to help teachers, parents, and students focus on what they want to become and avoid becoming, what they value, and how they expect to engage in becoming like their desired selves and avoiding becoming like their undesired selves can be highly effective. Indeed, the theory of possible selves has been used to understand progress and life transitions for both youth learners and adults in continuing education and other settings. Perhaps the most important message that educators can take from the research on possible selves is that possible selves are malleable and can be influenced by intervention to enhance the content of possible selves”. Changing possible selves through intervention can lead to positive changes in academic behavior, in better academic performance and lower risk of depression (Oyserman et al., 2002; 2006).

Common to all this early research is recognition of the importance of an understanding of self to beliefs, attitudes and actions, and thus the kinds and effects of such actions. In teacher education also, much research literature demonstrates that knowledge of the self is a crucial element in the way teachers construe and construct the nature of their work (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994) and that events and experiences in the personal lives of teachers are intimately linked to the performance of their professional roles (Ball & Goodson, 1985; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Acker, 1999).

Several researchers (Nias, 1989, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994; Sumsion, 2002) have noted that teacher identities are not only constructed from technical and emotional aspects of teaching (i.e. classroom management, subject knowledge and pupil test results) and their personal lives, but also 'as the result of an interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural, and institutional environment in which they function on a daily basis' (Slegers & Kelchtermans, 1999).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What shapes the possible selves of efficacious language teachers?
2. Which sense of possible selves is the most dominant one in making efficacious language teachers?

METODOLOGY

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 50 (male and female) junior and senior high school English language teachers of Kurdistan, Iran and also English language teachers who work in institutes of this state. The teachers in the sample had 3 to 15 years of teaching experience and ranged in age from 20 to 50. Based on the total score of efficacy and its median score of 176.5, the participants were divided into two groups of efficacious and non-efficacious groups (each having 25 participants). The analyses were run on the 25 efficacious participants, i.e. the other 25 were omitted.

Instruments

Two kinds of questionnaires were used to find answers to the questions raised by this study. One of them was *The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was used to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. The other scale which was used in this study was *Possible Selves Questionnaire* prepared by Dastgoshadeh (2013) to better understand what has actually shaped the different L2 selves of EFL teachers. The Cronbach's alpha reliability indices for the efficacy questionnaire and ideal, ought-to actual, feared and total possible selves were 0.94, 0.91, 0.80, 0.58, 0.63 and 0.92 (Table 1)

Table 1: Reliability Statistics for efficacy and possible selves development

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Efficacy	.948	24
Ideal-Self	.916	28
Ought-to-Self	.803	10
Actual-Self	.584	13
Feared-Self	.631	3
Possible Selves	.922	54

Procedure

In the first step 50 English teachers were selected randomly. They were asked to answer Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scales in person. Next, out of 50, 25 were selected as efficacious teachers since they scored above 168. They were requested to answer the second questionnaire which was on teachers' possible selves development. These questionnaires submitted to them in person. Participants were asked to answer each question by choosing one of the six possible answers ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Time was not considered as an important factor in completing the questionnaires. The researcher herself was also available to provide them with guidance and answers if they came across any ambiguities.

Data collection and analysis

In order to investigate the research questions of the study, some statistical analyses were conducted. SPSS program was used to analyze the data gathered from the questionnaires. Chi Square test was used for analyzing the data. Based on the total score of efficacy and its median score of 176.5, the participants were divided into two groups of efficacious and non-efficacious groups (each having 25 participants). The analyses were run on the 25 efficacious participants, i.e. the other 25 were omitted.

Sixteen chi-square plus frequency and percentages were used to probe to what extent efficacious teachers have each of the 16 subdomains. This probed the first research question. The subdomains under each domain were compared through chi-square in order to probe the second research question to find which one is more dominant. For example the three subdomains of personal-self, teaching efficacy and career identity were compared for ought-to-self.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

First Research Question

What shapes the possible selves of efficacious language teachers?

The possible-self questionnaire measures four main domains of ideal-self, ought-to-self, actual-self, and feared-self; each of which in turn measures some subdomains. The first research question was analyzed for these 16 subdomains.

Ideal-Self

A chi-square test was run to probe any significant differences between the teachers' perception towards the subdomains of Ideal self. Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 89, Residual = 59) strongly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of ideal-self. The other 46 responses (Residual = 16) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -29) disagreed with the idea that career identity shaped ideal-self. Two responses (Residual = -28) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally 12 responses (Residual = -18) slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was part of ideal-self. Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 36, Residual = 21) strongly agreed with the idea that person self was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 27 responses (Residual = 12) had the same idea.

On the other hand only one response (Residual = -14) disagreed with the idea that person-self shaped ideal-self. Two responses (Residual = -13) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally nine responses (Residual = -6) slightly agreed with the idea that person self was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 44, Residual = 29) strongly agreed with the idea that language identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 17 responses (Residual = 2) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -14) disagreed with the idea that language identity shaped ideal-self. Six responses (Residual = 9) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally seven responses (Residual = -8) slightly agreed with the idea that language identity was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 41, Residual = 26) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 23 responses (Residual = -2) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -24) disagreed with the idea that teaching efficacy shaped ideal-self.

Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 28, Residual = 15.5) agreed with the idea that cultural identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 26 responses (Residual = 13.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -11.5) disagreed and another one response (Residual = -1.5) strongly disagreed with the idea that cultural identity shaped ideal-self. Five responses (Residual = -7.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally 14 responses (Residual = 1.5) slightly agreed with the idea that cultural identity was part of ideal-self.

Based on the results displayed in Table 2 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 39, Residual = 26.5) strongly agreed with the idea that language efficacy was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 22 responses (Residual = 9.5) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed and another one response (Residual = -11.5) disagreed with the idea that language efficacy shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -9.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally eight responses (Residual = -4.5) slightly agreed with the idea that language efficacy was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 45, Residual = 25) strongly agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 38 responses (Residual = 18) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -19) strongly disagreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -17) disagreed with this idea. And finally 13 responses (Residual = -4) slightly agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was part of ideal-self.

The results of chi-square (Table 2) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 54, Residual = 35.3) strongly agreed with the idea that job satisfaction was an aspect of ideal-self. Another 16 responses (Residual = -2.8) had the same idea. On the other hand only two responses (Residual = -16.8) strongly disagreed with the idea that job satisfaction shaped ideal-self. Three responses (Residual = -15.8) slightly agreed with this idea

Table 2: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Ideal Self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ideal self	Career identity	Observed N		1	2	12	46	89	150
		Expected N		30	30	30	30	30	
		Residual		-29	-28	-18	16	59	
	Personal self	Observed N		1	2	9	27	36	75
		Expected N		15	15	15	15	15	
		Residual		-14	-13	-6	12	21	
	Language identity	Observed N		1	6	7	17	44	75
		Expected N		15	15	15	15	15	
		Residual		-14	-9	-8	2	29	
	Teaching efficacy	Observed N				1	23	51	75
		Expected N				25	25	25	
		Residual				-24	-2	26	
	Cultural identity	Observed N	1	1	5	14	28	26	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-11.5	-11.5	-7.5	1.5	15.5	13.5	
	Language efficacy	Observed N	2	1	3	8	22	39	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-10.5	-11.5	-9.5	-4.5	9.5	26.5	
	Sociopolitical identity	Observed N	1		3	13	38	45	100
		Expected N	20		20	20	20	20	
		Residual	-19		-17	-7	18	25	
	Job satisfaction	Observed N	2			3	16	54	75
		Expected N	18.8			18.8	18.8	18.8	
		Residual	-16.8			-15.8	-2.8	35.3	

Note1. The frequencies refer to the responses not number of cases.

Note2. Positive residuals indicate that the option was selected more than expectation.

The results of chi-square (Table 3) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards each sub domains as main factors of ideal-self. The teachers significantly believed that career identity, personal self, language identity, teaching efficacy, cultural identity, language efficacy, sociopolitical identity, and job satisfaction shaped ideal-self.

Table 3: Chi-Square; Ideal Self

domain	Sub domain		Choices
Ideal self	Career identity	Chi-Square	189.533 ^a
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Personal self	Chi-Square	65.733 ^b
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Language identity	Chi-Square	79.067 ^b
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square	50.240 ^c
		Df	2
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Cultural identity	Chi-Square	59.640 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Language efficacy	Chi-Square	91.640 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Sociopolitical identity	Chi-Square	82.400 ^e
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Job satisfaction	Chi-Square	94.867 ^f
		Df	3
		Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for career identity is 30.0., for personal self and language identity is 15.0., for teaching efficacy is 25.0., for cultural identity and language efficacy is 12.5., for sociopolitical identity is 20.0., and for job satisfaction is 18.8.

Ought-to-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 4) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 56, Residual = 31) strongly agreed with the idea that personal-self was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 18 responses (Residual = -7) had the same idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -24) slightly disagreed with the idea that personal-self shaped ought-to-self.

The results also indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 32, Residual = 19.5) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 31 responses (Residual = 18.5) had the same idea. On the other hand three separate one responses (Residual = -11.5) strongly disagreed, disagreed and slightly disagreed with the idea that teaching efficacy shaped ought-to-self. Nine responses (-3.5) slightly agreed with this idea. Based on the results displayed in Table 4 it can be claimed that majority of the teachers (N = 44, Residual = 24) strongly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of ought-to-self. Another 41 responses (Residual = 21) agreed with this idea. On the other hand only one response (Residual = -19) strongly disagreed with the idea that career identity shaped ought-to-self. Four responses

(Residual = -16) slightly disagreed with this idea. And finally ten responses (Residual = -10) slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was part of ought-to-self.

Table 4: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; ought-to self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Ought-to self	Personal self	Observed N			1		18	56	75
		Expected N			25		25	25	
		Residual			-24		-7	31	
	Teaching efficacy	Observed N	1	1	1	9	31	32	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-11.5	-11.5	-11.5	-3.5	18.5	19.5	
	Career identity	Observed N	1		4	10	41	44	100
		Expected N	20		20	20	20	20	
		Residual	-19		-16	-10	21	24	

The results of chi-square (Table 5) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards personal-self, teaching efficacy and career identity as main factor of ought-to--self. The teachers significantly believed that personal self, teaching efficacy, and career identity shaped out-to-self.

Table 5: Chi-Square; ought-to self

domain	Sub domain		Choices
Ought-to self	Personal self	Chi-Square	63.440 ^c
		Df	2
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square	90.520 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.000
	Career identity	Chi-Square	86.700 ^e
		Df	4
		Asymp. Sig.	.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for personal self is 25.0., for teaching efficacy is 12.5., and for career identity is 20.0.

Actual-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 41, Residual = 22.3) strongly agreed with the idea that teaching efficacy was an aspect of actual-self. Another 23 responses (Residual = 4.3) had the same idea. On the other hand two responses (Residual = -16.8) slightly disagreed and another nine responses (Residual = -9.8) slightly agreed with this idea. It is also indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 25, Residual = 8.3) agreed and slightly agreed with the idea that career identity was an aspect of actual-self. Another 17 responses (Residual = .3) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 15 responses (Residual = -1.7) slightly disagreed, 11 responses (Residual = -5.7) disagreed and finally seven responses (Residual = - 9.7) strongly disagreed with this idea. The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of

the teachers (N = 28, Residual = 15.5) agreed with the idea that sociopolitical identity was an aspect of actual-self. Another 22 responses (Residual = 9.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 14 responses (Residual = 1.5) slightly agreed, two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed, three (-9.5) disagreed and finally six responses (Residual = - 6.5) slightly disagreed with this idea. The results of chi-square (Table 6) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 32, Residual = 19.5) agreed with the idea that personal self was an aspect of actual-self. Another 18 responses (Residual = 5.5) strongly agreed with this idea. On the other hand 18 responses (Residual = 5.5) slightly agreed, two responses (Residual = -10.5) strongly disagreed, four (-8.5) disagreed and finally one response (Residual = - 11.5) slightly disagreed with this idea.

Table 6: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Actual self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Actual self	Teaching efficacy	Observed N			2	9	23	41	75
		Expected N			18.8	18.8	18.8	18.8	
		Residual			-16.8	-9.8	4.3	22.3	
	Career identity	Observed N	7	11	15	25	25	17	100
		Expected N	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	
		Residual	-9.7	-5.7	-1.7	8.3	8.3	3	
	Sociopolitical identity	Observed N	2	3	6	14	28	22	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-10.5	-9.5	-6.5	1.5	15.5	9.5	
	Personal self	Observed N	2	4	1	18	32	18	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	-10.5	-8.5	-11.5	5.5	19.5	5.5	

The results of chi-square (Table 7) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards teaching efficacy, career identity, sociopolitical identity, and personal self as main factors of actual-self. The teachers significantly believed that teaching efficacy, career identity, sociopolitical identity, and personal self shaped actual-self.

Table 7: Chi-Square; Actual Self

domain	Sub domain	Choices
Actual self	Teaching efficacy	Chi-Square
		47.400 ^f
		Df
	Career identity	3
		Asymp. Sig.
		.000
	Sociopolitical identity	Chi-Square
		16.040 ^g
		Df
	Personal self	5
		Asymp. Sig.
		.007
		Chi-Square
		46.040 ^d
		Df
		5
		Asymp. Sig.
		.000
		Chi-Square
		60.440 ^d
		Df
		5
		Asymp. Sig.
		.000

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency for teaching efficacy is 18.8., for career identity is 16.7., for sociopolitical identity is 12.5., and for personal self is 12.5.

Feared-Self

The results of chi-square (Table 8) indicated that majority of the teachers (N = 17, Residual = 4.5) strongly disagreed with the idea that feared-self was an aspect of possible-self. On the other hand, 15 responses (Residual = 2.5) agreed and slightly agreed with this idea. Seven responses (Residual = -5.5) strongly agreed, nine responses (Residual = -3.5) slightly disagreed and 12 responses (-.5) disagreed with this idea.

Table 8: Frequencies, Expected and Residual Values; Feared-Self

domain	Sub domain	Values	Strongly disagree	disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	agree	Strongly agree	total
Feared self	Personal self	Observed N	17	12	9	15	15	7	75
		Expected N	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	
		Residual	4.5	-.5	-3.5	2.5	2.5	-5.5	

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (5) = 6.04$, $p = .302$, $r = .28$ representing a weak to moderate effect size) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards feared-self.

Table 9: Chi-Square; Feared Self

domain	Sub domain		Choices
Feared self	Personal self	Chi-Square	6.040 ^d
		Df	5
		Asymp. Sig.	.302

0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5.

The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.7.

Second Research Question

Which sense of possible selves are the most dominant in making efficacious language teachers?

An analysis of chi-square (crosstabs) was run to compare the four domains of ideal, ought-to, actual and feared selves in order to probe the second research question. Each cell (Table 10) contain three pieces of information; frequency, percentage and standardized residual (Std. Residual). The former two are descriptive indices based on which no statistical inferences can be reached; however, the latter is a standardized index based on which the frequencies of vertical cells can be compared for detecting significant differences. Any Std. Residual higher than +/- 1.96 denote that the frequency was significantly beyond expectation (+) or significantly lower than expectation (-). Based on these results it can be claimed that;

Majority of the respondents (N = 384, 54.9 %, Std. Residual = 3.5 > 1.96) indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. The Std. Residual for actual-self (-4.2) and feared-self (-4.7) was significantly lower than what was expected.

Table 10: Frequencies, Percentages and Std. Residuals; Domains of Possible Selves

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Ideal	Count	6	5	21	67	217	384	700
	% within Domain	0.9%	0.7%	3.0%	9.6%	31.0%	54.9%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-2.9	-3.2	-1.8	-2.1	-.4	3.5	
Ought-to	Count	2	1	6	19	90	132	250
	% within Domain	0.8%	0.4%	2.4%	7.6%	36.0%	52.8%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.8	-2.2	-1.5	-2.1	1.2	1.6	
Actual	Count	11	18	24	66	108	98	325
	% within Domain	3.4%	5.5%	7.4%	20.3%	33.2%	30.2%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.8	3.2	2.5	4.1	.4	-4.2	
Feared	Count	17	12	9	15	15	7	75
	% within Domain	22.7%	16.0%	12.0%	20.0%	20.0%	9.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	10.6	7.1	3.1	1.9	-1.8	-4.7	
Total	Count	36	36	60	167	430	621	1350
	% within Domain	2.7%	2.7%	4.4%	12.4%	31.9%	46.0%	100.0%

T

he Std. Residuals for the selection of the “agreed” choice were all within the ranges of +/- 1.96, i.e. they did not show any significant differences.

On the other side of the table, the feared-self (N = 17, 22.7, Std. Residual = 10.6 > 1.96) indicated that the respondents significant disagreed with the idea that feared-self shaped possible selves. This was coupled with (Std. Residual = 7.1) for the selection of disagree, and (Std. Residual = 3.1) for the selection of slightly disagree. These results indicated that the respondents significantly disagreed with the idea that feared-self shaped possible selves.

Of interesting results was that respondents significant disagreed (Std. Residual = 3.2) and slightly disagreed (Std. Residual = 2.5) with the idea that actual-self shaped possible selves, while (Std. Residual = 4.1) slightly agreed with the idea that actual-self contributed to possible selves.

Thus it can be concluded that; a) ideal-self was considered as the best factor in shaping possible selves, b) feared-self was the weakest factor, c) actual-self seemed to have a weak contribution and finally, d) the attitude towards the contribution of ought-to-self did not seem unanimous.

The results of chi-square (χ^2 (15) = 309.69, $p = .000$, $r = .47$ representing an almost large to moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards domains of possible selves.

Table 11: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	309.693 ^a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	229.219	15	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	193.758	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1350		

a. 3 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

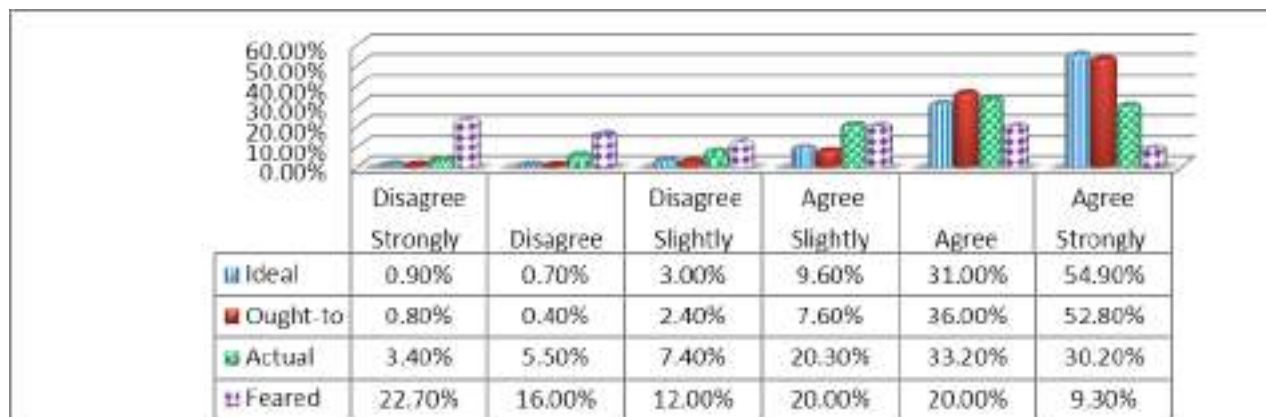


Figure 1: Percentages; Domains of Possible Selves

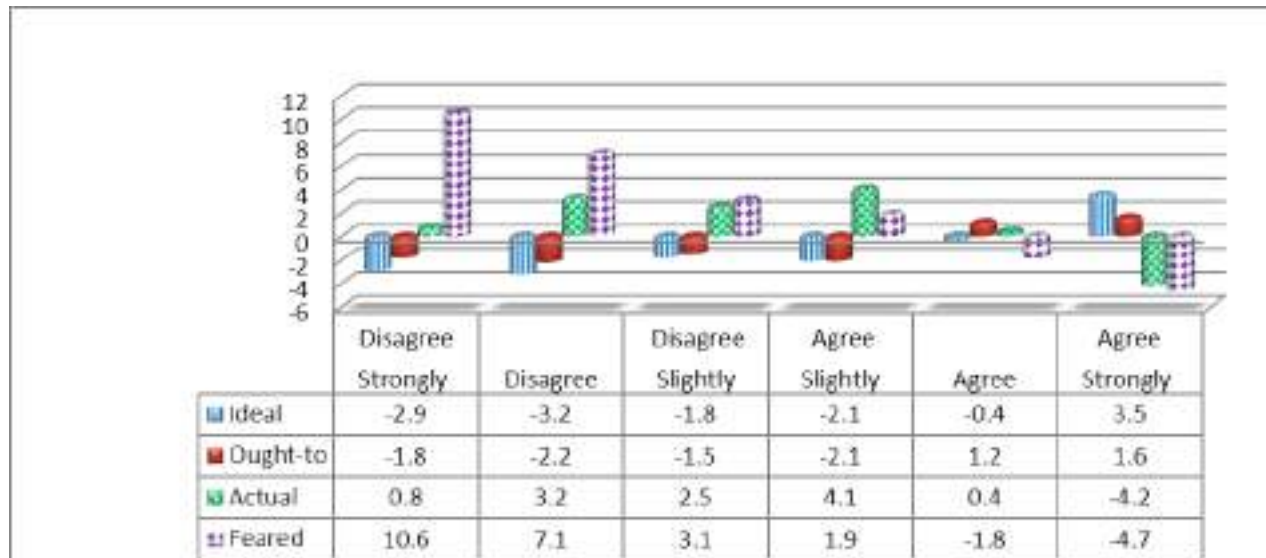


Figure 2: Std. Residual; Domains of Possible Selves

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the ideal self?

Table 12 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the eight sub-domains of the ideal self.

Table 12: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Ideal Self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Career Identity	Count	0	1	2	12	46	89	150
	%	0.0%	0.7%	1.3%	8.0%	30.7%	59.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.1	-.1	-1.2	-.6	-.1	.7	
Personal Self	Count	0	1	2	9	27	36	75
	%	0.0%	1.3%	2.7%	12.0%	36.0%	48.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	.6	-.2	.7	.8	-.8	
Language Identity	Count	0	1	6	7	17	44	75
	%	0.0%	1.3%	8.0%	9.3%	22.7%	58.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	.6	2.5	-.1	-1.3	.4	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	0	0	0	1	23	51	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	30.7%	68.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	-.7	-1.5	-2.3	-.1	1.5	
Cultural Identity	Count	1	1	5	14	28	26	75
	%	1.3%	1.3%	6.7%	18.7%	37.3%	34.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.4	.6	1.8	2.5	1.0	-2.4	
Language Efficacy	Count	2	1	3	8	22	39	75
	%	2.7%	1.3%	4.0%	10.7%	29.3%	52.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.7	.6	.5	.3	-.3	-.3	
Sociopolitical Identity	Count	1	0	3	13	38	45	100
	%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	13.0%	38.0%	45.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.2	-.8	.0	1.1	.3	-1.3	
Job Satisfaction	Count	2	0	0	3	16	54	75
	%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	21.3%	72.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	1.7	-.7	-1.5	-1.6	-1.5	2.0	
Total	Count	6	5	21	67	217	384	700
	%	0.9%	0.7%	3.0%	9.6%	31.0%	54.9%	100.0%

Based on these results it can be claimed that the following Std. Residuals were significant;

- 1) the subjects slightly disagreed with language identity (Std. Residual = 2.5 > 1.96) more than what was expected.
- 2) The subjects slightly agreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = -2.3 > -1.96) less than what was expected.
- 3) The subjects slightly agreed with cultural identity (Std. Residual = 2.5 > 1.96) more than what was expected.
- 4) The subjects strongly agreed with cultural identity (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected.
- 5) The subjects strongly agreed with job satisfaction (Std. Residual = 2 > 1.96) more than what was expected. The other values were lower than +/- 1.96.

The results of chi-square (χ^2 (35) = 67.14, $p = .001$, $r = .30$ representing a moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ideal self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the

moderate effect size value of .30 and also due to the fact that 50 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 12).

Table 13: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	67.149 ^a	35	.001
Likelihood Ratio	74.625	35	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.066	1	.302
N of Valid Cases	700		

a. 24 cells (50%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .54.

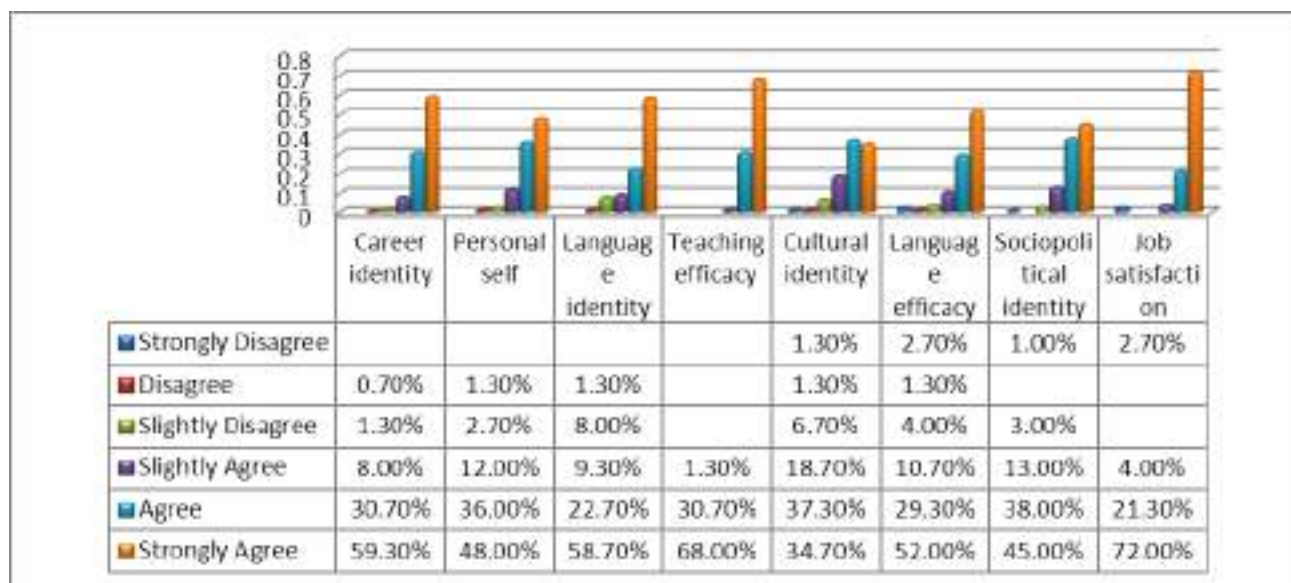


Figure 3: Percentages; Domains of Ideal Self

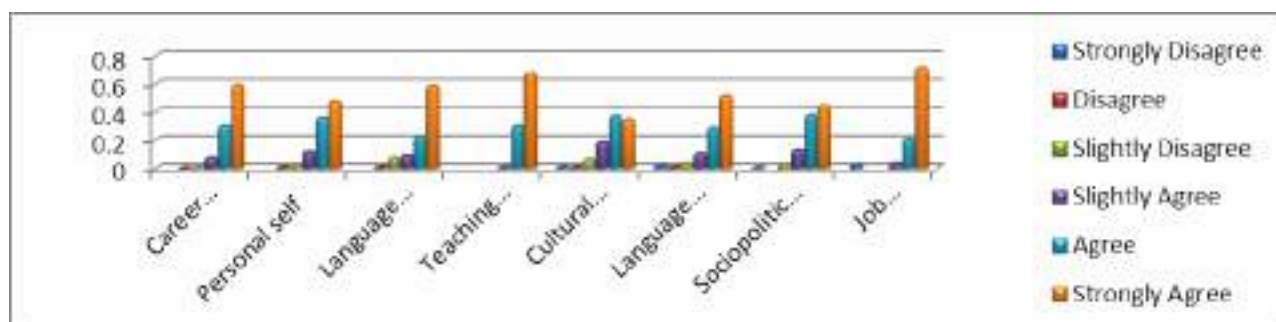


Figure 4: Percentages; Sub-Domains of Ideal Self

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the ought-to-self?

Table 14 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the three sub-domains of the ought-to-self. Based on these results it can be claimed that only two Std. Residuals were significant; 1) the subjects slightly agreed with personal self (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected. And 2) their strongly agreed with personal self (Std. Residual = 2.6 > 1.96) more than what was expected.

Table 14: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Ought-to-self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Personal Self	Count	0	0	1	0	18	56	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	24.0%	74.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.8	-.5	-.6	-2.4	-1.7	2.6	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	1	1	1	9	31	32	75
	%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	12.0%	41.3%	42.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.5	1.3	-.6	1.4	.8	-1.2	
Career Identity	Count	1	0	4	10	41	44	100
	%	1.0%	0.0%	4.0%	10.0%	41.0%	44.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	.2	-.6	1.0	.9	.8	-1.2	
Total	Count	2	1	6	19	90	132	250
	%	0.8%	0.4%	2.4%	7.6%	36.0%	52.8%	100.0%

The results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (10) = 27.40$, $p = .002$, $r = .33$ representing a moderate effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ought-to-self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the moderate effect size value of .33 and also due to the fact that 50 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 14).

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.400 ^a	10	.002
Likelihood Ratio	33.083	10	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.216	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	250		

a. 24 cells (50%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .54.

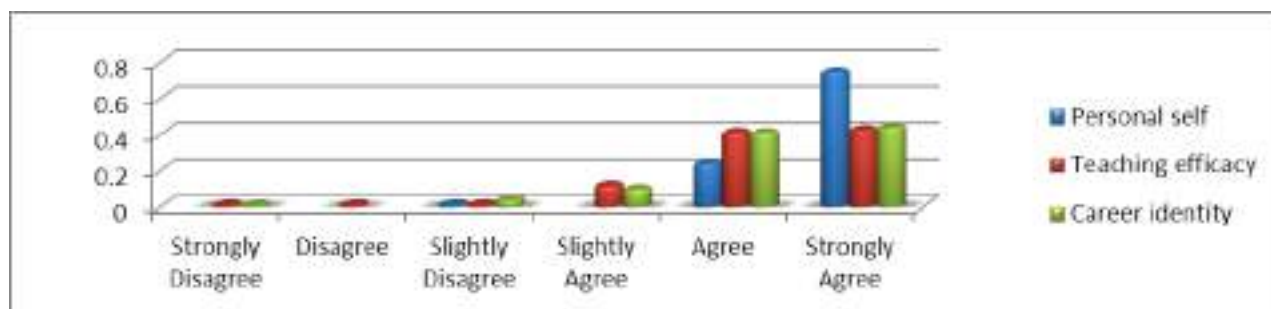


Figure 5: Percentages; Domains of Ought-to-self

Are there any significant differences between the sub-domains of the actual-self?

Table 15 displays the frequencies, percentages and Std. Residuals for the four sub-domains of the actual-self. Based on these results it can be claimed that six Std. Residuals were significant; 1) the subjects strongly agreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = 3 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 2) They disagreed with teaching efficacy (Std. Residual = -2 > -1.96) less than what

was expected. 3) They strongly agreed with career identity (Std. Residual = -2.4 > -1.96) less than what was expected. 4) They slightly disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.8 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 5) They disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.3 > 1.96) more than what was expected. 6) They strongly disagreed with career identity (Std. Residual = 2.4 > 1.96) more than what was expected.

Table 16: Frequencies, percentages and Std. Residual; Sub-Domains of Actual-Self

		Choices						Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Teaching Efficacy	Count	0	0	2	9	23	41	75
	%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	12.0%	30.7%	54.7%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-1.6	-2.0	-1.5	-1.6	-.4	3.9	
Career Identity	Count	7	11	15	25	25	17	100
	%	7.0%	11.0%	15.0%	25.0%	25.0%	17.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	2.0	2.3	2.8	1.0	-1.4	-2.4	
Sociopolitical Identity	Count	2	3	6	14	28	22	75
	%	2.7%	4.0%	8.0%	18.7%	37.3%	29.3%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.3	-.6	.2	-.3	.6	-.1	
Personal Self	Count	2	4	1	18	32	18	75
	%	2.7%	5.3%	1.3%	24.0%	42.7%	24.0%	100.0%
	Std. Residual	-.3	-.1	-1.9	.7	1.4	-1.0	
Total	Count	11	18	24	66	108	98	325
	%	3.4%	5.5%	7.4%	20.3%	33.2%	30.2%	100.0%

The results of chi-square (χ^2 (15) = 60.82, $p = .000$, $r = .43$ representing a moderate to large effect size) indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of actual self. The results should be interpreted cautiously due to the fact that 29 percent of cells had expected frequencies less than 5 (refer to footnote of Table 16).

Table 17: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	60.821 ^a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	64.869	15	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.487	1	.115
N of Valid Cases	325		

a. 7 cells (29%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.54.

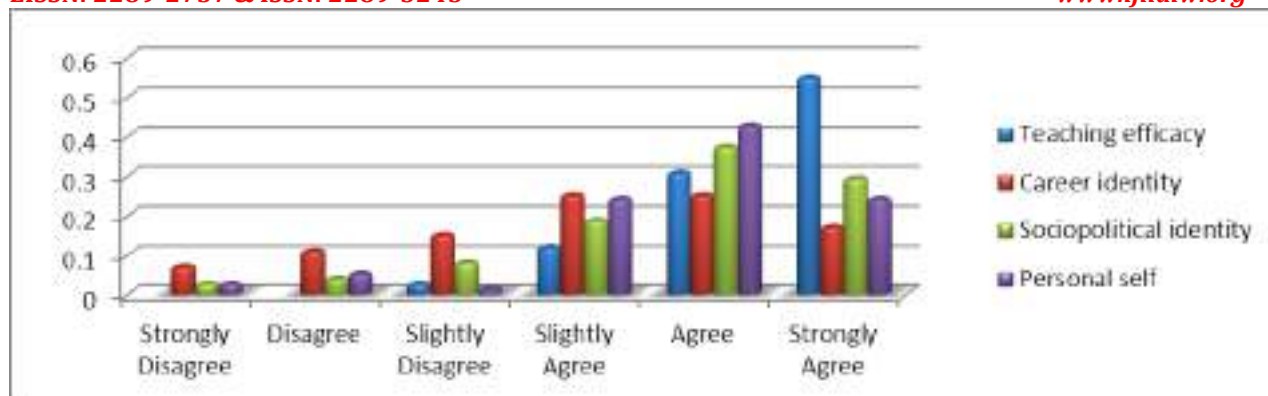


Figure 6: Percentages; Domains of Actual-self

The last one has one sub-domain. That is to say the domain and sub-domain are the same.

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the factors that shape the possible selves of efficacious language teachers and also exploring the most dominant of those factors.

The results of chi-square indicated that there were significant differences between the teachers' attitude towards domains of possible selves. It showed that; a) ideal-self was considered as the best factor in shaping possible selves, b) feared-self was the weakest factor, c) actual-self seemed to have a weak contribution and finally, d) the attitude towards the contribution of ought-to-self did not seem unanimous. It can be claimed that majority of the respondents indicated that the teachers significantly believed that ideal-self shaped possible selves. Teachers' sense of job satisfaction, teaching efficacy, career identity, and language identity are the most dominant selves of efficacious teachers.

For the next question four domains were explored separately to know which sub-domain is the most dominant in shaping possible selves of efficacious teachers. The results of chi-square indicated that there were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ideal self. It means that almost all efficacious teachers have the same degree of ideal self development. This shows that they think job satisfaction is a dominant sense of self to be developed. They have developed this sense to a great extent.

There were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of ought-to-self. It showed that they were not extremely concern about the different sub domains of ought-to self including personal self, teaching efficacy, and career identity. They have developed the sense of ought-to self to a limited extent.

There were significant but moderate differences between the teachers' attitude towards sub-domains of actual self. In other word, they were concern about their teaching efficacy more than career identity and personal self. Their actual sense of teaching efficacy has developed to a great extent.

The feared self has one sub-domain. That is to say the domain and sub-domain are the same. Considering the findings of the current study, there were no dominant sub- domains among each of the four domains. In other word, each of the teachers' selves is as important as the others. For example; teachers' sense of language efficacy is as important to them as their sense of teaching efficacy.

Limitations of the study

Similar to other studies, there were particular limitations while conducting the present study. The summary of limitations which were identified in this study is as follow:

1. The study is confined to developing language teachers' sense of efficacy.
2. This study is restricted to efficacious language teachers.
3. The participants are junior and senior high school language teachers of Sanandaj.
4. Teachers in the sample have 3 to 15 years of teaching experience.

REFERENCES

- Acker, G. (1999). The impact of clients' mental illness on social workers' job satisfaction and burnout. *Health and Social Work*, 24, 112-119.
- Ashton, P. T., & Webb, R. B. (1982). Teachers' sense of efficacy: Toward an ecological model. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association*, New York.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1989). Human agency in Social Cognitive Theory. *American Psychologist*, 44 (9), 1175-1184.
- Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. Cambridge University Press, New York
- Cross, S., & Markus, H. (1991). Possible selves across the life span. *Human Development*, 34, 230-255.
- Dastgoshadeh, A. (2013). *L2 self-development of EFL teachers: its relationship with teachers' efficacy and students' achievement*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Tehran University, Tehran.
- Dembo, M. H., & Gibson, S. (1985). Teacher's sense of efficacy: An important factor in school improvement. *Elementary School Journal*, 86, 173-184.
- Galluzzo, G. (2005). Performance assessment and reviewing teacher education: the possibilities of NBPTS standards. *Academic Research Library*, 74, 142-145.
- Gibson, S., & Dembo, M. H. (1984). Teacher-efficacy: A construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 569-582.
- Henson, R. K., Kogan, L. R., & Vacha-Haase, T. (2001). Areliability generalization study of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale and related instruments. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 61, 404-420.

- Higgins, E. T., Roney, C., Crowe, E., & Hymes, C. (1994). Ideal versus ought predilections for approach and avoidance: Distinct self-regulatory systems. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66, 276-286
- Kelchtermans, G., & Vandenberghe, R. (1994) Teachers' professional development: a biographical perspective, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 26(1), 45-62.
- Markus, H. R., & Nurius, P. (1986). "Possible selves." *American Psychologist*, 41, 954- 969.
- Nias, J. (1989) Primary teachers talking (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul).
- Nias, J. (1996) Thinking about feeling: the emotions in teaching, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(3), 293 306.
- Norman, C. C., & Aron, A. (2003). Aspects of possible self that predict motivation to achieve or avoid it. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39, 500-507.
- Oyserman, D., Bybee, D., & Terry, K. (2006). "Possible selves and academic outcomes: How and when possible selves impel action." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 91, 188-204.
- Oyserman, D., Terry, K., & Bybee, D. (2002). "A possible selves intervention to enhance school involvement." *Journal of Adolescence*, 25, 313-326.
- Oyserman, D., & James, L. (2009). Possible selves: From content to process. In: Markman, Klein, & Suhr (Eds.). *The Handbook of Imagination and Mental Stimulation*. Psychology Press.
- Oyserman, D. and Markus, H. (1990). Possible selves and delinquency. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(1), 112 – 125
- Ross, J. A. (1992). Teacher efficacy and the effect of coaching on student achievement. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 17(1), 51-65.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk-Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher-efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783–805

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRITICAL THINKING AND IMPULSIVE AND REFLECTIVE LEARNING STYLES AMONG IRANIAN FEMALE EFL LEARNERS

Samira Aliyari

Payame Noor University of Tabriz, Tabriz, East Azarbayjan, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between female English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' critical thinking and the learning styles of impulsivity and reflectivity. To this end, a total of 75 Iranian female EFL English learners took part in the study. This study was conducted in one of the famous institutes called Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urmia, West Azarbayjan, Iran. By means of NELSON Test, 75 learners out of the pool of 200 were selected for the study. The participants were within the age range of 15-20 having at least a 2 year-experience of learning English at the institute. The instruments utilized for data collection procedures were: 1) Impulsivity Subscale of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (I7) (IVE), 2) Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT) (Kember et al., 2000), and 3) Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT). Before embarking on the study, the researcher made sure that all the participants were homogeneous through NELSON in intermediate level. The data was collected in 3 sessions during the term. The researcher administered Cornell critical thinking test to the population to find out about the participants' critical thinking. Then, the learners were asked to fill out the questionnaires on reflectivity and impulsivity learning styles in two sessions. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated as well. Having collected all the data, the researcher coded and scored the data in order to get interval data for the purpose of data analysis. Pearson Product correlation coefficient was used for data analysis. The findings indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity, however, a weak negative one between critical thinking and impulsivity.. The results appear to have some valuable practical implications for teachers to pay special attention to learners' critical thinking ability if they want to encourage reflective learning style among their students.

KEYWORDS: Learning styles, impulsivity, reflectivity, critical thinking

INTRODUCTION

In an effective educational setting, the concept of critical thinking should be taken into account. This concept is not newly developed and everybody should be encouraged to be a critical thinker. It also became one of the major responsibilities of teachers and material developers to provide the opportunities for learners to practice critical thinking (Mohammadi Forood & Khomeiniani Farahani, 2013).

Critical thinking which is a major concern among educators and psychologists is one of the most important thinking abilities that should be acquired by learners in school and university. There are many contradictory opinions about whether critical thinking should be taught in education.

Various types of approaches and models to teaching, measuring and assessing critical thinking skills and abilities have been proposed. Although there are many conflicts on teaching critical thinking skills, everyone believes that thinking critically is the crucial goal of education (Reed, 1998).

The concept of critical thinking has developed throughout centuries and various definitions have been proposed, therefore, "there is no consensus on a definition of critical thinking" (Fasko, 2003, p. 8), and a single definition is not widely accepted (Halonen, 1995). Norris and Ennis (1989) terms critical thinking as "reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused upon deciding what to believe and do" (p.3). Similarly, Halpern (1993) calls it as "the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increases the probability of a desirable outcome, thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal oriented" (p. 6). According to Ennis (1985), critical thinking is a logical and reflective thinking which needs various proficiencies, tendencies, and abilities that result in reasonable reflective thinking. Nickerson, Perkin and Smith (1985, p. 58) defined the term as "understanding what to trust in various contexts reasonably and requires the ability to judge the truth value of some assertions, to measure the proof available, to evaluate the dependability of inferences, to build arguments and alternative hypothesis".

There is a general lack of agreement on how critical thinking is best defined, what critical thinking skills should be taught, and determining a framework for this teaching. As a whole, educational reformers have not even agreed on terminology (Mohammadi Forood & Khomeinjani Farahani, 2013). Other areas of disagreement and concern include the extent to which critical thinking is subject specific, the extent to which novice thinkers can learn to think more critically like experts, the difficulties in separating higher order and lower order thinking skills for instructional purposes, and whether critical thinking should be considered a process or a set of skills (Beyer, 1985; Facione, 1986; Perkins, Farady, & Bushey, 1991; Resnick, 1987).

Taking people's learning styles into consideration is a prerequisite for developing critical thinking. "Everyone has a learning style. Our style of learning, if accommodated, can result in improved attitudes toward learning and an increase in productivity, academic achievement, and creativity." (Griggs, 1991, p. 85). Getting to know the different learning styles is important in educational progress and academic success. Students can easily keep up with the syllabus and find their own weak points so that they can excel in the course only if they recognize their own learning style.

Research studies have investigated learners' learning styles since they are influential in the process and outcomes of learning. "Learning styles refer to an individuals' characteristics and preferred way of gathering, interpreting, organizing and thinking about information" (Wang, 2008, p. 30). Moreover, cognitive styles are a crucial part of learning styles. According to research studies, individuals use different methods and have their own preferences and methods to receive and process information (Kumar, Kumar & Smart, 2004). Two of the cognitive styles which are mostly related to problem solving behaviors and has been identified by Kagan (1966) and some other researchers sequentially, are impulsivity and reflectivity.

Impulsivity (I) and Reflectivity (R) are two characteristics of human beings in cognitive domain. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) defines impulsive people or their behavior as "marked by sudden action that is undertaken without careful thought" and gives the synonym of "thoughtful" for reflective (pp. 653-1067). Kagan, Rosman, Day, Albert, & Philips (1964), as cited in Duckworth (1974, p. 59), define the notion of conceptual tempo as "a behavioral dimension which may be described as the degree to which an individual reflects upon the differential validity of alternative solutions in problem situations where several possible responses exist simultaneously". Kagan (1965), as stated in Duckworth et al. (1974), classifies reflective person as "the individual who takes relatively longer respond and make fewer errors" (p. 59).

Kagan et al. (as quoted in Kagan et al., 1966), believe that "impulsive attitude begins its growth during the preschool years and may be a deeply entrenched habit" (p. 359). According to Block et al. (1974), reflectives are "slow deciders in uncertain situations" while impulsives are "quick deciders in uncertain circumstances" (p. 611). Kagan (1965), Kagan, Pearson, & Welch (1966), and Selinker et al. (1976) believe that "in general, reflective children have been found to perform better on visual discrimination tasks, serial recall, inductive reasoning, and reading in the primary grades, than do those identified as impulsive" (p. 322).

Kagan (as cited in Jamieson, 1992) stated that "the impulsives reach decision and report them very quickly with little concern for accuracy" (p. 492). However, some students are slow and accurate learners and take longer to respond and make fewer errors. Such learners are referred to as reflectives. They weigh all the possibilities in answering a question. Then, after reflection, they give a response to a question, a solution to a problem, or make a decision in a situation. Messer (1976) believes that "reflectivity/impulsivity is the extent to which a person reflects on a solution to a problem for which several alternatives are possible" (p. 532). Kagan, Rosman, Day, Albert, and Philips (as cited in Jamieson, 1992) added to this definition "the high uncertainty over which is correct." (p. 492).

Human beings are critical thinkers, but they are different from each other in their level of critical thinking which can be increased through practice. Some factors can affect critical thinking ability including learning styles. Young (as cited in Karamloo, 2014) believed that if teachers utilize effective and appropriate instructional methods and materials, they can enhance the students' critical thinking ability.

Given what was said above regarding the growing salience of critical thinking and its observable ignorance by EFL teachers, there is a lack of research on nurturing critical thinking in EFL contexts and its association with learning styles. Thus, the purpose of this study was to find out if there is a relationship between critical thinking and the female learners' learning styles, of course with the focus on impulsivity and reflectivity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were put forward to examine the results from a practical point of view with the aim of searching for the previously claimed concepts to achieve the goals of study.

- 1) Is there any relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners?
- 2) Is there any relationship between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners?

Correspondingly, in order to investigate this research question and to take the safe side, the following null hypotheses were proposed:

- 1) There is no relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.
- 2) There is no relationship between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 75 females were considered to take part in the study in order to yield more significant and at the same time trustable results. This study was conducted in one of the famous institutes called Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urmia, West Azarbayjan, Iran. By means of NELSON test, 3 intermediate intact female classes (25 students in each class) were selected. The participants were within the age range of 15-20 having at least a 2 year-experience of learning English at the institute and speaking Azari and Farsi as their native languages. The classes were held twice a week.

Instruments

Embarking on any study entails utilization of a number of instruments which help it to smoothly run toward achieving its intended goals.

Nelson Proficiency Test

To select the participants, the researcher administered the validated NELSON proficiency test to homogenize the prospective students for the study. This test included 20 vocabulary items and 15 reading items in multiple-choice format. 75 female participants out of 150 whose scores were within the one SD above the mean and one SD below it were selected. The researcher calculated the reliability of the test which was 0.82.

Impulsivity Subscale of Eysenck's Impulsiveness Questionnaire (I7) (Ive)

Eysenck's (1990) Impulsiveness Questionnaire contains 54 items. A Farsi version of this questionnaire was prepared by Salimi (2001), and its Impulsiveness subscale was also validated with 1820 subjects. The reliability of the Persian Impulsiveness subscale was tested using

Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown's unusual-length split half reliability. Alpha reliability was found to be 0.86 and split half reliability was found to be 0.86, which are acceptable indicators of reliability. The same Farsi version of impulsivity subscale served the Impulsivity scale of the present research. Moreover, the researcher herself calculated the reliability of the Farsi version of the questionnaire which equaled 84%.

Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (Qrt) (Kember Et Al., 2000)

The Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT) comprises four constructs that span a range of thinking. Within the Questionnaire for Reflective Thinking (QRT), Kember, Leung, Jones, and Loke (2000) have identified four constructs that cover a broad spectrum of reflective thinking. These comprise habitual action, understanding, reflection and critical reflection. The questionnaire was translated into Farsi. The researcher calculated the reliability of the questionnaire which was 79%.

Cornell Critical Thinking Test

The Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT), inspired by the Cornell/Illinois model of CT and developed in 1985 by Robert Ennis of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Jason Millman of Cornell University, develops a clear picture of the students' critical thinking abilities (Ennis, Millman, & Tomko, 2005). The Cornell Critical Thinking Test series offers two levels of testing: level X for grades five through twelve and level Z for grades ten through twelve and at the college level as well. It can be used to teach critical thinking skills, to predict students' performance on proficiency exam, critical thinking courses, college admissions, careers, and employment. It aims at measuring five aspects of CT: deduction; semantics; observation and credibility of sources; induction; definition and assumption identification. Each aspect is measured in a separate section in the test, but induction is split into two sections, namely, on the use of induction in hypothesis testing and in planning experiments. The test contains 52 items, all of which are in a forced-choice format. The CCTT uses multiple-choice questions.

Procedure

Before embarking on the study, the researcher made sure that all the participants were homogeneous by NELSON test. During the study, through NELSON test, 75 female students including 25 students in each class were selected out of the pool of 200 randomly in intermediate level. The data was collected in 3 sessions during the term. The researcher administered Cornell critical thinking test to the population to find out about the participants' critical thinking. Then, the learners were asked to fill out the questionnaires on reflectivity and impulsivity learning styles in two sessions. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated, too. Having collected all the data, the researcher coded and scored the data in order to get interval data for the purpose of data analysis.

Data Analysis

In this study, after coding and scoring the items in the questionnaires and obtaining interval data, Pearson Product correlation coefficient was used to discover the relationship between critical thinking abilities and impulsive learning style of Iranian female EFL learners and also between critical thinking abilities and reflective learning style of Iranian female EFL learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to analyze the relevant data, the researcher used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16. In order to test the first and second hypotheses, the researcher conducted

At first, having administered NELSON test, the researcher, out of the pool of 200 learners, selected 75 females. To ensure that the subjects were at the same level of proficiency, that is, to ensure the homogeneity of the subjects, the researcher checked the normality of the sample using Kolmogorove-Smirnov which indicated that the sample was normally distributed (i.e., $p=.19 > .05$).

Then, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to explore the correlation between critical thinking and reflectivity/impulsivity among females (Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Relationship between Critical Thinking and Reflectivity/Impulsivity among Females

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Critical	60.56	6.014	75
Impulsive	87.54	4.156	75
Reflective	58.26	5.551	75

The results of Pearson product-moment correlation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship between Critical Thinking and Reflectivity/Impulsivity among Females

		Critical	Impulsive	Reflective
Critical	Pearson Correlation	1	-.265*	.856**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021	.000
	N	75	75	75
Impulsive	Pearson Correlation	-.265*	1	-.225
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021		.052
	N	75	75	75
Reflective	Pearson Correlation	.856**	-.225	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.052	
	N	75	75	75

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

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

Table 2 shows that there was a significant strong and positive association between critical thinking and reflectivity [$r = .85$, $n=75$, $\text{Sig}= 0.00 < 0.01$]. However, There was a weak and negative significant association between critical thinking and impulsivity [$r= -.26$, $n=75$, $\text{Sig}= 0.02 < 0.05$].

Discussion

Improving critical thinking skills in higher education has remained a topic of discussion and a focus of varying importance for many years. Even in an educational climate that focuses its funding and attention to learners' success, it is a general consensus among higher education faculties that research relating to the development of critical thinking skills is of paramount importance (Paul, 1993). Thus, the overarching aim of the research reported here was to investigate the relationship between female EFL learners' critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity. The results of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity; however, the relationship between critical thinking and impulsivity was weak and negative.

The findings of the present study are in line with Borkowski, Peck, Reid, and Kurtz (1983), Heidari and Bahrami (2012), Meichenbaum and Goodman (1969), and Palladino, Poli, Masi, and Marcheschi (1997) who investigated the relationship between learning styles and critical thinking ability. Their results revealed that children with reflective cognitive style utilized metacognition more than those with impulsive style. Consistent with the results of this study, Cano and Martinez (1991) reported a positive relationship between student cognitive ability and students' critical thinking ability. It can be due to the fact that reflective learners perform better when learning calls for inductive reasoning (Kagan, Pearson, & Welch, 1966). Brodzinsky (1985) stated that reflective students can learn more since they can use their knowledge related to academic problems better than impulsive learners. In the case of simple tasks, impulsive children benefit more, while in analytical purposeful problem-solving tasks, the reflective learners perform better than impulsive learners.

In most educational settings, the effect of these learning styles is taken for granted and educators mostly do not take it into account as an influential variable in the process of learning. Even researchers in the field sometimes ignore the effect of this variable as an influential variable, which may change the acquired results (Rezaei, Boroghani, & Rahimi, 2013). By considering the difference between reflective and impulsive people, the result of study by Rezaei (2010) emphasized the effectiveness of the awareness raising activities. It seems that learners with different learning styles (i.e., reflective/impulsive) take advantage of the awareness raising activities to varying degrees. It seems that even after raising learners' awareness about different aspects of language, this factor has an important role in the learners' success because reflective learners are more analytical and more sensitive about the information and pay more attention to the awareness raising. Thus, they notice the activities more than the impulsive learners.

The development of critical thinking skills is dependent upon instruction. Teachers should encourage the development of critical thinking by arranging the learning environment, demonstrating critical thinking, and implementing techniques that encourage active student engagement. The most prevalent mode of instruction in higher education classrooms unfortunately continues to be the traditional approach of content delivery in the form of teacher lecture designed to promote the memorization of isolated facts and serves to reduce student interest. Among the best educated faculties it is the general consensus that the development of

students' critical thinking skills is necessary to prepare individuals to perform optimally in an ever-changing world.

Evidently, higher education doesn't have any strong effect in the promotion of critical thinking skills of students. Lack of attention to critical thinking skills in Iranian schools and universities

may be regarded as an important factor in unawareness of students. According to Hashemi and Zabihi (2012), Iranian education system's emphasis on knowledge transmission and learning is limited to memorizing materials and the main problem that Iranian education system encounters is the goal-centered being instead of being process-centered. Perhaps, if schools and universities apply critical thinking as one of their goals, students would become better critical thinkers. According to Lundy et al. (2002), critical thinking can be enhanced during one semester if the class is designed to enhance critical thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to language learning, particularly learning English as a second or foreign language, where a combination of historical, social, cultural, and political issues is involved, the necessity of working on critical thinking among ESL/EFL learners is more severely felt, and needs to be equally highlighted by lesson planners, materials developers, teacher educators, and teachers (Hashemi & Zabihi, 2012). However, it is unfortunate that only a few studies (e.g., Birjandi & Bagherkazemi, 2010; Fahim et al., 2010; Ghaemi & Taherian, 2011) had been conducted so far to throw some light on the importance of critical thinking in English language classes. Moreover, impulsivity has rarely been seen on the lists of learner factors and worked on.

Thus, the present study aimed at exploring the relationship between female EFL learners' critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers arrived at the following conclusions, that is, there is a strong positive association between critical thinking and reflectivity. However, the relationship between critical thinking and impulsivity was negative and weak.

The results appear to have some valuable practical implications for teachers. Teachers need to pay special attention to critical thinking ability if they want to encourage reflective learning style among their students. It is important to note, however, that the enhancement of critical thinking ability depends on the nature of the curriculum. Thus, educational settings should provide a very wide range of choice and options for both teachers and learners to increase critical thinking in learners.

Furthermore, teachers should provide any chance for the students to think about learning second/foreign language and boost a sense of problem solving to develop their ability to select the best and easiest way to get their goals. In fact, instructors can increase the logic of selecting the most appropriate strategies for language learning by promoting and emphasizing the ability of

critical thinking skill. Also, teachers should try to make learners conscious of their behavior and learning styles.

Another implication is for the wider world of national policymakers and curriculum developers of teacher education programs. Those programs should increase novice teachers' awareness of how to enhance learners' critical thinking and reflectivity through learner-centered tasks. Therefore, pre-service language teacher education programs should incorporate the methods of enhancing critical thinking ability in their schedules.

As any human production, this study has some limitations. A serious limitation of this study was that it failed to incorporate the proficiency level. The researcher addressed just one proficiency level, that is, intermediate. In this regard, the findings may not be generalizable to other proficiency levels such as elementary, pre-intermediate and advanced. Moreover, this study focused on a number of EFL learners from one educational context. In other words, the researcher delimited the subjects to institutions students. In addition, the used tool in this study was the questionnaire, and the other useful tools such as interviews and observations were not used.

Despite some studies conducted on learners' critical thinking, there are still some problems that need to be tackled and some gaps can be seen in the literature which gives avenue for further research in the area. Researchers should triangulate the findings both qualitatively and quantitatively in order to get reliable data to generalize. It is also necessary to conduct a research to investigate the relationship between critical thinking and reflectivity as well as critical thinking and impulsivity across various proficiency levels, gender, and in different contexts. This study can be replicated in a larger scale to make it more generalizable.

REFERENCES

- Beyer, B. K. (1985). Teaching critical thinking: A direct approach. *Social Education*, 49(4), 297-303.
- Birjandi, P., & Bagherkazemi, M. (2010). The relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking ability and their professional success. *English Language Teaching*, 3(2), 135-145.
- Block, J., Block, J. H., & Harrington, D. M. (1974). Some misgivings about the Matching Familiar Figures Test as a measure of reflection-impulsivity. *Developmental Psychology*, 10, 611-632.
- Borkowski, J. G., Peck, V. A., Reid, M. K., & Kurtz, B. E. (1983). Impulsivity and strategy transfer: Metamemory as mediator. *Child Development*, 54, 459-473.
- Cano, J., & Martinez, C. (1991). The relationship between cognitive performance and critical thinking abilities among selected agricultural education students. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 32(1), 24-29.
- Ennis, R. H. (1985). A logical basis for measuring critical thinking skills. *Educational Leadership*, 43, 44-48.

- Ennis, R. H., Millman, J., & Tomko, T. N. (2005). *Cornell Critical Thinking Test*. Midwest, Pacific Grove, Calif, USA.
- Eysenck, H. (1990). Biological dimensions of personality. In L. A. Pervin (Ed.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 244–276). New York: Guilford.
- Facione, P.A. (1986). Testing college-level critical thinking. *Liberal Education*, 72, 221-231.
- Fahim, M., Bagherkazemi, M., & Alemi, M. (2010). The relationship between test takers' critical thinking ability and their performance on the reading section of TOEFL. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 830-837.
- Fasko, D. (2003). Critical thinking: origins, historical development, future direction. In D. Fasko (ed.), *Critical thinking and reasoning: Current research, theory and practice* (pp. 3-20). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Ghaemi, H., & Taherian, R. (2011). The role of critical thinking in EFL teachers' teaching success. *MJAL*, 3 (1), 8-22.
- Griggs, Sh. A. (1991). Learning Styles Counseling. *Educational Resources Information Center(ERIC) Document*, 1-3.
- Halonon, J. S. (1995). Demystifying critical thinking. *Teaching of Psychology*, 22(1), 75-81.
- Halpern, D. (1993). Assessing the effectiveness of critical thinking instruction. *The Journal of General Education*, 42, 239-254.
- Hashemi, M. R., & Zabihi, R. (2012). Does critical thinking enhance EFL learners' receptive skills? *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(1), 172-179.
- Heidari, F., & Bahrami, Z. (2012). The relationship between thinking styles and Metacognitive awareness among Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(3), 721-733.
- Jamieson, J. (1992). The cognitive style of reflection/ impulsivity & field independence & ESL success. *Modern Language Journal*, 76, 491-501.
- Kagan, J. (1965). Reflection-impulsivity and reading ability in primary grade children. *Child Development*, 37, 583-594.
- Kagan, J. (1966). Reflection and Impulsivity: the Generality and Dynamics of Conceptual Tempo. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 71(1), 17-24.
- Kagan, J., Rosman, B., Day, D., Albert, J., & Phillips, W. (1964). Information processing and the child: Significance of analytic and reflective attitudes. *Psychological Monographs*, 78 (1), pp. 1-37.
- Kagan, J., Pearson, L., & Welch, L. (1966). Conceptual Impulsivity and Inductive Reasoning. *Child Development*, 37, 583 – 594.
- Karamloo, S. (2014). The relationship between critical thinking ability and learning styles of Iranian male and female EFL learners. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies*, 4(2), 1-12.
- Kember, D., Leung, D., Jones, A., Loke, A. Y. (2000). Development of a questionnaire to measure the level of reflective thinking. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 25(4), 380-395.
- Kumar, P., Kumar, A., & Smart, K. (2004). Assessing the impact of instructional methods and information technology on student learning styles. *Journal of Issues in Informing Science and Information Technology*, 1(1), 533-544.
- Lundy, L. K., Irani, T. A., Ricketts, J. C., Eubanks, E. E., Rudd, R. D., Gallo- Meagher, M., Et al. (2002). *A mixed-methods study of undergraduate dispositions toward thinking critically*

- about biotechnology. Paper presented at the National Agricultural Education Research Conference, Las Vegas, NV.
- Meichenbaum, D. H., & Goodman, J. (1969). Reflection-impulsivity and verbal Control of motor behavior. *Child Development*, 40, 785-797.
- Messer, S. B. (1976). Reflection-impulsivity: a review. *Psychological Bulletin*. 83, 1026- 1052.
- Mohammadi Forood, S., & Khomeiniani Farahani, A. A (2013). A comparative study between the performance of Iranian high and low critical thinkers on different types of reading comprehension questions. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(9), 1710-1716,
- Nickerson, R., Perkins, D. N., & Smith, E. E. (1985). *The Teaching of Thinking*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ.
- Norris, S., & Ennis, R. (1989). *Evaluating critical thinking*. Pacific Grove, CA: Thinking Press & Software.
- Palladino, P., Poli, P., Masi, G., & Marcheschi, M. (1997). Impulsive-reflective cognitive style, metacognition, and emotion in adolescence. *Institute of Developmental Neurology, Psychiatry and Educational Psychology*, 84(1), 47-57.
- Paul, R. W. (1993). The logic of creative and critical thinking. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 37, 21-39.
- Perkins, D. N., Farady, M., & Bushey, B. (1991). Everyday reasoning and the roots of intelligence. In J. F. Voss, D. N. Perkins, & J. W. Segal (Eds.). *Informal reasoning and education* (83-105). Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Reed, J. H. (1998). *Effect of a model for critical thinking on students' achievement in primary source document analysis*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of south Florida. Retrieved from www.criticalthinking.org
- Rezaei, A. (2010). *Effect of awareness giving on bilinguals' and monolinguals listening comprehension: Learners with different cognitive styles*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Malaya.
- Rezaei, A., Boroghani, T., & Rahimi, M. (2013). Reflectivity/Impulsivity as an Important Individual Factor and Effectiveness of Awareness Raising Activities. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 10(4), 281-286.
- Salimi, E. (2001). On the relationship between impulsivity/reflectivity cognitive style and performance in Tmu English proficiency test. (Unpublished Master dissertation). TMU Iran, Iran.
- Selinker, T., Jeffrey, W., Kagan, J., & Wright, J. (1976). Reflective & impulsive children: strategies of information processing underlying differences in problem solving. *Monographs of Society for Research in Child Development*, 41, 1-4
- Wang, M. (2008). Learning styles and English teaching. *US-China Foreign Language*, 6, 30.

THE EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES ON PROMOTING READING COMPREHENSION AMONG EFL LEARNERS IN GACHSARAN

Alireza Avazpour

Islamic Azad University, Yasooj Branch,
Faculty of Humanities, English Language Department
alireza.avazpour@gmail.com

Taher Bahrani (Ph.D)

Department of English, Mahshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mahshahr, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the impact that Cooperative Learning techniques may have on reading comprehension among EFL learners in Gachsaran, Iran. The EFL population for this study was Iranian EFL learners from Talieye-Danesh Institute in. 60 out of the hundred students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean based on the reading comprehension pre-test were qualified to attend the research. An experimental-control group method was followed. The participants were then randomly divided into three groups, namely A, B and C. Groups A and B were considered as experimental groups and group C as the control group. Each of the three groups received different trainings namely STAD, GI, and CI techniques respectively. The instruments utilized in this study included a reading comprehension pre-test and a reading comprehension post-test based on the students' textbook (Top Notch1A). Several paired samples t-tests, and a one way ANOVA were used to determine whether there were significant inter and intra-group differences. Results of the analyses were indicative of the fact that as a means to teaching reading comprehension, CL is better than traditional method since the groups that received CL techniques outperformed the other group that received conventional instruction. The second findings confirmed the superiority of STAD over GI method. Based upon the findings of the study, STAD is thus recommended to be integrated into the English reading course.

KEYWORDS: cooperative learning, STAD, GI, CI, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps reading skill can be regarded as the foundation and as one of the fundamental skills in second and foreign language learning. Due to the rapid explosion of science and technology in the world, as Farhady (1998) argues, the ability to read in English has received priority over other objectives of English language teaching. As a result, the main goal of English instruction in most countries, especially within the educational programs, is to improve the reading ability of the students in order to enable them to grasp new information from the original sources in their field.

Many researchers and psychologists in the field have attempted to develop a conceptual view about the notion of reading. Reading is defined as a “complex activity that involves both perception and thought” (Pang et al, 2003, p. 6). According to Beck and Margaret (2005), reading is a complex process composed of a number of interacting sub-processes and abilities. Reading is also defined as a process of problem solving, which involves working to build up a sense from a text. Not only this process involves making sense from the words and sentences written on the page, but it also goes to ideas, memories and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences (Schoenbach et al. 1999). Therefore, we can conclude that reading refers to the active process of extracting and interpreting information and messages from different written materials.

The importance of reading comprehension has urged many researchers to find an efficient way or method which can facilitate English learning and help learners comprehend better. Some new studies in this regard have proposed Cooperative Learning (CL) as a beneficial method to augment learners’ reading comprehension. Hollingsworth, Sherman, and Zaugra (2007), for instance, claim that CL as a method of teaching is a valuable tool in helping students learn comprehension strategies while encouraging positive interactions among peers. They further proposed that students can achieve academic success, and their enthusiasm and motivation towards reading will be increased through increasing their reading levels and knowledge of comprehension skills.

Among a myriad of models and activities which have emerged and currently applied in the field of cooperative learning, Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD), and Group Instruction (GI) have attracted much attention. According to Slavin (1987), STAD has been used in a variety of subject areas including math, language arts, social studies, and science. The STAD technique was chosen in this study because, as Ghaith and Yaghi (1998) believe, it has consistently been shown to be among the most simple and effective CL methods in enhancing students’ achievement of well defined objectives in various subjects. In addition to STAD, GI is the next issue of interest in this research which according to Kagan (1995) is a student-directed technique and that in GI technique cooperation and learning are complimentary.

Reading comprehension is also very important in educational system in Iran and nearly all objectives of formal English instructions in schools and universities are reading comprehension and techniques used to develop this skill. Despite the growing importance and interest in learning English as a foreign language in Iran, students at the pre-university level, as Faramarzy (2003) believes, are rarely proficient enough to read and comprehend foreign language texts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Even though CL methods are mostly similar in that students work in groups to achieve a common goal, they are different from one another in particular. While some methods like STAD, and TGT are structured with well specific group tasks and rewards, GI and Learning Together are structured with fewer well specific group rewards (Slavin, 1990). Due to the shortage of time and space, only STAD and GI which were the foci in this study are presented in brief in the next section.

Student team -achievement divisions (STAD)

According to Slavin (as cited in Hardegree, jr, 2012), STAD is a “peer tutoring format” which includes such principal elements like biracial heterogeneous student teams and achievement divisions. He suggested that achievement division is a tool applied to ensure an equal and considerable possibility of success for each student provided that he/she utilizes maximum effort. It is further used as a reference group for student scores. Students in this activity are assigned to 4-5 members, in heterogeneous learning teams. Each team is comprised of high, average, and low performing students, boys and girls of different ethnic backgrounds, so as for the team to be representative of the class as a whole.

After assigning the students to the small groups in this method, the teacher presents a lesson and students are then required to work within their teams to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. In each group, students tutor each other on the material in the course and prepare each other for weekly quizzes. Students then take individual quizzes. Success is based on improvement, that is, quiz scores are compared to past averages and points are awarded based on the degree to which they exceed those past performances. Scores of the teams are obtained through summing those points.

STAD technique, therefore, operates on the principle which involves students work together to learn and be responsible for their own learning as well as their teammates. This method also necessitates having team goals and success teams that are dependent on the learning of all group members. Three central concepts of STAD outlined by Slavin (1990) are namely team rewards, individual accountability, and equal opportunities for success.

Group investigation

GI, as Slavin (cited in Hardegree, jr, 2012) argues, is a powerful structure used to encourage learners to learn group organizational skills and to think creatively. Slavin further referred to GI as an organizational approach in which students work in small groups while using cooperative inquiry, group discussion, and cooperative planning and projects. He adds that in GI, students are assigned into 2-6 member groups and they can choose the topics based on their interest. After dividing the investigation into smaller parts, the groups further break their subtopics into individual tasks, and they should be responsible for synthesizing the information to prepare group reports. Each group member then participates in the class presentation. Jacobs (1994, p. 4), in this regard, emphasized the “philosophy of Dewy and humanistic psychology” as the theoretical basis for GI approach. According to him, GI comprise the first five ideas of Dewey which are listed below:

- Students should be active in learning by doing an act,
- They should be intrinsically motivated,
- Knowledge is not fixed, but changing,
- Learning occur based on students’ needs and interest,
- Education should include learning to work with, respect, and understand others,
- Learning should be related to the world beyond the classroom and should help to improve the world (p. 4).

Previous studies regarding the effectiveness of using cooperative learning in reading class

One of the most widely researched peer learning models is cooperative learning which has been investigated in a variety of academic disciplines including reading comprehension. According to Fielding and Pearson (1994), CL can serve as the most effective technique if the students clearly understand the teacher's goals, and when goals are group-oriented and the criterion of success is satisfactory learned by each group member, when students are expected and taught to describe things to one another instead of just providing answers, and when group activities supplement rather than supplant teacher-directed instruction.

As one of the earliest studies Bejarano (1987), studied the effects of two cooperative small-group learning techniques (STAD and GI) and of the traditional whole- class method on the general achievement of junior high school EFL learners and on their acquisition of specific language skills. This study lasted five sessions a week for 4½ months involving 33 seventh-grade classes in Israel. The results showed that STAD had no significant and positive effect on the achievement of the reading comprehension skill. The results also revealed that GI technique had no significant effect on the achievement of the reading comprehension skill.

In a more recent time frame, and in their study Hollingsworth, Sherman, and Zaugra (2007) pointed out that CL is an effective tool, which helps students learn comprehension strategies while encouraging positive interactions among peers. The students achieved academic success by enhancing their reading levels and knowledge of comprehension skills, and there was also an increase in enthusiasm and motivation towards reading.

In another recent study Kassim (2006) examined the effectiveness of CL model and the whole class instruction in improving learners reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and motivation to read. Forty-four grade five EFL learners participated in the study. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between the control and the experimental groups on the dependent variables of reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. However the results revealed statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group on the dependent variable of motivation to read and its dimensions, the value of reading, and reading self concept.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the above mentioned, this study investigated the effects of two methods of CL namely STAD and GL in improvement of students' reading comprehension ability.

1. To what extent does implementing STAD affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?
2. To what extent does implementing GI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?
3. To what extent does implementing CI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A total of 60 Iranian EFL learners from Talieye-Danesh Institute in Gachsaran, one of the towns in Kohkiloye and Boyerahmad province participated in this study. In order to select the participants, first, a sample of 100 students who were at same age (17-18) were asked to take a reading comprehension pre-test to ensure homogeneity of the participants regarding their proficiency at reading skill. 60 out of the hundred students who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean based on the reading comprehension pre-test were qualified to attend the research. They included both female and male students. When the reading proficiency homogeneity was assured, the participants were randomly divided into three groups, namely A, B and C. Groups A and B were considered as experimental groups and group C as the control group. There were 20 students in each group under consideration. Each of the three groups received different trainings namely STAD, GI, and CI techniques. The following table demonstrates the population and the related treatment.

Table 1: The Population of the Study and the Related Treatment

N	Group	Treatment
20	A	STAD
20	B	GI
20	C	CI

Materials and instruments

The materials and instruments which were utilized in the study were students' textbook (Top Notch1A), reading comprehension pre-test, and reading comprehension post-test. The reliability of the tests was gained, through a pilot study on the EFL learners ($n=20$) who were similar to the learners of the main study in terms of age, sex, and proficiency level. The results of Cronbach's alpha analysis showed that the tests were reliable (pre-test $r = 0.81$, post-test $r=0.79$). It should be mentioned that after interpreting the collected data, some weak, malfunctioning and non-functioning items were removed from the whole test, and some were modified. The content validity of the tests was then evaluated, and accepted, by three experts who were PhD holders of applied linguistics with more than five years of teaching and testing experience at different universities. Finally, the researcher decided to include the tests as the pre and post-tests for the study.

Procedures

In order to collect the required data, a reading proficiency test was first selected from the students' textbook by the researchers and administered to all the participants of the study, once as a reading comprehension pre-test before embarking on the study and another time as a post-test at the end of the study. Furthermore, the scores of the reading pre-test were used to divide the students into three groups. After homogenizing the participants of the study with respect to their reading proficiency based on the reading comprehension pre-test, each group received the assigned treatment. All the three groups were taught by the same teacher (researcher). All sessions took place in the students' classrooms about 45-minitues reading period. The treatment lasted for two months (sixteen sessions) and covered five instructional units (reading comprehension parts of the students' textbook).

Procedures for the first experimental group

After assigning the participants of STAD group to the small teams including 4-5 members, the teacher presented the first reading lesson. Teaching, team study, individual quizzes, and team recognition are the four important stages for implementing STAD in the classroom (Ghaith, 2004). As such, the teacher first presented the explanation of material for the participants of the group A. Doing so the teacher followed the usual practices of reading activities included in reading comprehension texts such as reading warm-up, while reading activity, and post reading activity. Then, the participants worked within their teams to ensure that all team members mastered the lesson. Students in this group then tutored each other while they were utilizing different reading strategies (predicting, skimming, scanning, inferencing, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words, and self monitoring). The participants then tried to complete activities or worksheets, took individual quizzes, and finally recognized their team achievements. This required the students to help their team mates and they were not in competition with each other since all or none of the teams could achieve rewards depending on how they scored. Team rewards took the form of certificates or other rewards (like giving the opportunity to present the answers first) which were given to the team provided that the team achieved above a required criterion.

Procedures for the second experimental group

Following Sharan and Sharan (1999), four key components in the implementation of GI in the classroom were applied which were namely, investigation, interaction, interpretation, and intrinsic motivation. At investigation stage the topic was first assigned and subtopics were determined. As the next step, the groups of students were formed according to their interest with respect to the subtopics. Then the students carried out the learning plan with assistance from the teacher. Afterwards, the students planned their group investigations through interaction. Group discussion and exchanging ideas were also done in this stage. The students were then given opportunity for intellectual as well as social interaction.

As the third stage, the GI group carried out their investigations by interpreting and integrating their findings. Each participant contributed his or her own perspective on the topic. The last component of GI technique according to Sharan and Sharan (1999) is intrinsic motivation. They believe that motivation becomes intrinsic when students determine what and how they will learn, besides the ability of students to control their own learning. In order to promote the intrinsic motivation, it was tried to let the participants of this group have their control over the materials to be learned. Doing so, during the treatment, besides their freedom to choose their interest group they were given power to choose about what and how to learn the reading comprehension materials.

Procedures for the control group

The control group (group C) was also taught the same content by the same teacher, but according to a Conventional Instruction technique (CI). As the conventional practice of teaching technique, before presenting the reading comprehension passage, the teacher first asked some warm-up questions in order to tap the students' background knowledge. As the next step, the teacher asked one of the students to read out the page loud and explained the points in which they had

problems. The process was mostly in a way that the teacher translated new vocabulary and explained the general points of the reading. As the final step the students were required to answer their textbook post reading exercises.

After the treatment period was over for the three groups, all of the participants were asked to take the reading comprehension post-test. The obtained results were then gathered and coded into SPSS version 20 to be analyzed based on the purposes of the study.

RESULTS

Results of the reading comprehension pretest

In order to ensure about the homogeneity of the three groups in terms of the reading comprehension prior to the administration of the treatments, a one-way ANOVA was run to compare the three groups' means on the reading comprehension pretest. As displayed in Table 2, the first experimental ($M = 9.38$, $SD = 2.44$), second experimental ($M = 9.68$, $SD = 2.62$) and control ($M = 9.84$, $SD = 2.59$) groups gained close means on reading comprehension pretest.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics; Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
EG1	20	9.38	2.446	.499	8.34	10.41	4	14
EG2	20	9.68	2.626	.525	8.60	10.76	4	15
CG	20	9.84	2.593	.519	8.77	10.91	5	15
Total	60	9.64	2.530	.294	9.05	10.22	4	15

EG1=Experimental Group 1 (STAD), EG2=Experimental Group 2 (GI), CG= Control Group (CI)

The results of one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 57) = .20$, $p = .813 > .05$ representing a weak effect size), depicted through Table 3, indicated that there were not any significant difference between the three groups' means on the pretest of reading comprehension. Thus, it can be concluded that they enjoyed the same levels of reading comprehension ability before the main study.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA; Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.724	2	1.362	.208	.813
Within Groups	464.425	57	6.541		
Total	467.149	59			

Investigating the effectiveness of the three different methods

After ensuring about the homogeneity of the participants regarding their prior proficiency in reading ability, to detect the group which benefited the most regarding the treatments applied,

another one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run on the post test results of the three groups. As displayed in Table 4, the first experimental ($M = 16.28$, $SD = 2.407$) showed the best group of the three, and the second experimental ($M = 13.29$, $SD = 3.014$) and control ($M = 11.28$, $SD = 2.665$) followed this group and ranked second and third respectively. Even though the descriptive statistics demonstrated better results for the first experimental group or STAD group, we should continue the analysis to be sure about these findings.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics; Prost-test of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
EG1	20	16.28	2.407	.481	4.046	7.154	7	18
EG2	20	13.29	3.014	.615	2.423	5.410	4	16
CG	20	11.28	2.574	.515	.102	2.778	6	17
Total	60	13.61	2.665	.537	2.190	5.114	4	18

EG1=Experimental Group 1 (STAD), EG2=Experimental Group 2 (GI), CG= Control Group (CI)

The results of one-way ANOVA ($F(2, 57) = 14$, $p = .000 < .05$ representing a large effect size) (Table 5) indicated that there were significant difference between the three groups' means on the posttest of reading comprehension. Thus, it was confirmed that the three groups were not the same and the predicted results seems to be true, but we could not make early conclusions on these results.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA; Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	200.002	2	100.001	14.003	.000
Within Groups	507.038	57	7.141		
Total	707.041	59			

In order to detect the group that benefited the most from the assigned treatments and made the difference in the results, taking the results of post-hoc tests in to account could be of utmost importance.

Table 6: Post-Hoc Scheffe's Tests; Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

(I) Proficiency	(J) Proficiency	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental 1	Control	5.0*	.764	.000	.10	3.92
	Experimental1	3.01*	.764	.039	.08	3.90
Experimental 2	Control	2.01	.756	.069	2.11	5.89

The initial findings of the study, based on the results of Post-Hoc test were proved to be significant. According to Table 6, the first experimental group which experienced STAD with the purpose of improving their reading comprehension successfully did the best of the three and

outperformed GI (Mean Difference = 3.01, $p < .05$) as well as CI (Mean Difference = 5.0, $p < .05$) groups. Even though the GI group did better on the post test compared to that of control group, since their difference was not very significant (Mean Difference = 2.01, $.069 > .05$), we could not draw effective conclusions on these results. We could then conclude that GI did not have a meaningful impact on reading comprehension of EFL learners compared to CI technique.

After being ensured about the final results of the three groups and detecting the group which stood out as the best group, we could now continue the analysis to test the within group effectiveness of these methods. The quantitative content analyses were statistically tested by conducting several paired-samples t-tests. The purpose of these tests was to study the effect of the type of training (STAD, GI, or CI) on the participants of the three groups, in order to answer the three questions of the study. This way, we could gain a clear picture of these methods and their impact within their groups. To this end, three paired-samples t-tests were computed on the pre and post test scores of all three groups to investigate any statistically significant differences in reading comprehension before and after the training period. The results are discussed below.

Answering the first research question

1. To what extent does implementing STAD affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

According to the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 7, the first experimental group (STAD) showed a higher mean on the posttest of reading comprehension ($M = 16.28$, $SD = 2.40$) than pretest ($M = 9.68$, $SD = 2.62$).

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (STAD Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Posttest	16.28	20	2.407	.481
Pretest	9.68	20	2.626	.525

As the next step, a paired-samples t-test was run on these results. According to Table 8, the findings of this test ($t(19) = 7.43$, $p < .05$, $r = .83$ representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between the STAD group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension.

Table 8: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (STAD Group)

Paired Differences							
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of thet		df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Lower	Upper			
6.600	3.764	.753	4.046	7.154	7.439	19	.000

Based on these results, it was concluded that the training method namely STAD was an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Answering the second research question

2. To what extent does implementing GI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

Another paired-samples t-test was also conducted to compare the GI groups' means on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension. As displayed in Table 9, the GI group also showed a higher mean on the posttest ($M = 13.29$, $SD = 3.01$) than pretest ($M = 9.38$, $SD = 2.44$).

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (GI Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	13.29	20	3.014	.615
Pretest	9.38	20	2.446	.499

The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(19) = 5.42$, $p < .05$, $r = .74$ representing a large effect size) (Table 10) further indicated that there was a significant difference between the second experimental group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest.

Table 10: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (Second Experimental Group)

Paired Differences								
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
			Lower	Upper				
3.917	3.538	.722	2.423	5.410	5.424	19	.000	

These results were the bases to conclude that the training method namely GI, standing as second in effectiveness after STAD, was an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Answering the third research question

3. To what extent does implementing CI affect the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the control group's means on the pretest and posttest of reading comprehension. As displayed in Table 11, even the control group showed a higher mean on the posttest ($M = 11.28$, $SD = 2.57$) than pretest ($M = 9.83$, $SD = 2.59$).

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (Control Group)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	11.28	20	2.574	.515
Pretest	9.84	20	2.593	.519

The results of the paired-samples t-test ($t(19) = 1.22$, $p > .05$, $r = .21$ representing small effect size) (Table 12) indicated that there was not a significant difference between the control group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest.

Table 12: Paired-Samples t-test, Pretest and Posttest of Reading Comprehension (CI Group)

Paired Differences							
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Lower	Upper			
1.440	3.241	.648	.102	2.778	1.221	19	.066

Based on these results, it was confirmed that the training method namely CI was not an effective method in enhancing Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, it is obviously clear that STAD has a significant effect on the reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL learners. Given its many benefits and advantages, STAD can be regarded as the best techniques of CL. Previous studies also reported similar results with regard to the positive effects of CL and STAD in augmenting reading comprehension of the learners. The findings are congruent with previous studies such as Fielding and Pearson (1994), Bejarano (1987), Sherman, and Zaugra (2007), and Kassim (2006), which proved the CL techniques to be positive in developing the participants' language learning and reading comprehension. What seems to make the present study significant is the superiority of STAD as one technique of cooperative learning among other techniques.

It is therefore reasonable to assert that positive interdependence, as the basic key components of CL, encouraged all group-mates in helping each other and applying more effort to achieve group success. On the contrary, in the conventional classroom negative interdependence, as Jalilifar (2009) also confirms, is discouraging since the success of some students, especially high achievers, may result in decreasing the opportunities for their low achieving counterparts.

As a result of positive interdependence, students in STAD group received support and help from their more proficient group mates which in turn resulted in the success of the whole group. This was because they believed that their cooperation is expected and valued in their learning process. Thus when they encountered a problem they could rely on their partners and they were available to help them when they needed a solution to a problem.

The domination of STAD, according to Johnson et al. (1998), can be explained from the perspective of behavioral learning theory which proposes that students will work harder on tasks that provide a reward, whereas they will fail to work effectively on those tasks which provide no reward or punishment. Thus, it could be claimed that the rewards assigned to the STAD groups with the best performance during the treatment reinforced the expansion of group process skills.

The study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on the point whether cooperative learning could bear any influence on the reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. The final purpose of the study was to study and find the most effective method of CL to be applied in order to get the most preferred results concerning reading comprehension. It was confirmed that learning reading comprehension through STAD would lead to better learning than GI or traditional method for some important reasons. First, in STAD students would be able to experience a friendly learning environment which seems appealing to them. STAD facilitates students' involvement in both class and home activities by encouraging them to take part in answering the questions or solving the problems through cooperation and active group work. Second, positive interdependence, interaction, and team rewards were the factors which helped the STAD group outperform the other groups since these activities ultimately resulted in higher interactional potentials of the learners and led to the understanding of problematic areas. In fact, the students can come to feel that they are positive contributors, not only to their teams, but to the class as a whole.

These findings suggest EFL teachers, educators, course designers as well as researchers to integrate CL techniques, and especially STAD, in EFL setting with all learning levels so that EFL learners become able to achieve comprehension in reading texts at the early stages of learning English as a Foreign Language.

REFERENCES

- Bejarano, Y. (1987). A cooperative small-group methodology in the language classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 483–504.
- Farhady, H. (1998). Construction of reading comprehension tests. *Roshd Foreign Language Journal*, 13(2), 30-37.
- Fielding, L.G., & Pearson, P.D. (1994). Reading comprehension: What works. *Educational Leadership*, 51(5), 62–68.
- Ghaith, G., & Yaghi, H. (1998). Effect of cooperative learning on the acquisition of second language rules and mechanics. *System*, 26, 223–234.
- Hardegree, M. S. jr, (2012). *PEER MENTORING: EFFECTS ON NINTH GRADE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Liberty University, retrieved from: <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1636&context=doctoral>
- Hollingsworth, A., Sherman, J., & Zaugra, C. (2007). *Increasing reading comprehension in first and second graders through cooperative learning* (Unpublished master's thesis). Saint Xavier University, Chicago, Illinois.
- Jacobs, G. M. (1994). What lurks in the margin: Use of vocabulary glosses as a strategy in second language reading. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 5(1), 115-137.
- Kagan, S. (1985). Dimensions of cooperative structures. In R. Slavin, S. Sharan, S. Kagan, R. Hertz-Lazarowitz, C. Webb, & R. Schmuck (Eds.), *Learning to cooperate, cooperating to learn* (pp. 67-69). New York: Plenum.
- Kagan, S., (1995). We Can Talk: Cooperative Learning in the Elementary ESL Classroom. *Elementary Education Newsletter* 17 (2), 10-19.

Pang, E., S. et al (2003). *Teaching Reading*. International Academy of Education, 6. Retrieved April 9, 2014 from <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications> <http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Chien-BusinessEnglish.html>

Schoenbach, R. et al (1999). *Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Slavin, R. E. (1990). *Student team learning: A practical guide to cooperative learning*. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association.

Sharan, Y., & Sharan, S. (1999). Group investigation in the cooperative classroom. In S. Sharan (Eds.), *Handbook of cooperative learning methods* (2nd Ed.) (pp. 97-114). Westport, CT: Greenwood.

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES AND READING COMPREHENSION SKILL

Bahare Farahmand

Department of English, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the role of inferencing, analyzing and memorizing as metacognitive strategies on promoting language learners' reading comprehension skill. Some articles were studies and the results of the related literature showed that students who used inferencing analyzing and memorizing as a metacognitive strategy had good results comparing to other students that did not use the strategies. And the use of learning strategies in this way can be of help in promoting reading comprehension among students.

KEYWORDS: motivation, reading comprehension, inferencing, metacognitive strategies

INTRODUCTION

English has gained importance all over the globe due to political, economical, and technological reasons. It is generally believed that English as a foreign language (EFL) plays a crucial role in Iranian educational system in which reading comprehension has its own dominance among other teaching skills. Reading comprehension is a very complex process, the importance of which has been mentioned in many of the studies. Kirby (2007, p.1) states that a process by which we understand the texts we read is called reading comprehension. This process is the purpose of reading and also reinforces meaningful learning from text. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 443), reading for comprehension happens when we perceive a written text to understand the contents. This perceiving can be done silently According to Richard and Schmidt (2002, 249), metacognition is referred to as reading awareness and monitoring processes. These processes are parts of the readers' cognition about reading and the self-control that readers apply in monitoring and regulating text comprehension. It is the teachers' task to use the metacognitive reading strategies for which they have gained knowledge.

Reading comprehension is a complex process in itself, but it also depends upon other important lower-level processes. It is a critical foundation for later academic learning, many employment skills, and life satisfaction. It is an important skill to target, but we should not forget about the skills on which it depends. To improve the reading comprehension skills of poor performers, we need to understand that there is no "magic wand", and no secret weapon that will quickly improve reading competencies for all poor readers. Careful assessment is required to determine individuals' strengths and weaknesses, and programs need to be tailored accordingly; most poor readers will need continued support in many areas. Generally speaking, reading comprehension is always a grand task for the students who want to learn a foreign language. Cohen (1998, p.1) states that strategies are different in nature, they can be metacognitive, cognitive, performance, and affective. When we plan the organization of our learning, it is called metacognitive strategy.

When we apply mnemonic devices for learning vocabulary, it is called cognitive. When we practice what we want to say, and affective strategy is when we booster self-confidence for a language task by means of self-talk it is performance. It is important to teach students reading techniques to facilitate their reading comprehension. Students might be unaware of reading strategies that can be of help to them. The role of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension needs to be clarified until students become independent in reading for meaning. One metacognitive strategy is inferencing which is used in many reading and teaching texts. In this regard, Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 255) define inferencing as the "process of arriving at a hypothesis, idea, or judgment on the basis of other knowledge, ideas, or judgments"(p. 255). So from the above definition, inferencing can be defined as extraction of implied meaning from the texts using the world knowledge and background information with the aid of textual characteristics

The use of proper strategies by learners with the aid of teachers in developing reading comprehension is of considerable importance. The role of inferencing, memorizing, and analyzing are important in improving reading are important. It is necessary to help learners to use proper strategies in developing their reading comprehension in a way that they can monitor and evaluate their own ability in processing the different texts . This study is a review to improve out knowledge about reading comprehension in general and is about reviewing the use of three metacognitive strategies of inferencing, memorizing, and analyzing on reading comprehension in reading comprehension.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading comprehension has always been of paramount importance in all educational system, and comprehension of both general and academic texts has been the aim of many educational centers. There are many people wishing to understand what the texts of both academic and non-academic wants to say so that they can follow their aims according to their profession and their motivation. Therefore, in many language centers and institutes much attempt has to be made by teachers to teach students the appropriate strategies for understanding the texts of the target language they learn.

Yin and Cheong conducted a study, with the aim to examine the metacognitive knowledge and use of metacognitive strategies by good and poor readers of the English language in Singapore. The subjects in the study came from general and academic courses. The awareness and knowledge of metacognition were measured with the Index of Reading Awareness, while the Reading Strategy Use scale measured the readers' use of metacognition. Thirty students, consisting of 14 good and 16 poor readers, participated in the study. Participant recruitment first involved the administration of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test for identifying the students who are good or poor in reading comprehension. To investigate the students' use of metacognitive strategies during the reading of the science text, the pupils were requested to read a passage extracted from a science textbook, and then to respond to questions that checked on their understanding of the text. Following that, the students were asked to respond to an adapted version of the Reading Strategy Use scale to determine their use of metacognitive strategies when

reading a text in this different domain. The data were computed through t-tests. The t-test computed on the Index of Reading Awareness scores demonstrated that the good readers attained higher scores than the poor readers.

The t-test computed on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test comprehension scores showed that the Express Course students attained higher scores than the Normal (Academic) Course students. The t-test computed on the (Index of Reading Awareness) scores demonstrated that the Express Course students selected more strategic responses than the Normal (Academic) Course students. Computation of the t-test on the scores of the Reading Strategy Use scale showed that the Express and Normal (Academic) Course students, however, did not differ in their use of metacognitive strategies.

Feryal (2008, pp. 83- 91) conducted a study of the teacher trainees in the English department who had received instruction in metacognitive awareness for reading comprehension. Students were taught metacognitive strategies for reading in a five- week program they had joined voluntarily. The students used the reading logs to reflect on their own thinking processes as they were engaged in reading tasks. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of systematic direct instruction of multiple metacognitive strategies designed to assist students in comprehending text. Specifically, the reading comprehension and vocabulary achievement of 130 third-year university students were investigated to determine whether instruction that incorporated metacognitive strategies led to an increase in the reading comprehension of expository texts. The students received 45 minutes of reading comprehension instruction a week for five weeks. In each class hour they were taught two metacognitive strategies and they applied them to the passages. The strategies were using strengths, inferencing, background information, evaluating, searching according to the goals, distinguishing, revising, and guessing the later topics. The experimental group received explicit instruction on metacognitive strategies based on cognitive academic language learning approach model of teaching learning strategy. At the end of the course, both the control group and the experimental group were given the vocabulary and reading comprehension tests and the results of the tests were compared to find the effects of the training. The results of the study confirmed that reading comprehension could be developed through systematic instruction in metacognitive language learning strategies. Systematic explicit instruction about the concept of metacognition and learning strategies helped students of the experimental group to better comprehend this new approach and how to apply it to different learning tasks on reading.

Zhang (2007, p. 4) states that metacognition is of much importance in reading comprehension; so, those who are metacognitively aware of the nature of reading and types of appropriate strategies are different from those who are not in terms of success in reading comprehension. Zhang (2007, pp. 5-7) conducted a study which was set up to explore the types of metacognitive knowledge of reading strategy EFL learners of different proficiency levels have while learning to read EFL. In doing so, ten EFL readers were selected from a sample of 312 participants. For the purpose of comparison, an orthogonal design was adopted. In both the high-scorer and the low-scorer groups, five students were sampled. Results from a subjects' background questionnaire showed that they started their formal education in Chinese when they were in kindergarten or

primary school. The data also showed that they began to learn English as a foreign language at the age of 13, as required by the ministry of education. They had a total of about seven years of classroom EFL learning. Their average EFL proficiency was estimated to be equivalent to about 450 on the TOEFL. Their Chinese reading abilities ranged from good to excellent. Their average age was around 19 on the basis of ordinal scale.

The subjects were divided into high scorers and low scorers according to their performance. A score of 60 out of 100 was regarded as a cut-off point. A scheme for coding the verbal data from the interviews was developed on the basis of the results obtained from the pilot stage for this study. All the audio-recordings of the subjects were browsed and randomly chosen to transcribe and analyze five subjects' transcripts. Then another judge, whose native language was Chinese and who had extensive training in applied linguistics both in her home country and overseas, independently analyzed the same transcripts. Thereafter, the data were classified into different categories with reference to the coding scheme. Results showed that the subjects' metacognitive knowledge of which strategies they used independently of EFL reading tasks varied across EFL proficiency levels, with high scorers predominantly showing clearer awareness of strategy use. In contrast, the low scorers did not realize that reading EFL required them to adopt different reading strategies to solve the problems they might encounter. They said that most often they had to handle reading tasks by chunking, detailing every linguistic element in print. In addition, they reported that they were reluctant to stop using dictionaries or translating into Chinese to make meanings clear.

Yang (2002) conducted a study to analyze how readers monitor their comprehension processes and how teacher intervention provides facilitation. The participants of the study were recruited from the freshmen English classes at the department of business management and the department of space design in national Yunlin University of science and technology; the numbers of freshmen in each class were 54 and 42 respectively. The top 14% of the students in the referential criteria of each class were considered to be proficient readers, and the lowest 14% percent of the students of each class to be less proficient readers. The texts for selection were from the commonly used college-level textbooks in Taiwan. The teachers of each class were asked to choose texts that their students had never read before. The study included two consecutive stages: a think-aloud procedure, and a diagnostic and remedial procedure. All participants were met individually by their experimenter in each of the two stages, in a small classroom. After the subjects understood the think-aloud procedure, they were given a text for training. Five days after the think-aloud training task for all subjects, the formal experimental session began, and the new text began for the first time. In the first experimental think-aloud procedure, the subject was asked to think aloud when reading the assigned text. If the experimenter's intervention succeeded in helping the subject to describe his or her thoughts, he/she was allowed to go directly to the succeeding sentences. If not, the experimenter tried different ways to invoke a verbal report. One fact that cannot be ignored is that even the less-proficient readers had some competence in comprehension monitoring since they were able to access the appropriate meaning of certain words or sentences. The most significant difference between the two groups in the comprehension process was the fact that the proficient readers seemed to monitor their on-going reading process retrospectively, while the less proficient readers seemed to be mostly limited to the lexical level of the word.

To motivate students to become involved in the learning process and to have more participation in their reading class, Shen and Huang (2007) conducted a study in Taiwan. They found that during reading classes, the students of the second semester of academic year who were generally considered to be relatively inadequate in terms of vocabulary size, grammar knowledge, and strategy use, looked up every difficult word in the dictionary and were unable to draw inferences or to guess the meaning of unknown words. So they designed their project on the basis of the key concept of collaborative action research. An understanding of the learner's backgrounds and needs formed the prerequisite for their follow-up teaching. Moreover, a diagnostic reading assessment was used to identify student's strengths and weaknesses in reading. The students also became aware of the results in the use of reading strategies. Therefore, the lesson plans were carefully designed according to the results and were developed through collaborative discussions between the teacher-researcher and her assistant. Then, the teacher self-evaluated the teaching process. Towards the end of the semester the teacher achieved more success in making her students aware of the reading processes as well as the reading strategies taught.

Erten and Karakas (2007, p. 114) conducted another study to understand possible divergent influences that reading activities could exert on the comprehension of short stories. The study was carried out at MartUniversity in Turkey with a number of forty-seven third year students. Eight of the students were male while thirty-nine were female, reflecting the natural demographic gender distribution. The participants had an advanced level of English language proficiency. A Rose for Emily by William Faulkner was the story which was chosen with an appropriate level of linguistic ability. The theme of the story was relevant to students' lives in that the participants were able to make comments and express their own experiences, which could activate their prior knowledge. A post-test was prepared to measure two types of comprehension of the story: literal and evaluation. The activities which were given to the experimental group, mostly involved procedures directed towards literal comprehension while those given to the control group tended to involve more than literal comprehension and required some reflection on the textual information. Neither group was given a pre-test before reading a short story. At the pre-reading stage, both groups were given two activities. The control group received brainstorming and surveying while the experimental group received previewing and key words. Both groups were asked to do a predicting activity as a transition activity into the story. The analysis revealed that the experimental groups' performance was considerably higher on literal comprehension than evaluation. However, there was no significant difference between the performances of control group students on different parts of the post-test. According to Erten and Karakas (2007, p. 116), those who make use of the strategy of inferencing reach at the meaning of the text which has not been explicitly stated

Saricoban (2002, p. 2) aimed to see if any differences would exist in terms of the strategies employed by the successful and the less successful readers during their reading activities in language classrooms that could lead them to better comprehension. The subjects were 110 preparatory students for language studies in English department at HacettepeUniversity. Following a homogeneity test, to determine the sort of reading strategies of both successful and less successful readers at proficiency level, the researcher designed and administered a reading

strategy inventory to the subjects. The inventory included strategy types for the three reading stages of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading during instruction. Finally, an achievement test was given to distinguish the successful readers from the less successful readers. The results showed that the three-phase approach has not to be carried out mechanically on every occasion. Sometimes, the teacher may wish to cut out the pre-reading stage and get the learners to work on the texts directly. Sometimes, the post-reading work may not be suitable. Therefore, the three-phase approach leads to the integration of the skills in a coherent manner so that the reading session is not simply isolated.

Mckown and Barnett (2007, p.1) conducted a study on reading comprehension of second grade and third grade students. The teacher researchers intended to improve reading comprehension by using higher-order thinking skills such as predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferencing, questioning, and summarizing. In their classrooms, the teacher researchers modeled these strategies through the think-aloud process and graphic organizers. This was followed by students using these strategies through the whole class, small group, and independent practice. The teacher researchers gathered information prior to implementing the reading strategy interventions. The metacomprehension strategy index indicated a lack of student knowledge of strategies to use before, during, and after reading. The state snapshot of early literacy given to the second grade students identified nine of the sixteen students below target level and others were at risk for reading comprehension failure. They mentioned that effective learners are able to cope with the difficulties of unfamiliar language and missing information. They are able to think critically which is of their characteristics. Teachers can help students to deal with the problems by teaching them the proper strategies such as inferencing, which is meant to make educated guesses. They explained inferencing as guessing the meaning of words in unfamiliar language structures based on the topic being discussed, content, background knowledge, knowledge of language structures, contextual clues and world knowledge.

They believe that students need to be independent and cope with challenges of language in problem-solving situations. Inferencing is of much use in the two skills of listening and reading and is considered as one of the fastest and most effective ways in acquiring additional vocabulary. It would be very easy for the learners to remember the words when they are actively involved in constructing meaning. They suggested that inferencing as a metacognitive strategy falls within problem-solving strategy that teachers should use so that students can be put to challenge for trying to understand the missing information in texts. And this practice must be encouraged by teachers. According to Barnhardt, the strategy of inferencing is used by many students. However, there is difference between more and less effective learners in that effective learners use all types of knowledge to make inferences. And less effective ones rely more on contextual clues such as pictures. Effective learners have been observed to be more active in construction of meaning and less effective learners normally lack confidence enough to make guess at the meaning.

CONCLUSION

Results of the study showed that using metacognitive reading strategies of inferencing, memorizing and analyzing for reading comprehension skill result in successful learning among EFL learners. Language learners who are successful in their reading comprehension skill might use these strategies more frequently in their reading comprehension skill. The study indicated that when students used inferencing analyzing and memorizing as a metacognitive strategy, they had good results comparing to other students that did not use the strategies. It is suggested that EFL learners use learning strategies to be able to improve their reading comprehension in the process of EFL learning.

Implication of the study

Reading comprehension is a very important factor in the process of language learning. The study reviewed using different reading strategies for EFL learning and reading comprehension. Zhang's (2007) believes that metacognition has an important role to play in the reading process; hence, readers who have clearer metacognitive awareness of the nature of the reading task and of their own strategies for text processing will differ from those who do not. Therefore, the use of metacognitive strategies should get more attention.

REFERENCES

- Cohen, A.D. (1998). Strategies in learning and using a second Language. *TESL-EJ*, 3 (4), 1-13. Retrieved [January 12, 1999] from: www.writing.berkeley.edu/
- Erten, I. H., & Karakas, M. (2007). Understanding the divergent influences of reading activities on the comprehension of short stories. *The Reading Matrix*, 7 (3), 116-130. Retrieved [December 1, 2014] from: www.readingmatrix.com/articles
- Feryal, Y. (2008). How to enhance reading comprehension through metacognitive strategies. *The Journal of International Social Research*, 1 (2), 83-91. Retrieved [December 2, 2014] from: www.sosyalarastirmalar.com/cilt1/sayi
- McKown, B., & Barnett, C. (2007). Improving reading comprehension through higher-order thinking skills. (p.1). Chicago, ON: SaintXavierUniversity. Retrieved [December 3, 2014] from: www.eric.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sq/
- Richards, J. & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd Ed.). Tehran: Sepahan publication.
- Saricoban, A. (2002). Reading strategies of successful readers through the three phase approach. *The Reading Matrix*, 2 (3). Retrieved [December 1, 2014] from: <http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/saricoban/article.pdf>.
- Shen, M.Y., & Huang, Y.K. (2007). Collaborative action research for reading strategy instruction: A case in Taiwan. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 4(1), 110-118.
- Yang, Y. F. (2002). Reassessing reading comprehension. 14. (1). Retrieved [December 4, 2014] from: <http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/April2002/>
- Yin, W. M., & Cheong, C. S. (2005) Knowledge and use of metacognitive strategies. Retrieved [December 10, 2014] from: www.aare.edu.au/01pap/won01419.htm
- Zhang, L. J. (2007) Awareness in reading: EFL students' metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies in an acquisition-poor environment. Retrieved [December 1, 2014] from: <http://larry.jzhang.googlepages.com/Awarenessinreading>

THE EFFECTS OF USING INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION METHOD ON SPEAKING SKILL OF IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Sahar Ghaffari

*English Department, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Torbate Heydarieh,
Iran*

Mohammad Ali Fatemi

*Assistant Professor at English Department, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Torbate Heydarieh, Iran*

ABSTRACT

The ability of employing the language as a communicational tool often judges one's successfulness in speaking class in language learning. This study sought to investigate the impact of instructional conversations on speaking ability of Iranian English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners from three language institutes in Sarakhs, Khorasan Razavi, Iran were selected as the participants of the study based on their scores in Nelson Proficiency Test. Administering Nelson General Proficiency Test, participants were measured to make sure they are homogeneous. These participants were randomly assigned into to control and experimental groups. Participants in both groups sat for IELTS speaking test. Results of independent samples t-test indicated lack of any significant difference between the two groups in speaking ability at the outset of the study. Throughout the study lasting for 12 sessions participants in experimental group received the treatment, instructional conversations, as a means for instructing speaking materials. Participants in the control group were taught the same materials as those practiced in the former group through other techniques such as role playing, peer dialogues. Finally participants in both groups sat for the posttests being the same as those administered as pretests. Results of t-test indicated the experimental group performed significantly better than the control one in IELTS. The present findings provide pedagogical implications for employing instructional conversation in EFL speaking classrooms. Students' use of instructional conversation not only develops their understanding of the language via interaction, but also it increases their speaking abilities by interaction.

KEYWORDS: Instructional conversations, speaking ability

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The ability to speak English as foreign language (EFL) appears to be the primary purpose of EFL students. Speaking can be improved through a variety of techniques introduced by EFL teachers to their students. According to Brown and Yule (1983) many language learners view speaking as the criteria for knowing a language and one's progress is assessed in terms of his/her achievement

in spoken communication. Speaking a foreign language seems to differ from speaking a native one due to different structures, vocabularies, cultural factors, and so on. The process of learning to speak a foreign language is, therefore, complex. Richards and Renandya (2002) view the ability to speak a second language well as a very complex task.

Overall, it can be concluded that speaking skill is worthy to bring up the newly developed issue, instructional conversation method, which might significantly affect the development of speaking ability. Before dealing with the issue it is worth presenting a background of it.

Communicative competence, according to Boyd and Miller (2000), involves the ability to interpret and enact suitable social behaviors and requires the learner to actively participate in producing the target language. Thus the learner needs to do more than one-word answers in the target language or memorize separated sentences (Pinkevičienė, 2011). The learner needs to be actively engaged in building and clarifying meaning. EFL teachers, on the other hand, need to provide opportunities in the classroom to engage students in talking.

Wells and Haneda (2005) view learners as active agents who, along with their teachers, participate in a form of conversational discourse aims at improving understanding rather than the one-way transmission of teacher-directed instructional talk. In this case the target language becomes the vehicle for communicating ideas rather than an instructional tool (Pinkevičienė, 2011). According to Wells and Haneda (2005), Tharp and Galimore (1988) coined the term "Instructional Conversation" (IC: Talk about text). Instructional Conversation: contains a paradox: 'Instruction' and 'Conversation' appear contrary, the one implying authority and planning, the other equality and responsiveness (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988 as cited in Wells & Haneda, 2005, p.151).

Reveles (2004) describes IC as a teaching strategy in which conversation takes place among small groups of students. These conversations are not random rather they are academically goal-oriented. In such classrooms, Reveles (2004) explains, the students speak more than the teacher; the teacher therefore becomes a listener and facilitator. "IC protocol is a way to transform a classroom into a more productive learning community through dialogic teaching" (Reveles, 2004, p.1).

IC is most often enacted in a small group through employment of familiar forms of conversation to improve learners' language production and understanding. Teachers who employ IC take the advantage of ordinary conversation about an interesting stimulus or activity to tempt their students to employ social and academic language and to share prior knowledge (Dalton & Sison, 1995). In the interaction, teachers determine levels of students' independence and necessary assistance (Gallimore, Dalton, & Tharp, 1986, as cited in Dalton & Sison, 1995). In IC, teachers investigate to gather information about students' Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD). Therefore, the format of an IC, from the beginning, is neither exactly prescribed nor pre-scripted; however, it mirrors a plan composed of anticipated options and some unanticipated ones to gain selected outcomes. Outcomes are proximal in collecting information of students' prior knowledge

and their ZPDs, and distal for facilitating students' understanding and knowledge construction (Dalton & Sison, 1995).

Evidence shows that IC is effective in improving reading comprehension scores of limited English proficient students (Teaching Transformed, Tharp et al., 2000, as cited in Reveles, 2004). ICs (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, 1989, 1991; Saunders & Goldenberg, 1992, as cited in Shen, 2005) include small-group discussions where teachers and students discuss the themes of the unit, students' written responses to reading, and related personal experiences. Shen (2005) considers five instructional elements for this model of literacy pedagogy which include thematic focus, activation and use of background and relevant schema, direct teaching, promotion of more complex language and expression, and elicitation of bases for statements or positions. The five conversational elements of this pedagogy include fewer known-answer questions, responsiveness to student contributions, connected discourse, a challenging but not-threatening atmosphere, and general participation, including self-selected turns (Saunders, Patthey-Chavez, & Goldenberg 1997, as cited in Shen, 2005). These dimensions can be helpful for students since through attending peer discussion, student can enhance their own comprehension, knowledge, and experiences. Teachers, according to Shen (2005) can also take advantage from taking part in discussion with students in terms of improving their teaching practices since they can "(a) hear students articulate their understanding of the story, theme(s), and related personal experiences; and (b) in the process of facilitating the discussion, challenge but also help students to enrich and deepen their understandings" (Saunders & Goldenberg, 1999, p.297, as cited in Shen, 2005).

Curenton and Zucker (2013) view instructional conversations as planned discussions with small groups of children where teachers improve students' collaborative reasoning by using challenging questions which necessitate students to use complex language to talk about their experiences, knowledge, and opinions.

IC method with the aim of improving learning through conversation (AssadiAidinlou, & Tabeei, 2012), was implemented as the treatment in order to address the following research question:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Speaking and Instructional Conversation

Speaking is one of the four main skills required for actual communication in any language, chiefly when presenters are not employing their mother tongue. As English is commonly used as a way of communication, particularly in the internet domain, English speaking skills should be advanced along with the other capabilities so that these unified skills will augment communication accomplishment both with native speakers of English and other associates of the global community. Owing to the important role of speaking in action, Bailey (2005) and Goh (2007) explained how to increase the expansion of speaking by means of syllabus scheme, principles of instruction, sorts of tasks and materials, and speaking evaluation. Though reading and listening are taken to be the two receptive abilities in language education and use, writing and speaking are two productive abilities essential to be combined in the expansion of effective communication. Among all the four macro English abilities, speaking appears to be the most vital

skill obligatory for communication (Zaremba, 2006). Real communication through speaking frequently generates a number of profits for both speakers and business organizations.

There are some issues linking to speaking abilities to be measured for actual English speaking performance. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and collocations are pulled out as central influences to be highlighted in constructing fluency for EFL speakers. Giving students a diversity of circumstances and regular speaking tasks plays a noteworthy role in the development of students' eloquence when speaking (Tam, 1997).

Self-assurance and capability usually bring about strong point of English speaking abilities. Patil (2008) declared that strengthening the learner's self-confidence to abolish fear of making errors was a significance that the instructor should contemplate in order to make the student feel relaxed with their language usage. Self-confidence and capability in speaking could be established from suitable syllabus design, methods of instruction, and adequate tasks and materials (Bailey, 2005; Songsiri, 2007). For efficiency of speaking, Shumin (1997) argued a number of elements, counting listening abilities, socio-cultural elements, affective influences, and other linguistic and sociolinguistic capability such as grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic skill. So as to carry meaning, EFL learners must have a comprehension of words and sentences; that is, they must comprehend how words are put into different sounds, and how sentences are stressed in specific ways.

Dalton and Sison (1995) described four ICs taught by a novice teacher. The ICs aimed at fostering interaction about math concepts in small groups of seventh grade students who were ordinarily excluded from classroom participation by their regular teacher. Results indicated that all the students participated comfortably in academic conversation using math lexicon with increasing appropriacy and focus. Intersubjectivity emerged in the conversations and was apparently built on the students' and teacher's similar and shared experience in constructive social interaction about math. Students' participation in IC increased dramatically and stabilized across the four ICs which indicated the effectiveness of this pedagogy to include often excluded language minority students in classroom interaction (ibid).

Concerning the effects of IC in EFL contexts several studies have been already conducted. For example Aidinlou and Tabeei (2012) in their study on the effects of using instructional conversation method on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners indicated advantages of instructional conversation in English students' reading comprehension. It was found that the participants in the IC groups performed better than those in control group in reading comprehension post-test. Moreover, significant differences were found between performances of two experimental groups. These findings showed that a combination of instructional conversation method and traditional method was more effective than instructional conversation alone (Aidinlou, & Tabeei, 2012).

Miller (2010) in her article under the title of "Instructional Conversations: Improving Reading Comprehension in English for English Language Learners" concentrated on improving teaching of reading comprehension skills via instructional conversations. She believes that an

instructional conversation engages students in a structured discussion to activate background knowledge before reading a text, to help them think of a text while reading, and to analyze and ponder on a text after reading. Finally, the findings indicated positive effects of using instructional conversations (Miller, 2010).

Meskill and Sadykova (2011) in their article entitled “Introducing EFL faculty to online instructional conversations” state that while the availability of teaching models was until recently limited to face to face observations, videotaped classes and transcriptions of classroom interaction, language educator professional development can now use online discussions between language educators and their students as instructional models for language faculty in training. Such technology-based models, like those of traditional classrooms, are those that make optimal use of the affordances of the given instructional context. Concerning online asynchronous language coursework, according to Meskill and Sadykova (2011), “exemplary teaching sequences can be examined as both representing effective teaching overall and effective teaching given the specific affordances of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)” (p.201). Online instructional conversations between language educators and students as effective training tools can help educators conceptualize effective online instructional processes as well as effective instructional processes overall (Meskill & Sadykova, 2011).

RESEARCH QUESTION

The following research question was posed by the researcher:

Q: Does the use of Instructional Conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Setting

Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners studying English as their foreign language in three language institutes in Sarakhs, Khorasan Razavi, Iran were selected as the participants of the study. Sample selection was carried out by administering Nelson Test developed by Fowler and Coe (1976). All of them were female and their age ranged from 18 to 24.

Instrumentations

The following instrumentations were employed by the author.

Nelson Proficiency Test

To assure the homogeneity of the participants, a Nelson proficiency test series 200A (developed by Fowler and Coe, 1976) was administered to 110 EFL learners in Sarakhs. The test contained 50 multiple-choice items and participants were allowed to respond in 40 minutes. The test mainly assessed the participants' vocabulary knowledge and grammar.

After analyzing the results of this test, 49 participants who could obtain at least 70% of the total score were selected as the participants of this study (Appendix A).

IELTS Speaking Test

Composed of three parts, speaking test assessed the participants' speaking ability. The questions included personal information (family members, description of an influential teacher, and discussion topics, e.g. different styles/methods of teaching and learning, a national education system). The speaking test took 11-14 minutes and consisted of an interview with an examiner (Appendix B).

Procedure

Forty-nine Iranian intermediate EFL learners from language institutes in Sarakhs were selected as the participants based on a Nelson Test. These participants were randomly assigned to control (n=24) and experimental (n=25) groups. IELTS Speaking module was administered at the beginning of the study.

During the course which lasted for 12 sessions, instructional conversation was employed in the experimental class. Every session the teacher brought 20 copies of a reading text into this class. These students were allowed to work together as a whole class, in small groups, or even in pairs to maximize their own language learning. These participants were provided with a time (25 minutes) to analyze and talk about the text. The teacher managed the process of discussion to correct the mistakes committed by the students. The text details were discussed by the students through oral discussions. Sometimes the teacher, herself, attended the discussions to explain more and clarify the issues.

Students in experimental class were provided with opportunities for conceptual and linguistic development through making connections between academic content, students' previous knowledge and cultural experiences.

Role playing and peer dialogues were used in the control group. To do so, they were given a topic (e.g. holidays in Iran, music, hobby) to practice in groups or pairs before the class. The groups or pairs were asked to perform the task in the class. Finally participants in both groups sat for the posttest which was the same as the pretest. Finally data were analyzed using SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Having gathered the required data, the researcher analyzed them by SPSS to test the formulated null-hypothesis

Results of Normality of Data

To make sure that the data are normal, a normalizing test, Smirnov-Kolmogorov Test, was conducted. Results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Nelson	speakpre	speakpost
N		49	49	49
Normal Parametersa	Mean	37.7347	4.8571	5.2449
	Std. Deviation	2.12892	1.91485	1.93144
	Most Extreme Differences	.160	.144	.121
	Positive	.160	.144	.108
	Negative	-.112	-.093	-.121
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.118	1.006	.850
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.164	.263	.465

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Note: speakpre stands for speaking pretest; speakpost stands for speaking posttest

Table 1 summarizes the data related to normalizing test. Null-hypothesis of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test indicates that the data are normal. Since P-values obtained in the test for the instruments administered are greater than .05, (p-value for Nelson=.164>.05; p-value for speakpre=.263>.05; p-value for speakpost=.465>.05) the null-hypothesis is supported.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Nelson

Table 2 shows results obtained from independent samples t-test for Nelson proficiency test.

Table 2: Results of independent samples t-test for Nelson

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	Sig (2-tailed)
Control	24	37.66	2.21	47	.21	.82
experimental	25	37.80	2.08			

As Table 2 shows there is not any significant difference [df=47, t=.21, sig (2-tailed)=.82>.05] between control (N=24, M=37.66, SD=2.21) and experimental (N=25, M=37.80, SD=2.08) groups in Nelson. Therefore, the homogeneity of the participants was confirmed at the outset of the study.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Speaking (pretest)

Table 3 summarizes the performance of the two groups in speaking at the beginning of the study.

Table 3: Results of independent samples t-test for Speaking (pretest)

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	sig(2-tailed)
Control	24	4.58	1.83	47	.98	.33
experimental	25	5.12	1.98			

Table 3 indicates lack of any statistically significant [df=47, t=.98, sig (2-tailed) =.33>.05] difference between control (N=24, M=4.58, SD=1.83) and experimental (N=25, M=5.12, SD=1.98) groups in speaking pretest. Therefore, the participants were shown to be homogeneous with respect to speaking ability.

Results of Independent Samples t-test for Speaking (posttest)

Table 6 shows results obtained from independent samples t-test for speaking test which was administered after the treatment.

Table 4: Results of independent samples t-test for Speaking (posttest)

Group	N	M	SD	Df	T	sig(2-tailed)
Control	24	4.33	1.90	47	3.62	.001
experimental	25	6.12	1.53			

As Table 4 shows, participants in the experimental group (N=25, M=6.12, SD=1.53) significantly [df=47, t= 3.62, sig (2-tailed=.001<.05)] outperformed those in control (N=24, M= 4.33, SD=1.90) in the speaking posttest. Accordingly, the first null-hypothesis "Use of Instructional Conversation does not have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability" was rejected. It can be deduced that the treatment was significantly effective in improving speaking ability of intermediate EFL learners in Iran.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to explore the effects of instructional conversations on EFL learners' speaking ability. Concerning the research question "Does use of Instructional Conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability?" data analysis showed that use of instructional conversation has significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' speaking ability. Significant effects of instructional conversation on speaking ability may be due to the involvement of students in further talk. According to Goldenberg and Patthey-Chavez (1994, as cited in Saunders & Goldenberg, 2007, p.?) during ICs teachers talk significantly less, students talk significantly more, and the actual content of lessons is more likely to be mutually shaped and defined by student and teacher understandings. Aidinlou and Tabeei (2012) found out advantages of instructional conversation on improvement of reading comprehension of second language learners.

CONCLSUION

This study sought to investigate the impact of instructional conversations on speaking ability of Iranian English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The findings of this study indicated that the experimental group, which studied and practiced instructional conversations, performed significantly better than the control group in IELTS. The findings of this study illuminate the way for the teachers whose major purpose is to develop students' speaking abilities. Applying instructional conversations in a speaking classroom can enhance their understanding, speaking abilities and motivate them to participate in conversations with more self-confidence. The participants were only female intermediate EFL learners from Sarakhs, Iran. The major focus of the present study was on instructional conversation as independent variable and other techniques were not considered. Finally, the researcher explored the effects of the treatment on speaking ability and other skills such as writing, reading, listening were excluded.

REFERENCES

- Aidinlou, N.A., & Tabeei, S. (2012). The Effect of Using Instructional Conversation Method on Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners. *I.J. Modern Education and Computer Science*, 9, 45-51.
- Bailey, K.M. (2005). *Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Boyd, M., & Miller, V. (2000). How Teachers Can Build on Student- Proposed Intertextual Links to Facilitate Student Talk in the ESL Classroom. In Hall, J. (ed.) *Second and Foreign Language Learning through Classroom Interaction*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Teaching the Spoken Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (1996b). English teaching and learning in China. *Language Teaching*, 29(2), 61-80.
- Curenton, S.M., & Zucker, T. (2013). Instructional conversations in early childhood classrooms: policy suggestions for curriculum standards and professional development. *Creative Education*, 4, (7A1), 60-68.
- Dalton, S., & Sison, J. (1995). *Enacting Instructional Conversation with Spanish Speaking Students in Middle School Mathematics*. Retrieved from: <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/22g2s871#page-1>. (accessed 11/3/2015).
- Goh, C. (2007). *Teaching speaking in the language classroom*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Meskill, C., & Sadykova, G. (2011). Introducing EFL faculty to online instructional conversations. *ReCALL*, 23(3), 200–217.
- Miller, E.L. (2010). Instructional Conversations: Improving Reading Comprehension in English for English Language Learners. *MMSD Classroom Action Research vol. 2010 Dual Language Immersion*.
- Patil, Z.N. (2008). Rethinking the objectives of teaching English in Asia. *Asian EFL Journal*.10 (4), 227-240. Retrieved from http://www.asianefl-journal.com/December_08_zn.php. (accessed 16/6/2014).
- Pinkevičienė, D. (2011). Triadic Dialogue in EFL Classroom: Embedded Extensions. *Kalby Studijos*, (18), 97-104.
- Reveles, J. (2004). Instructional conversation in a middle school setting. *Language, literacy, learning*, 1-12. Retrieved from: www.aps.edu. (accessed 9/11/2014).
- Richards, J., C., & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Saunders, W. & Goldenberg, C. (2007). In R. Horowitz (Ed.). *The Effects of an instructional conversation on English Language Learners' concepts of friendship and story comprehension*. Talking texts: How speech and writing interact in school learning (pp. 221-252). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Shen, F-Y. (2005). *Enabling higher-level thinking process in ESL reading: An examination of three instructional approaches*. Proceedings of the 22nd Conference on English Teaching and Learning. Retrieved from: www.quality-talk.org/pdf/Shen_2005.pdf. (accessed 13/9/2014).

- Shumin, K. (1997). Factors to consider: Developing adult EFL students' speaking abilities. *English Teaching Forum*. 35 (3), 8. Retrieved from <http://eca.state.gov/forum/vols/vol35/no3/p8.htm>. (accessed 21/5/2015).
- Songsiri, M. (2007). *An action research study of promoting students' confidence in speaking English*. (Dissertation of Doctor of Education Degree), School of Arts, Education and Human Development, Victoria University, Australia. Retrieved from prints.vu.edu.au/1492/1/Songsiri.pdf. (accessed 3/8/2014).
- Tam, M. (1997). Building fluency: a course for non-native speakers of English. *English Teaching Forum*, 35(1), 26. Retrieved from <http://eca.state.gov/forum/vols/vol35/no1/p26.htm>. (accessed 27/1/2015).
- Tharp, R., & Gallimore, R. (1989). *Rousing minds to life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, G., Haneda, M. (2005). Extending the Instructional Conversation. In O'Donnell, C. R. & Yamauchi, L. (Eds.) *Culture and Context in Human Behavior and Change: Theory, Research, and Applications*, pp.151–178. New York: Peter Lang.
- Zaremba, A. J. (2006). *Speaking professionally*. Canada: Thompson South-Western.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Nelson English Language Test (Book, Intermediate, 050A) by Fowler, and Coe, (1976)

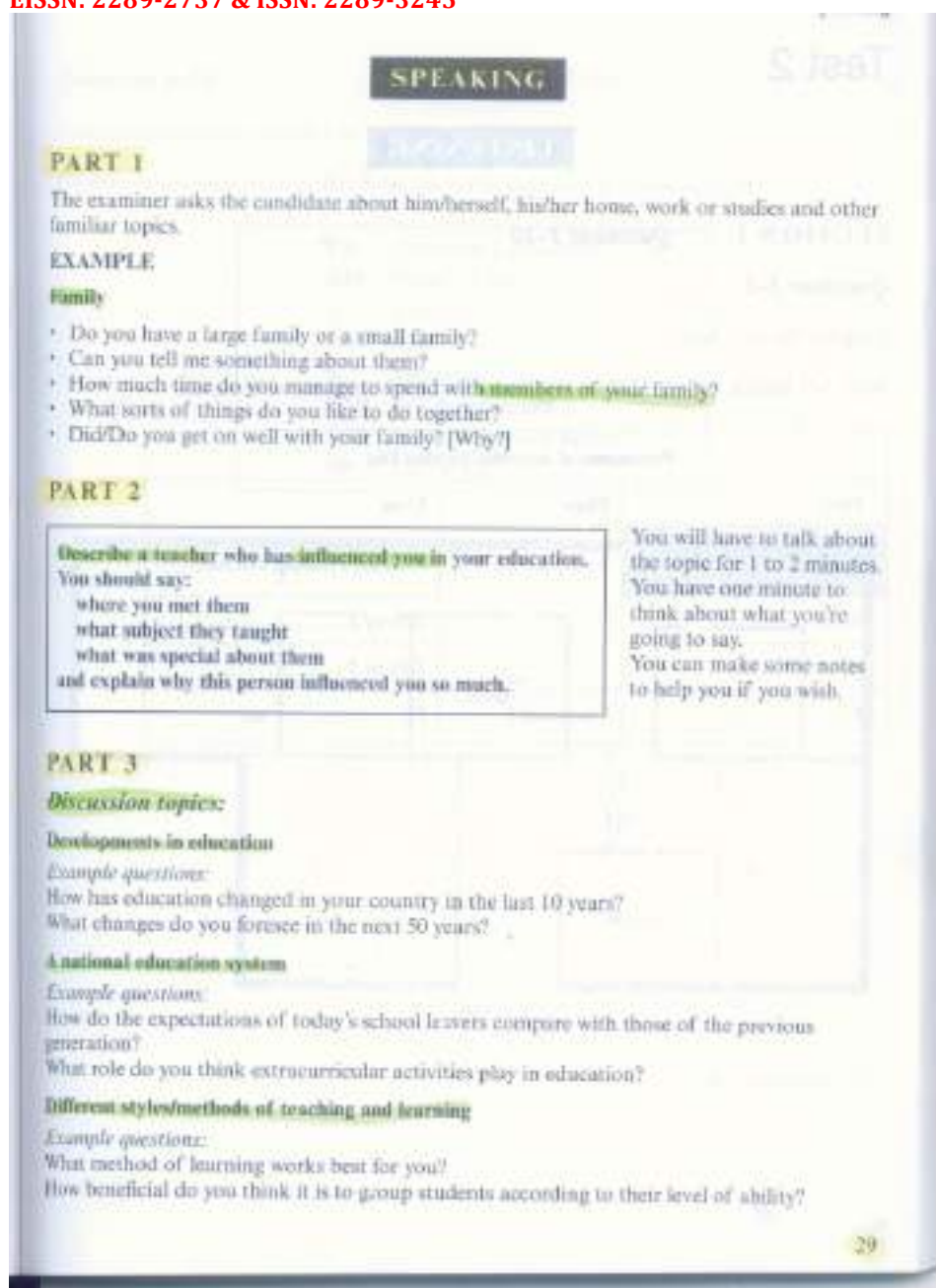
Choose the correct answer. Only one answer is correct.

1. A) The sun is in a sky B) The sun is in the sky
C) Sun is in a sky D) A sun is in a sky
2. What John doing?
A) Are B) do C) does D) is
3. John and Mary the radio.
A) are listening on B) are listening to C) is listening on D) is listening to
4. Bill and I here.
A) We're B) we C) we are D) are
5. Sarah, what doing?
A) She is B) are you C) are D) is
6. Mary's the garden.
A) In B) at C) on D) into
7. Are there six books on the table?
A) No, are five B) No, there are three C) No, there's one D) No, there are any
8. Tom often sings, but
A) Sings Sarah? B) Sarah sings? C) Sarah does? D) does Sarah?
9. Tony is looking at
A) She B) he C) her D) here
10. Who's that boy?
A) Is Bill B) It's Tom C) It's a boy D) Peter's that
11. Where's the book?
A) There's it B) He's under the chair C) It's he D) There's on a chair
12. Are you happy?
A) Yes, I'm B) No, I aren't C) Yes, I am D) No, I not
13. What's his name?
A) It's name Jack B) It's a Jack C) It's Jack's name D) It's Jack
14. Do you dance or draw?
A) I'm dance but I'm not draw B) I dance but I don't draw

- C) I'm dancing but I not drawing D) I dance but I'm not drawing
15. Is that a book?
A) Yes, there is B) Yes, it is C) Yes, that's D) Yes, is a book
16. Is that horse big?
A) No, that's a little B) No, that's little horse
C) No, It's little horse D) No, It isn't
17. What's her brother doing?
A) Playing football B) Is playing football
C) He playing football D) She's playing football
18. How many chairs are there in the room?
A) Are four B) Are five chairs there C) There's one D) there's a chair
19. A) Is that table big brown? B) Is that big brown table?
C) Is that big table brown? D) Is brown that big table?
20. A) Mary can dance tomorrow B) Mary cans dance tomorrow
C) Mary she can dance tomorrow D) Mary can tomorrow dance
21. The lamp is the television.
A) at B) next to C)near of D) between
22. The tree is the door.
A) between B) in front C) beside D) next
23. What's that girl?
A) It's a student B) She's student C) She's a student D) She's a student girl
24. Do the girls know Tom?
A) Yes, they knows her B) No, they isn't
C) Yes, they know D) No, they don't
25. A) John's looking at I and you B) Your looking at John and
C) I'm looking at you and John D) John and I am looking at you
26. A) That girl is some of my friends B) This girl is one of my friends
C) That girl is me friend D) This girl's are friends
27. A) This is Mr. Smith there B) That is the Mr. Smith there
C) This is the Mr. Smith here D) That is Mr. Smith there
28. My brother is writing
A) by a pencil B) with pen C) in a paper D)in a book
29. A) Who now in London lives?
B) Who in London now live?
C) Who lives in London now? D) Who live now in London?
30. Monday is the first day.
A) Tuesday is the second. B) The second is Thursday.
C) Tuesday is the fourth. D) The fourth is Thursday.
31. Jane is in front of Tom. Tom is Jane.
A) beside B) behind C) before D) between
32. Tom is Mrs. Smith' son.
A) She is his son. B) She is her son. C) He is her son. D) He is his son.
33. A) Come here to us! B) Go here to we!
C) Go there to us! D) Come here to my
34. A) Don't look at us! B) Don't looking at us!
C) No looking at we! D) Not look at us
35. A) Some girl are listening to the old men B) An old man is listening to the girl
C) An old men are listening the girl D) The old man are listening to a girl
36. A) Listen to he and he's brother! B) Listen to he and his brother!
C) Listen to him and his brother! D) Listen to him and he's brother!
37. Whose hats are those? They are Hats.
A) he's B)Mr. Black's C) Mrs. Black's D) she's
38. A) Where are you going to put the cups? B) Where are you going put the cups?

- C) Where you're going put the cups? D) Where you are going to put the cups?
39. Jane's tall and
A) John's, too B) Tom is, too C) Tom is to D) Tom are two
40. Does Brain play football?
A) Yes, and Sam doesn't, too B) No, but Sam doesn't
C) Yes, but Sam doesn't D) No, and Sam does, too
41. James is talking to
A) they B) them C) she D) your
42. These pens are
A) Pats B) of Pat C) Pat's D) to Pat
43. Sarah cat.
A) haves a B) haves some C) has some D) has a
44. This is
A) second lesson B) the lesson two C) lesson the second D) lesson two
45. A) Lena cans have Mikes' radio B) Lena can has Mikes' radio
C) Lena can have Mikes' radio D) Lena can has Mikes' radio
46. It's 21.00.
A) Yes, it's nine in the evening B) Yes, it's nine clocks
C) Yes, it's nine in the afternoon D) yes, it's nine hours
47. 164 is
A) hundred sixty four B) a hundred sixty four
C) hundred sixty and four D) a hundred and sixty four
48. A) The girls don't do the homework B) The girls don't the homework
C) The girls doesn't do the homework D) The girls don't does the homework
49. Do Mr. and Mrs. Smith speak English?
A) He does but she doesn't B) He speak but she doesn't
C) He do but she don't D) He speak but she don't
50. Who are those boys? One is my brother and
A) the big boy is Peter B) a big boy is Peter
C) the big boy is a Peter D) a big boy is a Peter

Appendix B
IELTS Speaking



IMPACT OF BLENDED LEARNING ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' ACQUISITION AND RETENTION OF PASSIVE SENTENCES

Nafise Arfaorafiee

Department of English, Isfahan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
Email: nafise66arfa@gmail.com

Ahmad Ameri-Golestan

Department of English, Majlesi Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
Email: a.ameri@iaumajlesi.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

The present study was intended to investigate the Impact of Blended learning on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and long term retention of passive sentences .In order to this end, a group of 44 EFL learners were randomly placed in three groups, after conducting the placement test. The participants were placed in two experimental groups, namely Blended Learning (N=15), Web-based (N=15), and one Control (N=14).The participants of the Blended Learning received traditional teaching methods of grammar (passive structure) plus learning via the web. In the second group, the Web-based, the participants received materials and instructions merely through the web. Participants of the control group, however, were taught based on the traditional teaching methods of grammar and received the materials, instructions, and feedback through traditional methods. In order to collect the data, first a pre-test, then posttest and the last one delayed posttest consists of 30 multiple -choice items was given to the participants. The results of the one way analysis of variance and repeated measure tests showed that the participants of the Tradition group outperformed of two other experimental groups in their acquisition and long term retention of passive structures. Having a more meticulous look at the results, it was observed that participants of the Web-based group although had a lower performance in the post-test and delayed posttest, too. It did not significantly outperform those of the Tradition and Blended group. In conclusion, the results of the study revealed that employing a Blended Learning method cannot create a desirable condition to enhance the EFL learners 'acquisition and long term retention of passive sentences. This is because participants are not completely familiar with the benefits the method can have for EFL learners. Therefore, an important implication of the study is that EFL learners need to be familiarized with such techniques and try to benefit from their positive effects, as shown by the literature in the field.

KEYWORDS: Blended Learning; Passive Structure; Web- based Learning; CALL

INTRODUCTION

Technology has made a huge change in learning a second language. It can improve teaching and learning processes. Technology lies in providing a learning environment that helps learners succeed in improving understanding where other methods have failed. Digital technologies have led to more integration between computer-mediated instructional elements and traditional face-to-face learning practices. The most important result of combining technology and education is the emergence of e-learning. Nowadays, e-learning has grown and expanded in exponential ways at the expense of traditional face-to-face learning that has been around for centuries.

Research over the last several years has indicated that students learn as successfully in online environments as in traditional face-to-face classroom settings (Brew, 2008). Electronic learning has become popular and has had a huge impact on language education. Learning English as a foreign language in recent years has been accompanied with the revolution of changes in the field of technologies. One of these changes is the use of computers in learning English or technically speaking, it is Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

Undoubtedly, CALL is one of the most important technologies used to contribute to language learning. It should be pointed out that the computer has caused significant variation to every aspect of education. Numerous English as a foreign language research studies (Blake, 2000), suggest that integration of technology can improve academic performance, enhance motivation, and promote learning. Learning English as a foreign language has a lot of changes due to the field of technologies.

CALL programs provide interactive computer activities for language learning which helps learners to interact in a communicative way. Traditionally, computers have been considered a good fit to teach grammar (Hubbard & Siskin, 2004). When we use the computer for presentation, explanation, and application of grammatical structures, more classroom time can be saved for real communication in order to focus on expressing meaning and using appropriate grammatical structures to express that meaning. Additionally, this makes the process of language teaching and learning more fun for the learner as well.

Not only EFL grammar course instructor feel frustrated in teaching grammar, but also learners usually face greater challenges. Proponents of online learning have seen that it can be effective in potentially eliminating barriers while providing increased convenience, flexibility, currency of material, customized learning, and feedback over a traditional face-to-face experience (Hackbarth, 1996; Harasim, 1990). Opponents, however, are concerned that students in an online environment may feel isolated (Brown, 1996), confused, and frustrated (Hara & Kling, 2000) and that a student's interest in the subject and learning effectiveness may be reduced (Maki, Patterson, & Whittaker, 2000).

In the learning process, a large number of comparative studies of traditional and on-line learning education have concluded that on-line learning can be as effective as traditional learning. On-line learning provides students a convenient and efficient way for learning. On-line methods or

merely traditional might not lead to desirable results. In order to facilitate learning and communication theories suggest that a third alternative, i.e., blended learning.

Blended learning is “integrating the online and face-to-face formats to create a more effective learning experience” (Brew, 2008, p. 98). With blended learning, teachers can use online resources in their daily classroom activities to engage students and help them become more active and more effective learners. The study was intended to investigate the effects of blended learning on grammar instruction with a particular focus on passive structures.

In learning a second or foreign language, grammar has always been an important component and is something both language learners and teachers are concerned about, especially in traditional grammar classes. They get bored easily due to traditional methods of teaching. Language learners may not have sufficient metalinguistic knowledge (i.e., grammar terminology) to understand the topics and explanations of grammatical points (Hasselgard, 2001). Traditional methods of teaching grammar are time-consuming. It seems that because of the inefficiency of grammar teaching methods, new approaches and techniques are needed to assist language teachers and learners.

In order to help students find language classes, especially grammar lessons more interesting and to achieve the best quality of learning, in addition to traditional methods, on-line instruction can lead to new potential in learning. It is believed that a combination of traditional instruction and on-line instruction, called blended learning, can be employed in language classrooms. Blended learning can be a practical and effective way to make students attracted and motivated to learn grammar better.

Therefore, regarding limitation and problems in traditional classes (time-consuming, lack of interest and motivation), the need for the integration of modern technology into traditional classrooms, to improve their grammar skills. Although, the use of the computer and the internet has been introduced in language classrooms, studies are needed to examine the effectiveness and impact of blended learning on Iranian EFL learners.

The main objective of the study is intended to examine and compare the impact of blended learning, web-based learning and traditional classroom learning on the acquisition and retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. In addition, the study is intended to scrutinize the role these teaching methods play in long-term retention of the target structure in question and which one results in better learning among Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, based on what mentioned above the following research question can be posed:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Computer serves as a language-learning tool and as an instrument to help researchers. According to Chappelle in (2001), the first needs of CALL were planted during the 1950s. In effect, CALL was considered as an instructional help instrument during the 1960s. In the 1960s and 1970s, the application of CALL in second language contexts was considered; and CALL was firstly applied

in small scale personal projects called Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition (CASLA) Chapelle (2001).

Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) was the expression agreed upon at the 1983 TESOL convention in a meeting of all interested participants. This term is widely used to refer to the area of technology and second language teaching and learning despite the fact that revisions for the term are suggested regularly (Chapelle, 2001, p.3). Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) may be defined as the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997, p.1). Given the breadth of what may go on in computer-assisted language learning (CALL), a definition of CALL that accommodates its changing nature is any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language (Beatty, 2003, p. 7).

There are a variety of approaches used by CALL researchers, like the other areas of second language learning. Although quantitative studies probably dominated in the early literature, qualitative and mixed-method studies are now common, especially in the area of computer mediated communication (CMC). An edited volume by Egbert and Petrie (2005) did a credible job of covering the more dominant research approaches along with some less common ones, presenting criticisms and offering suggestions for improving the overall quality of CALL research. Levy and Stockwell (2006) illustrated that quite clearly in their chapter on research by contrasting two articles in computer mediated communication that have looked at a similar phenomenon but through very different lenses, one interactionist (Fernandez-Garcia & Martinez-Rabelais, 2002) and the other sociocultural (Drawer, 2002).

By understanding the development of CALL, we can understand the innovative applications of CALL. Development of CALL Moras (2001) has divided CALL into three distinct phases: behaviorist, communicative and integrative: Behaviorist CALL was implemented when the Audio-lingual Method was popular (around the 1960's and '70) and it viewed the computer as a tutor which presented drills and non-judgmental feedback to practices. The "programs were designed to provide immediate positive or negative feedback to learners on the formal accuracy of their responses" (Warschauer & Kern, 2005, p. 8). In language learning, grammar plays a significant role and thus, many language educators have made an effort to inculcate technology in the learning process, in the hope that technology helps to improve students' knowledge in grammar. Some researchers have tried to get some insights on the effects of web-based learning on students' performance in grammar class. Another research that focused on grammar teaching and web-based environment is a research done by Frigaard (2002). The research was participated by high school students and their performance on Spanish vocabulary, grammar and listening was investigated after they participated in language lab activities. The findings, which were from the analysis of the students' data and surveys from the five units of lesson, revealed that the students preferred to learn vocabulary and grammar in the classroom, but not the listening skills. Hence, the findings reveal that environment plays an important influencing factor in language learning.

Blended learning has become a popular form of education. It "means integrating the online and face-to-face formats to create a more effective learning experience" (Brew, 2008, p. 98). With

blended learning, teachers can use online resources in their daily classroom activities to engage students and help them become more active and more effective learners. Badawi defined blended learning as "a flexible approach that combines face-to-face learning activities with online learning practices that allow students to exchange collective and individual feedback and responses [in] four specific areas, namely, learner feedback, learner strategies, and alternative assessment synchronously or asynchronously" (Badawi, 2009, p. 15).

The blended learning classes in all the studies combined two modes: face to-face and CALL. The location of the face-to-face mode was the classroom and the CALL mode the computer lab or student home. The technology used in the CALL mode included CALL programs, learning management systems (LMSs), and the web. Most of the studies used LMSs (WebCT or Moodle) to deliver instruction, sometimes in conjunction with computer-mediated communication tools. The authors of the studies paid attention to the integration of modes, the second parameter in Neumeier's framework, by making some activities obligatory. Many studies have suggested the fundamental shift blended learning proposes. One study, conducted at Brigham Young University (BYU), examined how blended learning was changing instructional practices and the prevalence of blended learning at BYU (Graham & Robinson, 2007). Data collected came from faculty surveys and interviews. The data revealed that female teachers were more likely to use blended learning strategy, and adjunct professors were three times more likely to use blended learning strategy than not. Findings also revealed that faculty rarely substituted online instruction for face-to-face instruction.

The Graham and Robinson (2007) study opened a clear distinction between enabling, enhancing, and transforming blends. Enabling blends merely create greater access and convenience for students, whereas enhancing blends increase student and teacher productivity. However, a transformational blend moved from information transmission pedagogy to active learning constructivist pedagogy (p. 96). The authors of the study concluded that for blended learning to reach the transformational level, the primary objective of the teacher should first focus on the teaching and learning relationship and then efficiency or productivity (p. 107).

As blended learning becomes more established, it offers the opportunity for educators to develop new methods of communication with and among students, develop learning activities that are engaging to the digital native learner, and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners' styles presented in any classroom (Bonk & Graham, 2007). Studies in this field indicate that it is important to consider some elements in the design of instruction that creates a setting for greater student learning.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the background presented above the following research questions can be posed:

1. Does blended learning lead to the acquisition of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does web-based learning lead to the acquisition of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners?

3. Is there a significant difference among the three teaching methods of passive structures (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional)?
4. Does blended learning have any effect on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?
5. Does web-based learning have any effect on long-term retention of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners?
6. Which of the three grammar teaching methods (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional) has more long-lasting effects on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participant

The participants of the study were 44 Iranian EFL learners who were learning English in a language institute in Isfahan. These participants were selected from among a larger sample of 75 EFL learners after taking the Solution Placement Test. Both male and female learners participated in the study. Attempts were made to include an equal number of each gender, so that gender could be controlled. Since the study was intended to investigate the impact of blended learning on mid-proficiency participants, it was necessary to administer a placement test to make sure that the participants were homogenous. After the placement test, the 44 participants who were from the required level of proficiency were placed in two experimental and one control groups.

In one of the experimental groups, Blended Learning (BL), participants (N=15) received traditional teaching methods of the passive structure plus learning via the web. In the second experimental group, Web-based (WB), participants (N=15) received materials and instructions through the web. Finally, in the control group, Traditional, participants (N=14) were taught based on the traditional teaching methods of the passive structure and received the materials, instructions, and feedback through traditional methods in the classroom.

Instruments

In order to conduct the experiment and collect the required data, the following types of materials were employed:

The Solution Placement Test

In order to choose homogeneous participants and place them in the relevant groups, Solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was used. It is essential to mention that the test has been designed to assess general knowledge of the key language as well as the receptive and productive skills and gives insight into what level language learners are. The test consists of three sections; the first part includes 50 multiple-choice items that assess learners' knowledge of key grammar and vocabulary from elementary to intermediate levels; the second part consists of 10 graded reading comprehension items, and the third section is a writing task which assesses learners' ability to produce the language. It should be noted that learners can be placed in different

proficiency levels based on the scores they receive and the placement criteria the test developer has identified.

A grammar pamphlet

In addition to Solution Placement Test, the participants were given a pamphlet which was taught during the course. The pamphlet was gathered from many books at intermediate level. The pamphlet contained several lessons explaining the target structure and providing plenty of lessons and exercises. In this pamphlet, different types of situations were presented to show where passive sentences can be used. For example, the passive voice was taught and presented in tenses, especially and other types of structures. It should be noted that all the experimental and control groups were required to study the pamphlet and do the exercises. For the Web-based and Blended Learning groups, the electronic version of the pamphlet was also uploaded so that they could access the materials and do the exercises.

A Weblog

Since an essential part of the course was online and participants had to send and receive their materials and assignments through the web, a weblog was designed. The content of this weblog was in correspondence with that of the course. In other words, all the participants in all the groups received the same amount of information. In fact, participants of the BL group, who also received instruction in the classroom, received the extra information and exercises through this page. In addition, they received their feedback through this page. Nevertheless, the page was more important for participants of the Web-based group. The students in this group also received all the material related to their course, including the pamphlet, exercises, and feedback through this weblog. In addition, participants were given an email address which they used in case there were any internet crashes or they wanted to get in touch with the instructor of the course.

Pretest and Posttest and delayed posttest

In order to make sure that participants were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of the target structure, namely the passive structure, a pretest was administered. The test included 30 multiple-choice items, focusing on passives in different types of tenses and structures. It is essential to mention that the reliability and validity of the test had been checked before the study. In fact, in order to check the reliability of the test, it was given to a similar group of learners in a different institute and after checking the items and making sure that the test was reliable ($r=.81$), it was administered in the target samples. In addition, the test was given to two professional teacher to check the items and provide the researcher with suitable feedback.

In the last session of the study, the participants took a post-test, including 30 multiple-choice items to examine the efficiency of the instruction. It is imperative to mention that the post-test was the same as the pretest. However, the order of items was different. It was done because it was necessary to make a comparison between the performances of participants in the pretest and posttest.

In order to scrutinize the long-term effects of the instruction presented in the experiment and one week after the post-test, a delayed post-test was conducted. Like the pretest and the posttest, it was imperative to use the same test so that proper comparison could be made.

Procedure

At first, in order to select and place participants of the courses, the Solution Placement Test (Edwards, 2007) was administered. It should be noted that the validity and reliability of this test have already been established. That is, the test has been used to evaluate EFL/ESL learners' level of proficiency for years and in many countries with diverse first language backgrounds.

In order to do the experiment and implement the treatment, the following procedure was followed. First, the placement test was conducted with 75 Iranian EFL learners who voluntarily participated in the test and had mentioned that they were of mid proficiency levels. The participants of the study were EFL learners from a language institute in Isfahan.

From among the 75 EFL learners who participated in the placement test, 44 EFL learners were randomly placed in one control and two experimental groups. The participants of the control group received the materials and instruction in the classroom. They were given the course pamphlet at the beginning of the course. Each session, they covered one grammar point from the material along with exercises. In addition, they were given some extra materials exercises to do during the course. They were familiarized with the structure of passive and how to use it.

The treatment for the experimental groups was different. The participants of the Blended Learning group attended classes and received the pamphlet and instructions in the classroom similar to those of the control group. Nevertheless, unlike participants of the control group, they had to send their assignments and receive the instructor's feedback through the net and also download the extra materials and exercises through the class weblog. In addition, they could use email in order to get in touch with the instructor in case they faced any difficulty.

Participants of the Web-based group, who had the same specifications as the participants of the Control and Blended Learning groups, were required to do everything through the net. After taking the placement test and being placed in the relevant groups, participants of the Web-based group were given the instructions about what to do to during the course. Participants had to visit the weblog frequently and download the lessons, the course book, and the assignments. They were told to send their material to the researcher through an email which was given to them in the instructions. In addition, they were told to be in touch with the teacher by email and ask any question they had.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Pretest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of

the study had to do several test during the course. The first test of the participants was considered to be the pretest. Table (1) presents the descriptive statistics of the pretest.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Pretest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Web-based	15	7.20	1.74	.45	6.24	8.16	3.00
Blended	15	6.73	2.55	.66	5.32	8.14	2.00
Control	14	8.21	1.81	.48	7.17	9.26	5.00
Total	44	7.36	2.11	.32	6.72	8.01	2.00

In order to test the homogeneity of variances for the pretest scores, the Levene test was conducted. The results, as presented in Table (2) indicate that the difference was not significant and that the participants were quite homogeneous. This helped the researcher run the inferential statistics, i.e. one-way ANOVA to see whether there was a significant difference among the participants.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for the Pretest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.49	2	8.25	1.92	.16
Within Groups	175.69	41	4.29		
Total	192.18	43			

The results show that there was no statistically significant difference at $p > .05$ level among the three groups: $F_{(2, 43)} = 1.92$, $p = .16$. In other words, there was no statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended group ($M = 6.73$, $SD = 2.55$), the Web Based group ($M = 7.20$, $SD = 1.74$), and the Control group ($M = 8.21$, $SD = 1.81$) in the pretest. The results ensured that any possible effects that happened during the experiment would be the result of the treatment.

Results of the Posttest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' acquisition and retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of the study had to take three tests during the course, namely pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest. Their second test was considered as the posttest. Table (3) presents the descriptive statistics concerning the posttest. The table shows information about each group in terms of the number, mean, and standard deviation, standard error of measurement, the minimum, and the maximum scores, respectively.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for the Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Web-based	15	17.40	3.92	1.01	15.23	19.57	10.00
Blended	15	21.47	4.47	1.15	18.99	23.94	15.00
Control	14	25.93	3.56	.95	23.87	27.99	19.00
Total	44	21.50	5.25	.79	19.90	23.10	10.00

Similarly, Levene's test of homogeneity was run to make sure that there was no significant difference among the participants of the posttest.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA for the Posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	526.74	2	263.37	16.35	.000
Within Groups	660.26	41	16.10		
Total	1187.00	43			

As the results of the table above show, there was a statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended Learning group ($M = 21.47$, $SD = 4.47$), Web-based group ($M = 17.40$, $SD = 3.92$) and Control group ($M = 25.93$, $SD = 3.56$). Nevertheless, in order to locate the difference among the control and experimental groups, the one-way ANOVA was followed by post-hoc tests.

Results of the Delayed Posttest

In order to examine the impact of blended learning, i.e., the independent variable, on Iranian EFL learners' retention of passive sentences, the dependent variable, participants of the study had to take a delayed posttest, which was their last test. Table (5) presents the descriptive statistics concerning the delayed posttest. The table shows information about each group in terms of the number, mean, and standard deviation, standard error of measurement, the minimum, and the maximum scores, respectively.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for the Delayed Posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Web-based	15	16.80	3.73	.96	14.74	18.86	11.00
Blended	15	21.73	4.27	1.10	19.37	24.10	11.00
Control	14	25.50	3.44	.92	23.52	27.48	20.00
Total	44	21.25	5.19	.78	19.67	22.83	11.00

Similarly, Levene's test of homogeneity was run to make sure that there was no significant difference among the participants of the delayed posttest.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA for the Delayed Posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	553.42	2	276.71	18.82	.000
Within Groups	602.83	41	14.70		
Total	1156.25	43			

As the results of the table above show, there was a statistically significant difference among the participants of the Blended Learning group ($M = 21.73$, $SD = 4.27$), Web-based group ($M = 16.80$, $SD = 3.73$) and Control group ($M = 25.50$, $SD = 3.44$). Nevertheless, in order to locate the difference among the control and experimental groups, the one-way ANOVA was followed by post-hoc tests.

Repeated Measurement

In order to examine the long-term effects of the treatment on the retention of passive structures, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. Table(7)presents the results.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Repeated Measures

	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pretest	Web-based	7.20	1.74	15
	Blended	6.73	2.55	15
	Control	8.21	1.81	14
	Total	7.36	2.11	44
Posttest	Web-based	17.40	3.92	15
	Blended	21.47	4.47	15
	Control	25.93	3.56	14
	Total	21.50	5.25	44
Delayed	Web-based	16.80	3.73	15
	Blended	21.73	4.27	15
	Control	25.50	3.44	14
	Total	21.25	5.19	44

Table 7 shows descriptive statistics of the participants' scores in experimental and control groups in the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest). As the results of Table(7)show the mean scores of the control group in all the tests was higher than both experimental groups.

Table 8: Multivariate Tests

	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Squared	EtaNoncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b
Pillai's trace	.96	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Wilks' lambda	.04	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Hotelling's trace	21.62	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00
Roy's largest root	21.62	432.39 ^a	2.00	40.00	.000	.96	864.77	1.00

Table 8 shows the results of analysis of variance for the effects of passing the time on the scores. Then this hypothesis that passing the time does not effect on the Participant's scores is rejected at the level of confidence, 95%. Because the significance level of this test is lower than 0/05,p<0/05.It is concluded that participant's scores changed through passing the time. Based on the effect size of time variable, repeated measure specified 96% of participant's scores changes.

Discussion

Research Question One

The first research question states: "Does blended learning lead to the acquisition of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners?" As indicated in Chapter four, blended learning strategy used in the current study did not significantly affect students'achievement.However, in this study the control group significantly outperformed the experimental groups, as the results of statistical analyses indicated.

Of course it is imperative to mention that there are studies which have had positive results using the blended learning teaching methods. For example, Al-Zumor (2013) investigated the advantages and limitations of face-to-face language instruction and online language learning in the Blended Learning approach. The results indicated the positive effects of blended learning on students' reading opportunities and enriching their English vocabulary. Moreover, based on advantages demonstrated how Blended Learning provided an environment for more effective employment of indirect language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990). It showed that Blended Learning could enhance their writing, listening, grammar, pronunciation and speaking skills.

Similarly, Jia, Chen, Ding and Runa (2012) investigated vocabulary acquisition in a Blended learning class. They conducted surveys and interviews in order to demonstrate the positive effects of Blended learning on vocabulary acquisition. The result showed that students were more interested in this kind of class (Blended) than the traditional one. Blended learning could improve the students' performance in vocabulary acquisition. The results are in contrast to the ones in the present study in which participants of the Blended Learning group performed more poorly than the traditional group.

Keshta and Harb (2013) examined another study related to the effectiveness of Blended learning on developing English writing skills. They reached positive effects of Blended learning. Their findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference for the experimental groups. Their results showed that Blended Learning was quite effective in improving English writing.

Research Question Two

The second research question of the present study was intended to assess the effects of web-based learning on the acquisition of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners. Online presentation of materials and instruction followed in this study did not impact the students' acquisition of passive structure. In other words, making EFL learners participate in online or exclusively virtual classes would not necessarily result in better performance. The difference between the means scores of the Web-based group and the control group was so salient. Thus, the proposed web based learning did not improve learners' acquisition the passive structure in English. In another study, Al-Jarf (2004) investigated the effects of web –based learning on struggling EFL college writers. The results of the study showed that using web-based instruction in online writing classes resulted in a significantly more effective performance than the one in traditional classroom instruction. Although web-based instruction has been considered to be an important factor in enhancing the writing quality, this has not been supported by the results of the present study.

Research Question Three

The third research question was aimed to examine whether there is a significant difference among the three teaching methods of passive structures (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional). The results of post hoc tests indicated that the traditional teaching methods of writing as presented to the participants of the control group was more effective and the participants of this group significantly outperformed those of the Blended Learning and Web-based groups in terms of their acquisition of passive structures. Comparing the control and experimental groups, the results revealed a significant difference in this regard. However, a closer look at the results, i.e., the

means and the level of significance showed that participants of the control group had a better performance than those of the experimental groups.

The participants of the Blended Learning group had a slightly better performance than their counterparts in the Web-based group. Yusofa and Saadonb (2012) investigated the effects of web-based language learning on university students' grammar proficiency. Their study was intended to determine the effects of learning grammar, in three different English classes using three different methods of teaching, namely face-to-face method, blended method (traditional and web-based materials) and web-based learning method. The results indicated that for all the three modes, the pretest and posttest showed a significant difference. Thus, those three methods of instruction could improve students' performance in grammar. The findings of Yusofa and Saadonbs' study revealed that there were significant differences between the two groups in their knowledge of English grammar. The online grammar instruction contributed to students' achievement in their English course.

Research Question Four

Research question four was aimed to examine whether blended learning had any effect on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. As indicated in Chapter four, the results of post hoc comparisons for the delayed posttest indicated that the participants of the traditional group significantly outperformed those of the Web-based and Blended Learning groups in terms of their long-term retention of passive structures. Therefore, blended learning did not have a significant effect on the retention of passive structures. The results of this study clearly revealed that after conducting the posttest, participants of the Blended group showed a negative performance in remembering the passive structure in future performances. It is essential to mention that there was no study to date to make any comparison for similar and different results.

Research Question Five

The fifth research question was asked to scrutinize whether web-based learning had any effects on long-term retention of passive sentences among Iranian EFL learners. The results showed that participants in this group had lower scores in terms of long term retention of passive sentences. The performance of this group in the delayed posttest was the same as that of the posttest and had a lower mean score.

Research Question Six

The last research question was aimed to ask which of the three methods of teaching grammar (i.e., blended, web-based, and traditional) had more lasting effects on long-term retention of passive structures among Iranian EFL learners. As indicated in Chapter Four, the results of the experiment showed that the Blended Learning group did not actually affect the retention of passive structures and that the control group showed a better result. The results showed that the traditional method of teaching grammar had more lasting effects on long-term retention of the passive structure.

CONCLUSION

A few conclusions could be drawn from the findings of this research that help English language teachers and learners in both public and private schools to have some insights about teaching and learning English grammar, especially passive structures. The results of this study indicated that the proposed blended learning method did not improve participants' acquisition and long-term retention of the target structure. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that some students were quite satisfied with the proposed blended learning method in learning passive structure.

For all the three methods, it was found that the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest had a significant difference. Thus, these three methods of instruction can affect learners' performance in learning and producing grammar. The findings revealed that the integration method (blended) was not the best method to be used in the grammar class as it helped to improve participants' score. This finding gives the idea that teachers should encourage their students to use more of the internet and computer. This is because learners will enjoy using the benefits of technology in learning and can understand grammar lessons (e.g., the passive structure) more efficiently and easily. Blended Learning remains a relatively new concept at many English institutions; however, recent research appears to indicate that when "appropriately" implemented, blended learning can significantly improve the learning experience (Marsh, 2012).

The present study contributed to proving the effectiveness and impact of Blended Learning for EFL learners. Although for certain reasons Blended Learning did not have any significant effect on learning the passive structure, the positive effects shown by other studies cannot be ignored. In fact, in some other related research, the researchers consistently noted the clear advantages of this experience in learning skills and sub-skills. In this study, there were some limitations that need to be addressed and results of the study should be interpreted having these limitations in mind. Many problems can be related to the type of students who enroll in a blended learning class. The Blended classes were not suitable for every participant. Some students who did not have self-discipline and could have benefitted more in a face-to-face traditional class. In the web-based class there was a lack of spontaneous feedback and some students needed the interaction with teacher, so they failed to get good results. In the online part of the blended learning and web-based classes, participants had some problems sending their assignment and even observing the blog through the net, most of them did not have any email at first and took some time to make one. In addition, using the blog was somehow difficult for them, especially at the beginning of the study. This resulted in some problems for the teacher too. For example, sometimes they had to wait and it was quite time-consuming. Also, preparing the materials for the blended learning group was difficult and time-consuming. Participants in the online part needed to have verbal interaction. The researcher sometimes observed that students were eager to have face to face learning because of the emotional aspects of direct feedback. Students sometimes felt that they were given more work to do when on line materials were used. They often preferred the paper versions of the materials. Some of them were interested in going to the weblog but they did not like to type and send their assignment. This problem is related to their knowledge of the computer.

REFERENCES

- Al-Jarf, R. (2005). The effects of online grammar instruction on low proficiency EFL college students 'achievement. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, 7(4), 408.
- Al Zumor1, A. (2013). EFL students' perceptions of a blended learning environment advantages, limitations and suggestions for improvement. *English Language Teaching*, 6 (10).
- Badawi, M. F. (2009). *Using blended learning for enhanced EFL prospective teachers' pedagogical knowledge and performance*. Conference Paper: Learning & Language The spirit of the Age. Cairo: Aim Shams University.
- Beatty, K. (2003). Teaching and researching computer-assisted language learning. London/New York: *Pearson education Limited*.
- Blake, R. (2000) 'Computer mediated communication: a window on L2 Spanish Interlanguage', *Language Learning & Technology*, 4 (1), 12036.
- Bonk, C. J., & Graham, C. R. (2006). The handbook of blended learning. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.
- Brew, L. S. (2008). The role of student feedback in evaluating and revising a blended learning course. *Internet and Higher Education*, 11, 98-105.
- Brown, J. D. (1997) 'Computers in language testing: present research and some future Directions', *Language Learning & Technology*, 1(1), 4459.
- Chapelle, C. A. (2001) Computer applications in second language acquisition: Foundations for teaching, testing, and research, *Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.
- Egbert, J. (2005). *CALL Essentials: Principles and Practice in CALL Classrooms*. USA: TESOL.
- Frigaard, A. (2002). Does the Computer Lab Improve Student Performance on Vocabulary, Grammar, and Listening Comprehension? (online) <http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED476749.pdf> (7 March 2010)
- Graham, C. R., & Robinson, R. (2007). Realizing the transformational potential of Blended learning. In *Blended Learning Research Perspectives* (pp. 83-110). Needham, MA: The Sloan Consortium.
- Hackbarth, S. (1996). The educational technology handbook: A comprehensive guide. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: *Educational Technology Publications*.
- Hara, N., & Kling, R. (2000). Students' distress with a web-based distance education course: An ethno graphic study of participants' experiences. *Information, Communication, and Society*, 3, 557579.
- Hasselgard, H. (2001). "Grammar in Communicative English Teaching". *Sprak og Sprakundervisning*, 1, 7-12.
- Hubbard, P., & Siskin, C. (2004). Another look at tutorial CALL. *ReCALL*, 16(2), 448-461.
- Jia, J., Chen, Y., Ding, Z., & Ruana, M. (2012). Effects of a vocabulary acquisition and assessment system on students 'performance in a blended learning class for English subject. *Computers & Education* 58, 6376.
- Kern, R., & Warschauer, M. (2000). Introduction: Theory and practice of networked-based language teaching. In M. Warschauer, & R. Kern (Eds.), *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice* (pp. 1-19). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Keshta, A., & Harb, I. (2013). The Effectiveness of a Blended Learning Program on Developing Palestinian Tenth Grades 'English Writing Skills. *Educational Journal Science PG*.

- Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-assisted Language Learning: Context and Conceptualization*, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Levy, M., & Stockwell, G. (2006). *CALL Dimensions: Options and Issues in Computer Assisted Language Learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Marsh, D. (2012). *Blended learning: Creating learning opportunities for language learners*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Moras, S. (2001). *Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and the Internet*. Retrieved April 13, 2005 from the World Wide Web <http://www3.telus.net/linguisticissues/CALL.html>
- Yusofa, N., & Saadonb, N. (2012). *The effects of web-based language learning on university students' grammar proficiency*. The 3rd International Conference on e-Learning ICEL2011, 23-24 November 2011, Bandung, Indonesia.

DIAGNOSTIC TEST: THE PREPONDERANT CONNECTIVE BETWEEN THE PILOT STUDY AND ACTION RESEARCH

Mrs. M. CHANDRASENA RAJESWARAN

Research scholar & Associate Professor of English
Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute University
Maduravoyal, Chennai – 600 095 (INDIA)
Email: chandrasena_raj@yahoo.in
Phone: 044 - 24960005 / Mob: 9840556559

Dr. R. PUSHKALA

HoD & Professor of English
Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute University
Maduravoyal, Chennai – 600 095 (INDIA)
Email: pushkalaramani@gmail.com
Phone: 044- 24869589 / Mob: 9840874338

ABSTRACT

Learner centred communicative language teaching classrooms allow teachers to do a wide variety of researches in different contexts; the action researches and the classroom researches are synonymous in their process and outcome too; they may be adjudged as the wash back sequence of globalization; these pedagogical exercises with the teachers as facilitators and monitors depend more on the teachers' ability to observe and their invincible belief in remedial approaches towards deficient performances of the learners. The present article deliberates on the diagnostic test administered to the first year engineering students of Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai; it was administered immediately after their induction into the course i.e. in the month of September, 2014. It was administered subsequent to a pilot study which investigated the students as the members of different language groups struggling to learn English as second language against the lack of parental and societal cooperation and the different variables that are detrimental to the learning of English as second language; the diagnostic test was designed to assess the cognitive and communicative implications in the overall English language proficiency of the new comers. The feedback proved that the students had not sharpened their listening and speaking skills at the tertiary level and hence their lack of oral communication. Pondering over the feedback, and taking the clue from action researches carried on in the English as second language (ESL) and English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms across the world, the researcher planned for the action research; with supporting technology intervention and oral communication practices in the form of role plays, the action research looked for honing the oral communication skills of the students for effective inter personal and academic communication in English.

KEYWORDS: globalisation, wash back sequence, action research, diagnostic test, preponderant connective

INTRODUCTION

When the students get inducted into Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University as new entrants in the professional course of their choice, the university takes responsibility to mould them as employable global citizens. As faculty of the university, the onus of developing the students' communicative skills with all its components squarely rests on the university English teacher. The prior knowledge about the students' language ability may show the direction for future course of action. As a first step, a pilot study was organised. It made use of a customised questionnaire (research instrument 1) to investigate the participants' personal factors such as age, and parental factors that usually influence second language learning at the early stages. The next step was to investigate the pattern of learning in the schools (medium of instruction and method of English learning), and then infer the socio political and cultural factors that might have influenced the students. The importance of English in the learner's perspective was to be ascertained. The analysis and findings suggested that the students have not honed their oral communication throughout their school education. So an action research was planned to hone the oral communication skills of the new entrants. On the basis of the findings of the pilot survey, the diagnostic test (research instrument 2) was designed with the purpose of reflecting how the students stood in relation to the attainment of the goals of the course in which they had got admitted on the basis of their knowledge acquired in the past. The findings helped the researcher to identify oral proficiency of the first year engineering students was not sufficient for the purpose of using English for inter personal and academic communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Test/assessment/ evaluation

Generally speaking, all classroom tests whether formal (paper and pencil tests: administered under controlled conditions) Hedge (2008) or informal (administered during classroom procedure) are formative in nature and they judge the students' level of performance on a specific task or unit in a syllabus during the course of learning. By and large all classroom tests are 'assessments for learning' because they give descriptive feedback to the students for self-realization and improvement in their academic performance; the teachers on their part can rely on these 'assessments for learning' to decide on required changes in the teaching learning process to achieve the desired outcome. In this view, classroom assessment has become an important medium that can support and enhance teaching learning (Shepard, 2000). The semester examinations at the end of a learning period, probably at the completion of the course itself are assessments of learning. They are summative in their function as they assess the learning outcome of a process as a product; they are usually considered separate entity. They categorise learners on certain criteria and offer least scope for learners' improvement. By way of their utility to sieve the learners for the next higher grade in the learning process, the present research considers them out of its purview.

The behaviourists consider classroom assessments and tests as cognitive strategies to focus on learner development (Linn & Gronlund, 2000). Linn and Gronlund (2000) posit that classroom assessments can address both the learning process and learning outcomes: these measurements can provide ways for teachers to know both the effectiveness of the process used to perform a

given task and the outcome of the performance. For Hedge, (2008) the classroom based assessments are “concerned with gathering useful information that the teacher can use to support student language learning” (p.384). Evaluation or assessment: used interchangeably (Nunan, 1991; O’Malley,1996) is exploratory to assess the learning outcome. In a teacher’s perspective, “A major reason for carrying out assessment and evaluation is to determine whether learners are progressing satisfactorily or not, and, if they are not, to diagnose the cause or causes and suggest remedies” (Nunan, 1991).The feedback from the assessments urge the teacher to be inquisitive about the possible methodologies and learning strategies in language learning for the benefit of the learners and help her to provide the less proficient students with constructive guidance for improvisation.

While discussing the syllabus based diagnostic achievement test for ESP (English for specific purpose) students, Bachman and Palmer (1996) suggest the diagnostic achievement test- other way of expressing ‘assessment for learning’, “should make it relatively easy for the test takers to perform at their best”(p.294). The types of feedback that the test takers receive enlighten them about their test performance quite directly. So the test developers and users should make the feedback relevant, complete, and meaningful to the test taker. While the scores to be appropriate to the demands of questions on the test taker, the verbal descriptions could be used to interpret the test scores, and personalised debriefing by the test administrator with the test taker could develop a positive affective response toward the test by the latter. Bachman and Palmer add that the feedback should be impartial and fair to regard the test taker as per se. The feedback could help a teacher to be decisive whether to continue the present instructional strategies or to bring a change in them. “... all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by their students in assessing themselves will provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged” (Black and William,1998, p. 2).

Diagnostic test

Though the assessment tests can be diagnostic by their outcome, the diagnostic tests per se, a category on their own, enjoy a special significance in the teaching learning process. Unlike the assessments of learning, a diagnostic test is administered at the beginning of a course to assess the actual language ability of the students and to design a methodology by which the students can be facilitated to learn the target language. Before starting a diagnostic procedure, the teachers need to understand the teaching beliefs and the appropriate teaching practices used in similar classes; such attitude and fine observation, could help teachers to design and administer the test to the beginners. The teacher like a physician uses the test instruments to obtain scientific and definite proof for better diagnosis and the remedial measure thereafter. Therefore, a diagnostic test may be defined as the test which can provide a detailed picture of strengths and weaknesses in the learners’ relevant area of learning. For Bachman and Palmer (1996) “diagnosis involves identifying specific areas of strength or weakness in language ability so as to assign students to specific courses or learning activities” (ibid: p. 98). A diagnostic test can plug the gaps in students’ learning. Nevertheless, it should be in congruence with the objectives of the tests designed and administered in similar EFL and ESL contexts.

Diagnostic feedback

Diagnostic feedback is quite valuable to both the teacher and learner; Black and William (1998) opine that descriptive diagnostic feedback could improve the learning outcome. It helps the teacher to identify slow learners, less proficient and also the cause for the problem; to identify the specific areas of remediation; while accelerating the process of learning it can make the learning process effective and customised to the learner need. The learner is relieved of his test and new course anxieties and sets himself to get adjusted to the learning of new syllabus and a new environment. Though the method of learning and the syllabus of the content they learnt till then are not necessarily the focus of the teacher, a diagnostic test presumes that the students had the opportunity to learn what can be considered the requisites to continue the present learning and hence it perfectly synchronises with the notion of Brumfit and Roberts (1983) about diagnostic test: “right at the beginning of a new course and its content designed to reflect the goals of the course, so that one would then know how students stood in relation to attainment of those goals on the basis of knowledge acquired in the past” (p.126). Furthermore the diagnostic test must be customised for the purpose of identifying the present proficiency level of the students in terms of what they have learnt in the past and what they stand to learn in the future (Ur, 1991).

Certain diagnostic assessments are specifically designed for providing diagnostic feedback (Alderson, 2005; Gorin, 2007). Therefore, in the present context of professional education in a university, the students’ language ability to handle interpersonal communication and academic language performance must be assessed. The diagnostic test customised for the purpose must include cognitive tasks and communicative tasks suited for diagnosing learners’ strengths and weaknesses in the language skills. Such a diagnostic test requires a systematic design framework involving multiple steps (Davidson & Lynch, 2002; Mislevy, Steinberg, & Almond, 2003; Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001). Bachman and Palmer have pointed out the benefits of diagnostic feedback for the researchers in second language learning context. Bachman and Palmer suggest that the test scores can be used to describe levels or profiles of language ability for a variety of research purposes. The language tests that the researchers design may shed light on the test taker’s language knowledge and language ability including the effects of their characteristics and that of language tasks on language test performance, and the relationships among tests of different areas of language ability.

Alderson (2005) opines that a diagnostic test should be more exposing test takers’ weaknesses than strengths. Effective diagnostic feedback is not only his concern but also that of Black and William, (1998) and Zhao, (2013). Zhao (2013) enumerates a number of empirical studies on diagnostic language tests. According to her recording, the diagnostic test administered by Sewell (2004) to a number of adult learners in UK provided feedback on their language skills and abilities. It employed multiple choices and open writing tasks. The result was that the learners benefited by the comprehensive diagnostic feedback on their strengths and weaknesses as language learners. Surely, the observations made by Zhao are fit to be considered a bird’s eye view opinion about the existing diagnostic tests and their validity in assessment in general; a diagnostic test needs to be reliable and valid lest it cannot be a decision making and preponderant connective in an action research.

Reliability and validity

It is widely believed that the available literature on language testing do not offer the required guidance to teachers about the content and conduct of diagnostic tests and also the measures to make them reliable and valid. Generally, a test can be a reliable device “if it is so constructed that performances on it are not random, but are procured in a systematic way through the interaction of the test with the knowledge and ability of the individuals tested, so that if the test were repeated, the results should still place the candidates in the same rank order” (Brumfit & Roberts 1983). They further add that the teachers should eliminate ambiguous phrasing of questions and should check for the appropriate scoring for the question in view of their demand on the test user. In short, reliability refers to the consistency of the assessment procedure; better still to the score consistency (AERA, 1999; Brown & Hudson, 2002; Henning, 1987; Sari Luoma, 2004) considers “reliability is important because it means that the scores are dependable so that we (teachers) can rely on them for decision making”.

As for validity, it refers to the purpose of the test and to see whether the purpose is achieved or not. A test should have ‘face validity’- that it tests the knowledge already exists with the candidate or “the situations in which the language was subsequently to be used; the test should show ‘content validity’ that it relates to the task for which proficiency is required; the test may be said to have ‘concurrent validity’ if its result is in concurrence with similar tests on the candidates placed on the same proficiency level; lastly if the test is constructed in such a way as to reflect current thinking on the aims of language teaching and the nature of language learning, it may be said to have construct validity (Brumfit & Roberts 1983; Savignon 1987). In short, they profess integrative or global language tests which are updated to the current thinking and criterion referenced to the communicative needs of the real world can be appropriate diagnostic tests. They add communication needs a working together of linguistic skills and other skills that are part of communicative skills. As such the construct validity of the diagnostic tests can be guided by the objectives of the learning process and its context.

Appropriateness of the customised diagnostic test

The orthodoxy of communicative language teaching believes learners are to be active participants in a teaching learning process as such they need to be active test takers too. Of late the communicative language classes have recognised the discrete language skills, such as grammar and vocabulary as essential components of oral communication to depict mastery over the language in the context of globalization. Bachman and Palmer believe that for language testing purposes teachers must consider the test takers’ language ability within the interactional framework of language use. The language ability involves two components: language competence or language knowledge and strategic competence or metacognitive strategies. The test developed may permit these components to interact within the frame work of language use in a given test task which demands the use of appropriate vocabulary and grammar. According to Larsen Freeman (2003), the exponent of linguistic heuristic principle, language exists through form, meaning and use. “As our principle tells us, with the difference of form comes a difference in meaning”(p. 44). As per her ‘challenge principle’, “It is impossible to separate form from meaning, meaning from use” (p. 45) Though it is possible to focus on any one of these dimensions in classroom for pedagogical reasons, it is true that classroom assessment based on

cognitive and constructive views of learning can provide both students and teachers with understandable information in a form to improve performance. . However, Bachman and Palmer suggest that the test scores can be used to describe levels or profiles of language ability for a variety of research purposes. The diagnostic test being a research instrument to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the engineering students to learn the academic language the cognitive and communicative aspects of language learning were part of its constructs and hence it had the construct validity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The Research questions addressed were as follows:

1. What is the participants' overall proficiency in English as second language?
2. Is it true that the new entrant students lack oral proficiency as they have informed in the questionnaire?
3. How can the students be facilitated to hone the required oral communication skills to meet the demands of the professional education?

METHODOLOGY

The diagnostic test spoken here was the sequence of the pilot study undertaken by the present researcher as a preliminary step to the 'Action Research to Hone Oral Communication Skills of Engineering Students' in Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai "The first step in a teaching process, is the collection of information about learners in order to diagnose the objective needs of the students (Richterich,1972), and it is more so with the action research. Action research is not exploratory in nature rather it is the process of posing the problem and identifying a solution which will give scope for exploring our teaching beliefs. "It is a cyclical process that follows a series of repeated steps like setting a goal, planning an action, to reach this goal, acting on this plan, observing the action, reflecting on the observation and setting the next goal"(Gebhard,1999 p.63). As such the research methodology has included a questionnaire to investigate the interrelationship between the various components of L1 and L2 language proficiency. The pilot study made use of a customised questionnaire (research instrument 1) to investigate the participants' personal factors such as age, and parental factors that usually influence language learning at the early stages and which act as affective filters in Second Language Learning. The next step was to investigate the pattern of learning in the schools (medium of instruction and method of English learning), and then infer the socio political and cultural factors that might have influenced the students. The importance of English in the learner's perspective was to be ascertained. It was a survey research because it was conducted by using questionnaires to collect the data, thoughts and feelings of participants. The descriptive survey method was adopted to scrutinise the responses and explain them" (Rajeswaran, 2015).

The appropriate objective inferences and findings from the pilot study guided the researcher to design a diagnostic test to identify the present proficiency level of the students in terms of what they have learnt in the past and in relation to the demands of the engineering course in which they

have been inducted and most importantly to ascertain the specific area of weakness in their learning and the mode of remediation to rectify it.

Participants

The research was conducted in the undergraduate engineering programme of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai. The participants were sixty five in number. They were from the different states of India and hence heterogeneous by virtue of their mother tongue, culture and tradition. They got admitted to the university after passing plus2 public examinations in Science, Mathematics, and English as second language.

Measuring conceptual skills through diagnostic Test

A diagnostic test was given in the course of the week after the students' induction into the course. The test investigated the class of sixty five to find if there were marked differences in the students' listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities. Though diagnostic tests should not be restricted into time limit, one hour and forty minutes was available for the purpose. It had the following components:

Sl. No.	TASKS	TESTED SKILLS	Marks
1	Dictation	L, W, C	5
2	Expanding the nominal compounds	L, W, C	5
3	Listening comprehension/Recalling the gist of an academic lecture:	L, W, C	5
4	Using a proverb in a context and presenting the write up orally	W, S, C	5+5=10

Each task was allotted five marks, explaining a proverb task was to be written and presented orally; it was allotted ten marks: writing: 5 marks; oral presentation: 5 marks; and hence the total assessment was for twenty five marks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dictation

A dictation test, the oldest form of listening and writing assessment was given to ascertain the cognitive ability of the participants to comprehend the English speech sounds and encode them by letters remembering spelling rules like silent letters, doubling of the consonants, the micro techniques, etc.,. Five words of scientific terms were dictated. Fifty six students could write correct spellings, the remaining nine did not write all the words correctly.

Expanding nominal compounds

To expand nominal compounds one should use appropriate prepositions with an innate common sense to mean the particular object referred to. While expanding them, the use of prepositions will vary depending upon the object and its function in the context. Thirty five students could expand the nominal compounds with appropriate prepositions; eleven students made few mistakes; nineteen students used confused sort of prepositions or no prepositions at all.

Listening comprehension

The students were to be assessed for their ability to listen, recall and write. At the beginning of the diagnostic test, a CD containing a lecture on 'Barriers to Listening' was played (Dutt, K. et al. 2008) and the students were advised to listen carefully to the lecture and take note in order that they could recall the lecture to answer the question asked. Only thirty students could take notes in phrases and write in the chronological order while the rest were not able to take notes and their comprehending ability was too poor to recollect that they remembered only at random.

Using a proverb in a context

Cultures are as different as languages themselves; it is true that many situations are common and universal in any language. So the exercise on proverb was included in the test. As proverbs are intricately intertwined with the common situations in a culture the researcher wanted to ascertain the students' ability to use a proverb of their choice in a context and write the same in a paragraph. The exercise on proverb was given to check not only their rote learning ability but to assess their ability to find the association of such proverbs in their own life and culture that they try to express their meaning in English. It was to check the test takers' retention ability for a long time (long time memory) whether they could recollect a common proverb and use it in the context; whether they were able to write a few grammatically correct sentences in a cohesive order and present the same orally.

The learners orally presented their write-ups. The following may give some idea of the rubrics for assessment.

Table 1: Holistic scoring rubric

Rating	Description
5	Speaks fluently-uses appropriate vocabulary and structure
4	Less fluent- with occasional errors in vocabulary and grammar
3	Speaks with difficulty- has vocabulary- no coherence
2	Speaks in single word utterance- searching for phrases and words
1	Lacks content - keeps silent- looks for prompts-no words- no grammar

The quantitative comments appearing in the form of 1,2,3,4, 5 in each column are indicative of student's oral proficiency in English: 1&2 – below the mark 3- fair 4- good 5 excellent. Further, it is a common assumption that lexical phrases or lexical chunks comprise a considerable part of a person's total vocabulary; probably a native speaker will know thousands of them easily. In a non- native speaker and ESL context though such expectations will not hold, the researcher expected a reasonable output since the proverbs are multiple word units that can easily be retained, recalled, interpreted and used in appropriate context. But, the performance of the students both written and oral showed poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and poor content comprehension; fluency, cohesion and coherence were relegated to insignificance. Yet, although nine students professed to be fluent in English, they could not give a satisfactory oral performance.

Table 2: The number of students and the components that they lacked

components	grammar	vocabulary	content	coherence	fluency
No. of students	35	30	56	56	56

Discussion

As for dictation, the feedback could underpin the reason for poor performance of the nine students as they were from vernacular medium instruction at school. They were not able to comprehend the pronunciation of the words; their listening skill needed practice; moreover, probably test anxiety could have been a barrier that did not permit them to listen to properly. Attaining better pronunciation habits is intimately linked with listening process. Listening instructions at both beginning and intermediate levels of second language proficiency, greatly enhances the language learning potentials of ESL students (Dunkel, 1986; Krashen & Terrel, 1983). Stevick (1976) wrote that in teaching of pronunciation all too often, self-consciousness leads to tension, tension leads to poor performance, poor performance leads to frustration, frustration leads to added tension, and so on around a downward spiral (p.146).

As for listening comprehension, 'Recalling the gist of an academic lecture' it was clear that listening to authentic audio CDs was new to the students. They have not groomed their listening skills to comprehend the spoken language and that too on the audio player. In the communicative approach, honing listening and speaking skills is the most important; they are the primary skills which are receptive and productive in their functions respectively. Listening is an active process of gathering the information passed on as input and the speech production is a multilevel interactive process of meaning creation. Proponents of comprehension approaches recognise the importance of listening in language comprehension, retention of information in memory and acquisition of second language competence. ESL methodologists argue that L2 pronunciation practice needs to be linked with the listening process. With better listening habits, Stevick (1976) assured better recognition of pronunciation for an anxiety free EFL learning. A view of listening comprehension describes comprehension of a speaker's message as the internal reproduction of that message in the listener's mind. So that successful listening produces the meaning much as the speaker intended (Clark & Clark, 1977).

As for expanding nominal compounds, the result that nineteen out of sixty five students used confused sort of prepositions or no prepositions at all showed the students' poor grammar skill and lack of vocabulary knowledge. It proved what Haynes (1993) said about students: they (students) "sometimes made an incorrect guess about what an unknown word meant in a text, and then stuck with that meaning even though it made no sense in the context". Morphology deals with affixes and their derivational effects. Laufer (1997) opines that as long as the derivational affixes are transparent identifying their meaning is easy; if they are not, the meaning is not clear. The researcher has identified the same problem with the noun affixes (nouns affixed before another noun) in the nominal compounds. While expanding them, the use of prepositions will vary depending upon the object and its function in the context. While talking about teaching pragmatically appropriate choices to the students, Freeman (2003) says, "At best all that we can do is call our students' attention to the norms of linguistic usage. ...we can, however, help our

students to become sensitive to differences among forms in general as a way to make them aware of the possible implications of their choice” (p.61). The nominal compounds did not pose much of a problem for many students and it elated the researcher to find that the students had an aptitude oriented towards technology to infer and interpret the meanings.

As for using a proverb in a context, the exercise on proverb was given to check not only their rote learning ability but to assess their ability to find the association of such proverbs in their own life and culture that they try to express their meaning in English. Cultures are as different as languages themselves; it is true that many situations are common and universal in any language. “Proverbs often, have equivalents across languages” (Schmitt, 2008, p.100). So it was assumed that the students will find it an easy exercise. However, the written and oral performance of the students showed poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and poor content comprehension; fluency, cohesion and coherence were relegated to insignificance. Although nine students professed to be fluent in English, they could not give a satisfactory oral performance.

While defining multiword units which comprise phrasal verbs, idioms and proverbs Schmitt says this kind of lexical phrases are common in a language to have functional utility, as such they facilitate clear, relevant and concise language use. They are important for pragmatic competence and communication in general that such lexical phrases are stored in human brain as a single unit of information in order to speed up the processing and use of language. Quoting John Sinclair, Schmitt continues lexical patterning allow variable expressions to have a syntagmatic structure. In this view, lexis and grammar “are combined into a single lexicogrammatical force” (p.113).

The fact that many students could not remember proverbs and find their relevance in some context has confirmed that their rote learning in schools was not conducive for lexical chunking to facilitate multiple storage in the mental lexicon. So, now it is the turn of the university teacher to familiarise the learners with lexical phrases advocating a focus on inducing lexical patterns from language input and also to concentrate on larger lexical phrases rather than individual words. This will help them to learn “the idea of lexical cohesion which is thinking about vocabulary not as discrete words but as interrelated members of cohesive discourse” (p.113); this kind of notion will be useful for students to organise ideas in academic writing and in oral discourses.

As for the assessment of students’ oral performance the components for the evaluation included content, language and delivery. The criteria need not be rigid but may accommodate the proficiency level of the class and the instructional goal (Gonzalez Pino, 1988). In a large class of students speaking different languages and no way near the zone of proximal development, pronunciation and accuracy were not stressed. Pronunciation is of least importance, only intelligibility is necessary in the non-native speaker to non-native speaker interaction context (Patil, 2007). Negotiation of meaning between non-native speaker students of English of different linguistic background stresses the importance of the co-operative nature of lingua franca communication. Since English is the lingua franca within the university campus and outside it, the non-native hybrid English is accepted as long as it is intelligible and comprehensible. The overall interpretation of the oral delivery was that the students were not fluent in speaking in

English. They were least motivated and were anxiety ridden that they were not ready to speak in English in front of their teacher and peers.

The assessment involved a detailed investigation method of scoring oral L2 performance and the interrelationship with the delivery of the content. This type of assessment gave insight into the overall weakness in their language learning. The pattern of their narrating had inflectional errors. Struggling to read what they themselves had written in English, for the reason that they were not sure of their sentence structure and their own handwriting was not helpful for reading in public under the pressure of language anxiety; hence their oral presentation was poor. Many of them used their mother tongue to explain and looked for prompting, which indicated that their vocabulary repertoire was not adequate to help their communication. It was observed that the students could write in English and they were not anxiety ridden to write but to speak in English. The most obvious problem in their learning was not having appropriate cognitive and metacognitive skills to sustain oral communication. The diagnostic test confirmed participants lacked oral communication.

Why role plays to enhance communication skills?

The literature available on various language learning strategies extrapolate that within the communicative approach, role plays can help the students to realise their communication goal. Though they are not cognitively demanding they give opportunity for the learners to use their cognitive and metacognitive skills to handle the language with confidence; they also help the students to shed off their inhibitions and language anxiety as the latter practice real world activities and academic functions.

Role plays can be used to express any content depending on the students' knowledge gained either from incidental reading or listening to teacher's introduction on certain topics for discussion or the situation for which the dialogues are created. The activity gives the students practice to think and speak without the strain of memorising. Role plays introduce the students to the socio cultural variations in speech acts, pragmatic aspect of the language such as requests and complaining, and discourse competence of coherence and cohesion. Students learn to understand the situation and appropriate linguistic choices made in the dialogue; at certain contexts teacher's introduction of prototypical phrases are also helpful.

It was decided that the students could present scripted role plays because as they wrote they could find the grammatical errors and rewrite taking the help of the teacher. The scripted role plays will help the teacher monitor the activity and the dialogues would not go out of her control (Alden, 1999). It was also identified that technology aided practices such as viewing authentic video would circumvent the tedious process of modelling and would inspire self-confidence (Terrell, 1993), and repeated watching and listening to the videoed drama, soap opera etc., could help the students to reflect and improve their language ability. Weyers (1999) proved that the increase in the quantity and quality of input provided by the authentic video would result in enhanced oral production of the second language learners.

Anne Lazaraton (2001) feels EFL teachers who teach a heterogeneous (by native language and ethnicity) class of learners in non- English speaking environment, against the odds of large classes which deny them freedom to throw opportunity to provide feedback to the learners, also equally lack the motivation and opportunity to talk. So she suggests, “EFL teachers need to be particularly adept at organising class activities that are authentic, motivating, and varied. The use of authentic, engaging materials should be the basis for in class activities. If the necessary technology is available, showing movies, or recorded television programs and playing audio tapes of programs can be enjoyable for students and can provide them with authentic practice in listening to native speakers’ speech”(p.110).

Recording their pair performance of role plays will help them to identify their errors in role play performance and rectify them in repeated performance till they were satisfied of their performance. The process oriented approach with in the frame work of constructivist theories of language acquisition, self-observation and reflection help the learners to evaluate their L2speaking performance and adopt appropriate learning strategy to enhance the same (Castaneda & Gonzalez, 2011); task repetition (repeated role play performances) will direct learner attention and focus on form (Hawkes, 2010), which is essential for handling academic language. Bygate (1996) opines improved performance in a repeat task will enhance students’ grammar skills and lexis.

Gaining experience in oral communication by performing role plays as participants, the students can manage any situation demanding communication in English within the university and in the real world outside the university. “Role play is a classroom activity which gives the student the opportunity to practice the language, the aspects of role behaviour, and the actual roles he may need outside the classroom” (Livingstone, 1983, p.6). The interactive classes and the students’ participation in role play activities will help the students to hone their oral communication skills. As they shed off their fear and shyness, their confidence level increases (Saint Leger 2009), they will come to realise the recent global demand for people with communication skills in English. Indians, particularly students have come to realise the vanity of denying English its rightful place in academic and official language functions. This social awakening can definitely lead the enlightened engineering students to enhance their oral communication skills.

CONCLUSION

In the context of teaching the first year engineering students who are in the age group of seventeen years to twenty years the present research identifies them as young adults. The literatures pertaining to the adult learners consider them as ‘self- directed learners’ (Hills & Sutton (2001). Wenden (2002) says Self –directed language learners (SDLL) choose their learning strategies in accordance to their needs and beliefs; those who believe in learning language opt for cognitive strategies like memorization, rote learning and intensive reading to familiarise with vocabulary and structural aspects of the target language; but those whose priority is using the language pay more attention to communicative strategies. Holec (1981: p.16) says that a self-directed adult learner, adjusts his learning rhythm to his acquisition rhythm as he monitors the process of his learning which is aimed at certain specific outcome. Ultimately, the

learner evaluates at the end of a learning project to check whether the selected means of learning contributed to the desired objective.

Brown et al (1983) and Naiman et al (1978) have documented elaborately the use of learning strategies by young children, adolescents and adults to shed light on the effective learning strategies that could provide teachers guidance in improving the learning skills of low proficient language learners. As adult learners the engineering students analysed the diagnostic test feedback themselves to recognise their weakness in oral communication. They could underpin the gap between their language ability and the actual requirement in the context of studying a professional course. In such a context introducing them to a communication enhancing strategy like technology integrated role play activities will help them gain language attainment by taking an active part in actual communication. By practicing role plays they will learn interpersonal communication and academic language function for professional lineage.

It is worth mentioning the opinion of Dornyei (1995) on teaching communication strategies (CS). He says “raising learner awareness about the nature and communicative potential of CSs, encouraging students to be willing to take risks and use CSs, providing L2 (second language) models of the use of certain CSs And providing opportunities for practice in CS use will provide them a sense of security in the L2 by allowing them room to manoeuvre in times of difficulty...learners may decide to try and remain in the conversation and achieve their communicative goal. Providing learners help towards accomplishing this is, I believe, a worthy objective of communicative language instruction” (ibid.: pp. 80).

Scope and limitations of the study

In view of the findings and their usefulness in planning and designing further course of the action research, the researcher feels such customised diagnostic tests may be conducted for the benefit of student community. However, it is true that the pilot study and the diagnostic test were limited to a limited number of first year B.Tech. students of Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute University in Chennai.

REFERENCES

- AERA, (1999). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. American Educational and Research Association. Washington DC.
- Alden. D, (1999). Experience with Scripted Role Play in Environmental Economics. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 30 (2), 127-132. retrieved from jstor.org/stable/1183266
- Alderson, J. C. (2005). *Diagnosing foreign language proficiency: the interface between learning and assessment*. London: Continuum.
- Lazaraton, A. (2001). Teaching Oral Skills. In Celce –Murcia Marianne (ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 3rd edition. Heinle& Heinle: Thomson Learning.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A.S. (1996). *Language Testing in Practice: Designing and Developing Useful Language Tests*, Oxford New York: Oxford University Press.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and Classroom Learning. *Assessment in Education*, 5(1), pp.7-74.

- Brown, A., Bransford, J. D., Ferrara, R., & Campione, J. C. (1983). Learning, Remembering and Understanding. In J. H. Flavell and E.M. Markman (eds.) *Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology*: Vol.1 New York: Wiley.
- Brown, J. D., & Hudson, T. (2002). *Criterion-referenced Language Testing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Castañeda, M. and González, E. R. (2011) L2 Speaking Self-ability Perceptions through Multiple Video Speech Drafts. *Hispania*, 94 (3), 483-501
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23032122>
- Clark, R., & Clark, A. (1977). *Psychology and language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich.
- Davidson, F., & Lynch, B. K. (2002). *Test craft: A teacher's guide to writing and using language test specifications*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. (1995). On the Teach ability of Communication Strategies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29 (1), 55-85 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/358788805>
- Dunkel, P. A. (1986). Developing listening fluency in L2: Theoretical principles and pedagogical considerations. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2) 99- 106.
- Dutt, K, Rajeevan. G., & Prakash, C. L. N. (2008). *A Course in Communication Skills*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Gebhard, J.G., & Oprandy, R. (1999). The process of exploration. In J. C. Richards (Ed.) *Language Teaching Awareness: A guide to exploring beliefs and practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gonzalez Pino, B. (1988). Testing Second Language Speaking: Practical Approaches to oral testing in large classes. In *Proceedings of the Northeast Conference of Teachers of Foreign Languages*, New York.
- Haynes, M. (1993). Patterns and perils of guessing in second language reading. In T. Huckin, M. Haynes, & J. Coady (Eds.) *Second language reading and vocabulary learning* (pp. 46-65). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Hawke, M. L. (2011) Using task repetition to direct learner attention and focus on form. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 94 (3), 326-336. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccr059
- Hedge. T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Henning, G. (1987). *A Guide to Language Testing*. Cambridge, Mass: Newbury House.
- Hills, S., & Sutton, A. (2001). Teaching Adults. In Celce –Murcia Marianne (ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 3rd edition. Heinle & Heinle: Thomson Learning.
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Oxford : Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S., & Terrell, T. (1983). *The Natural Approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Alemany Press.
- Laufer, B. (1997). What is in a word that makes it hard or easy: Some intralexical factors that affect the learning of words. In N. Schmitt & McCarthy (Eds.) *Vocabulary: Description, acquisition, and pedagogy* (pp.140-155). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Linn, R. L., & Gronlund, N. E. (2000). *Measurement and Assessment in Teaching* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Livingstone, C. (1983). *Role Play in Language Learning*. Harlow: Longman House.
- Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Mislevy, R. J., Steinberg, L. S., & Almond, R. G. (2003). On the structure of educational assessments, measurement. *Interdisciplinary Research and Perspectives*, 1, 3–67.
- Naiman, N., M. Frohlich, M., Stern, H. H., & Todesco, A. (1978). *The Good Language Learner*. Ontario: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *The Learner-Centred Curriculum: A study in second language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Pierce, L. V. (1996). *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners: Practical Approaches for Teachers*. USA: Addison and Wesley Publishing Company.
- Patil, Z. N. (2007). On the Nature and Role of English in Asia. *Journal of English as an International Language: Vol.1* 25-44.
- Pellegrino, J. W., Chudowsky, N., & Glaser, R. (2001). *Knowing what students know: The science and design of educational assessment*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Rajeswaran, M.C. (2015) Action Research to Hone Oral Communication Skills of Engineering Students. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistic World. Vol. 9 (1)* 158-168.
- Richerich, R. (1972) *A Model for the Definition of Language Needs*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Saint Leger, Diane de. (2009). Self-assessment of Speaking Skills and Participation in a Foreign Language Class. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42(1), 158-78.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Vocabulary in Discourse. In J. C. Richards (Ed.) *Vocabulary in language teaching*. (pp.96-115). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sewell, J. (2004). Diagnostic Assessment within the Skills for Life Strategy. Paper presented at the *Conference of the International Association for Educational Assessment, Philadelphia, June 2004*
- Shepard, L. A. (2000). The Role of Assessment in a Learning Culture. *Educational Researcher*, 29 (7), 4-14.
- Stevick, E. W. (1976). *Memory, Meaning and Method*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- Terrell, T. (1993). Comprehensible input for intermediate foreign language students via video. *IALL Journal of Language Learning Technologies*, 26, (2), 17- 23 ERIC No.: EJ462670
- Ur, Penny. (1991). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenden. A. L. (2002). Learner Development in Language Learning. *Applied Linguistics: Vol. 23, (1)*. pp. 32-55. doi: 10.1093/applin/23.1.32.
- Weyers, J. (1999). The Effect of Authentic Video on Communicative Competence. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83, iii. 0026- 7902/99/339-349
- Zhao, Z. B. (2013). An Overview of Studies on Diagnostic Testing and its Implications for the Development of Diagnostic Speaking Test. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 3 (1), 41-45 URL: [http:// dx. doi.org/10.5539](http://dx.doi.org/10.5539)

APPENDIX I

Research Instrument: 1

DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. Dictation words

(1X5= 5)

a. habitual b. sufficient c. detonate d. catalysis e. corrosive

2. Expand the following nominal compounds (1x5=5)

- a. Machine operator b. Circuit diagram c. Petroleum products
d. Water source e. Space travel

3. Take notes from what you listen to: (5)

Barriers to Listening (CD)

I'm sure all of you have come across people who are poor listeners and also some who are good listeners. If the person you are talking to is not listening to you actively, you do not feel encouraged to continue the conversation any further. So, it's important that you listen attentively to the person who is talking to you. This is very important when you are a student or when you are at work. To be an active listener, you must do several things.

First, look into the eyes of the person talking to you. Yes, make eye contact with that person. We communicate more through our eyes than through spoken words. That is why you find it difficult to communicate with a person who is wearing dark glasses because you miss the communication through the eyes.

Listening is not a passive activity. You communicate through gestures and facial expression. Such non-verbal communication can be helpful to the speaker. A stony, expressionless face can be very discouraging to the speaker. So, to be an active listener, learn to communicate through, gestures and facial expressions. If you're surprised, show surprise. If you're happy, smile. If you do not agree with what the other person says, signal your disagreement.

Thirdly, you must show your enthusiasm for what the speaker is saying. Your posture communicates your enthusiasm. If you sit back relaxed, you show disinterest. If you're an active listener, you should sit leaning forward and not backward. Finally, learn to respond to the speaker's words. Use responses such as ...mm..., ok, all right, perhaps, certainly, no, not at all, yes, very well, etc. Such responses help the speaker to understand whether you are with him or her.

The first thing to remember is that nobody is born a poor listener. There are many factors that lead to poor listening. The first reason for poor listening could be that the listener is not interested in the subject or the topic being discussed. In such cases, the listener does not make an effort to listen to and understand the content. As a result, he or she does not understand what the speaker is talking about. If you're not interested in history, you may not listen attentively to lectures on history.

Some listeners are partial listeners. They do not listen fully to the speaker's words. Again, this results in inadequate understanding. So, the second factor may be partial listening.

Some speakers speak very fast. Have you had an occasion when you found it difficult to understand someone because he or she was speaking too fast? That's the third factor – fast pace of delivery by the speaker. After listening to the speaker for a while, if you realize that you are not able to cope with the pace, you give up and stop listening. This can happen in classroom lectures. So, remember to speak at a pace at which the listener is comfortable.

Let's now talk about a fourth factor. What do you do when you do not understand what the speaker says? If you remain quiet or pretend that you have understood, you are making a mistake. Your failure to ask for clarifications can cause inadequate comprehension. It's interesting to learn why people don't ask for repetitions or clarifications. Some are shy, so they don't ask questions. Some do not have the chance to ask for a repetition because the speaker speaks continuously. Some do not ask questions or voice their doubts because they are unsure of their language competence. In all these cases, the listener stands to lose. So, do not make the mistake of not asking questions or seeking clarification.

Let me now talk about a fifth barrier to listening. Sometimes, the physical environment around you can make listening difficult. If there is too much external noise it can affect listening. Listen to this person who is standing in the middle of the street and is struggling to listen to the speaker.

A : I can barely hear you.

B : What I want you to do is ...

C : I can't hear you. I 'll call you back in 20 minutes.

You experience similar difficulty when there is loud music or loud noise from a machine.

Lastly, you can be a poor listener if you are engaged in other activities while listening to someone. You would have seen people doing other things while talking on the phone. Some continue reading the mail on the

computer, while some others continue watching television while talking to someone on the phone. In both cases, their attention is divided between the two activities they are involved in. This hampers their listening. Listen to a conversation where a man is working on the computer and listening to someone on the phone.

A : We should be able to deliver the goods on time as long as you assure us of payments on time.

B : Yes, yes.

A : Excellent. I will see that the goods are delivered today. Can I assume that your cheque will reach us in a week?

B : Yes. No, no, no. What did you say?

Let me sum up what we have discussed so far. To be good listener, you must do five things. Firstly, show interest in what the speaker is talking about. Secondly, listen fully, not partially. Partial listening leads to partial understanding. Thirdly, ask for clarifications. If you have not understood the speaker because he's too fast or because of any other reason, do not hesitate to ask for repetition or further explanation. Fourthly, avoid speaking or listening in a noisy environment. Finally, avoid doing something else while you're speaking to someone. If your attention is divided, it will hamper your listening severely.

Answer the following question: How can you be a good listener?

4. Explain a proverb in a context and present your write-up orally. (10)

EXPLORING CONTRIBUTIONS OF REFLECTIVE DISCUSSIONS TO EFL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Reza Biria

Assistant Professor, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan)

Fariba Haghighi Irani

Ph.D Candidate in TEFL, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan (Khorasgan)

ABSTRACT

Teachers' professional identity formation is one of the most significant aspects of teacher education program. Research suggests that teacher identity construction can be enhanced in different ways. One such way is conducting reflective discussions in teacher education programs to help teachers to teach thoughtfully and professionally. Due to the lack of extensive research in this particular area in the context of Iran, this study is intended to explore how incorporating reflective discussions into pre-service teacher education programs can help to develop student teachers' professional identity. Following this, ten Iranian student teachers (three males and seven females) attended a training program at a higher education institute in Tehran for 240 hours, five hours per week. After observing each sample teaching, either done by their peers or shown in video clips, the participants critically analyzed and discussed different aspects of the teachers' performance. The student teachers participated in an interview and wrote two reflective journals, at the end of each phase of the program, focusing on their teaching beliefs and identities. In addition to the recorded discussions and reflective journals, the teacher educator conducted a focus group session where the student teachers shared their ideas about the training program. The content analysis of the data supported the idea that reflective discussions affect the growth of pre-service teachers' professional identity. Finally, a cyclical model for conducting a systematic reflective discussion in teacher training programs is provided. Teacher educators and teacher education curriculum developers benefit from the findings in developing appropriate activities for teacher training courses and encouraging pre-service teachers in shaping their teacher identity.

KEYWORDS: *Reflective discussions, Professional identity, Teacher Training Course (TTC), Teacher identity construction, EFL pre-service teachers*

INTRODUCTION

The significance of contributing different techniques to teacher training courses (TTC) and enhancing language teachers' self-confidence to construct their role as a teacher has been discussed in various ways in the field of teacher education program (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Gee, 2000; Cattley, 2007; Maclean & white, 2007; Townsend & Bates, 2007; Trent, 2010; Ghasedi, 2013). However, the need for closer attention and more exploration on the process of the

transition from student teacher to teacher has been emphasized (Izadinia, 2013). Teacher educators like Walkington (2005) advise dedicating sufficient time to empower the ability of decision-making and judgment in pre-service teachers to encourage the teacher identity formation in teacher training courses. They believe that the process of identification and personification of the teacher's professional role is a complex phenomenon which grows by active participation in tasks like talking about their beliefs and ideas to develop the ability to judge the strength and weaknesses of their own and their peers' performance. Incorporating variety of reflective activities such as autobiographical stories, reflective journals, autoethnographic narratives, reading group forum to teacher education courses (Estola, 2003; Webb, 2005; Cattley, 2007; Maclean & White, 2007; Vavrus, 2009; Sutherland *et al*, 2010) reveals the significant role of reflective practices in the formation of teacher identity, as it is widely regarded they increase the teachers' self-confidence and empower their judgment ability. To shape a sense of self-awareness, beginner teachers need to professionally think themselves as teachers through a series of continually practicing activities during pre-service training career. Observations, role plays, readings, and performances would not be effective only through performing, knowing, and reading about teaching techniques (Wenger, 1998). Moreover, simply recording the classroom events can be misleading (Tomlinson, 2013).

While there have been plenty of reports on the studies of teachers' identity formation, implementing a systematic model for reflective discussions as part of the teacher training course materials has been lacking. Additionally, studies seldom have discussed on using appropriate pedagogical tools or specific activities leading to the emergence of teachers' professional identity in TTC programs. Further, the literature suggests that research on identity formation is absent in underdeveloped and developing countries (Izadinia, 2013) to the extent that it is called to a particular attention of researchers to focus on student teachers' identity in other contexts including Iran.

The present research aims to discover how Iranian pre-service teachers' professional identity is constructed through incorporating reflective discussions into the TTC program. Then, it will answer the question of what other particular activities can influence such a process and the implications of the findings on student teachers, teacher educators, and teacher education curriculum and materials developers will be discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional identity construction

Becoming a teacher requires the development of a professional identity and the construction of a special kind of self-image (Feiman-Neimser, 2000, in Wanzare, 2007) involving the transition from pre-service to in-service training in the profession of teaching (Wanzare, 2007, p. 343). While teacher's professional identity has been interpreted in multiple ways (Bijaard *et al.*, 2004; Cattley, 2007; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2010), it has been commonly defined as a continual and complex process (Cattley, 2007; Maclean & White, 2007; Izadinia, 2013) that is developed during the training career and grows under the influence of a variety of internal and external variables including social (e.g. context), affective (e.g. attitude), and cognitive (e.g.

prior experience) factors (Samuel & Stephens, 2000; Findlay, 2006; Olsen, 2008; Cook, 2009). Professional identity of a teacher emerges at a point when the student teacher is involved in the training activities; develops and changes, and gradually is formed as a professional image of the self that never fixed. This is why some scholars such as Izadinia (2013), in a review, finds no clear definition of the teacher identity across the literature and states that “identity” is not predetermined and stable, but it is shaped and reshaped during a process of active learning and practicing to teach. On the other hand, it is a process of transition from personal goals and dreams to professional accountability in a shape of a new self. Due to the strange nature of the professional identity of teachers, other notions like “openness to change”, “vulnerability”, “uncertainty”, and “fluidity” have been attributed to the image of self as a teacher (Cattley, 2007).

Given the significant role of student teachers as professional teachers, Bejaard et al. (2004) identified four characteristics of a teachers’ professional identity. Bejaard believes that a person’s identity and specifically professional identity is not a fixed entity, it is formed as a result of the interaction between the person and her/his context. He states that sub-identities such as teachers’ prior knowledge and beliefs are unique to individual teachers. Then, if the idea of individualized sub-identities happens to be true, it may increase the complexity of teachers’ identity and the teacher training programs. On the underlying factors and components contributing to teacher identity formation, Tajeddin and Khodarahmi (2013) found some more factors such as the role of self-efficacy, self-regulated professional development, and intrinsic job motivation in shaping EFL teachers’ professional identity. Having a better understanding of these features and the factors involved in the formation of teachers’ identity, for instance, context, motivation, and prior experiences are highly recommended as prompts that facilitate the process of the identity construction (Larsen & Phillips, 2005; Findlay, 2006; Schepens et al., 2009; Olsen, 2008).

Reflective discussions as a pedagogical tool

Reflection is defined as a special form of thought (Kremer-Hayton, 1988; Hatton & Smith, 1995) and *reflective teachers* is illustrated as “those who construct meaning from their work by monitoring, analyzing, and modifying their behavior according to their actions.” (Costa & Kallick, 2000). This idea is mainly directed to the active role of the student teachers in relation to their context of learning and teaching. They are called reflective practitioners (Abednia, 2012) and transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 1992) as their dynamic construct is transforming from teachers’ initial beliefs and expectations of professional identity during a reflective teacher education course. Since the reflective behavior of teachers is difficult to analyze, most evidence of reflective activities are documented through some of the written works such as journals, essays, and narratives (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Loughran, 1996; Lee, 2000; Geyer, 2008).

A pioneering scholar in reflective studies, Schön (1983) emphasized using reflective activities as a tool in professional developments in order to stabilize teaching practices in the early stages of teacher training courses and in his paper (1987, p. 31), defined “Reflection-in-action” as “a reflective conversation with the materials of a situation”. Following Schon, reflection and discussion happened to play a key role in a rich description of classroom activity and in the process of teacher development by other scholars (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Tomlinson,

2013). In the same line, Sherry and Gibson (2002, in Wanzare, 2007) used reflection and discussion with mentors and between peers about action research outcomes in their model of effective strategies for the stages of promoting learning in teachers. In another study, Tapline, et al. (2007) argued that “through observing their peers conducting demonstration lessons and through engaging in reflective discussions about these lessons and their attempts, in general, teachers were able to provide a great source of support and inspiration to each other (p. 533).”

Given the above-mentioned ideas, the literature suggests that over the past decades, reflective activities as pedagogical tools have been implemented to explore the process of pre-service teachers' identity construction. For instance, Webb (2005), Maclean and White (2007), and Sutherland et al. (2010) found “reflective research group” as a powerful process for debriefing and finding commonalities and “video reflection cycle” as an appropriate tool for shaping student teachers' identities. Also, “online-seminar groups” appeared as an effective technique in making changes in student teachers' cognitive and professional stance. Some other reflective activities such as reflective journals (Loughran, 1996; Weber & Mitchell, 1996; Walkington, 2005; Cattley, 2007; Poulou, 2007), autobiographical stories and autoethnographic narratives (Estola, 2003; Vavrus, 2009), and portfolios (Chitpin & Simon, 2009; Antonek et al., 1997) are documented as promising reflective pedagogical tools in the formation of student teachers' professional identity through reflection on their own teaching practices. Similarly, Loughran (1996) supports using reflective practices as a teaching tool and highlights the need to be reflective in teaching careers. He suggests “journal writing” as an encouraging tool for student teachers to reflect upon their own practices and experiences. In support of Loughran, Fletcher (1997) considers reflective activities as an “explicit analysis of practice” and mentions that “Explicit analysis of practice can be a valuable tool in learning to teach” (p. 242).

According to studies, Tomlinson (2013) argues that the teacher-learners need to know the reason of applying some activities in class and suggests observing peers and discussing the scenes they have observed. Therefore, it can be concluded that for thinking and discussing reflectively, teacher educators need to develop intellectual skills in pre-service teachers. In other words, it can be inferred that in the process of teachers' professional identity formation, cognitive and intellectual skills should be developed in parallel to teaching skills. Taken the above-mentioned definitions, the *reflective discussion* is generally understood to mean discussing purposefully and intellectually through monitoring and analyzing the intended activity. All the studies show that reflective discussions can be used as an effective pedagogical tool in teacher education and as a powerful stimulus to the student teachers' professional identity growth.

Teacher education program and teachers' professional identity

Teacher education is considered as an important step and a focal point in developing intellectual and reflective teachers and it is defined as “the art and science of educating focusing on the relationship between learning and teaching such that one does not exist as distinct from the other” (Loughran, 2006, p. 2). How can the teacher education program help shaping the teachers' professional identity? “Teaching is a highly complex series of acts that cannot be learned easily and cannot be done by formula or recipe” (Huling-Austin et al., 1989). In other words, teaching is not simply acquiring a prepackage of knowledge, but constructing and reconstructing a certain

concept of professional image in a given context. It is appeared to say that teacher education acts as a bridge to link the initial entry of identity to professional identity and subsequent long-term learning. Huling-Austin (1990) mentions the continuum role of teacher education and describes it as “a continuum extending from pre-service through induction into teaching to ongoing in-service and career-long development” (Townsend & Bates, 2007, p. 359). Abednia (2012) also considers professional identity as the major outcome of teacher education and argues that the ways through which this process progresses and is shaped are influenced by teachers’ perception about both themselves and their students.

Supporting the above-mentioned ideas and sociocultural point of view, teachers’ cognition appears to be a “socially situated” activity and the process of teachers’ learning is considered to be a “socially negotiated” practice (Geyer, 2008, p. 628). In other words, teachers learn through practice in different contexts rather than through mere training programs. Similarly, Abednia (2012) highlights the critical role of context in teacher education in relation to constructivist approach and claims that the preliminary step in learning to teach is passing through the process of constructing professional identity rather than acquiring knowledge. He calls for more studies on the critical TESOL teacher education and believes that in Iran, teacher education “excludes the teachers’ voices and beliefs to a greater extent” (p. 707). Activity theory acknowledges social settings as an important factor in human development (Smagorinsky et al., 2004). Although, some other scholars found some tensions in teachers’ identity as a result of contextual changes such as the structure of the workplace and the relationship with colleagues (Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Findlay, 2006) and value the contextual factors on the formation of teachers’ identity. Given the fact that teacher education is the initial context of the emergence of teachers’ professional identity, turning a considerable attention to the design and contents of the teacher education leads to deeper understanding of positive and negative factors influencing teachers’ identity.

The evidence presented in this section suggests that professionalism, in general, and teachers’ professional identity in particular, is a dynamic process that can be facilitated initially through the stages of development, change, and becoming by incorporating pedagogical instruments to teacher education programs.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study is directed to answer the following questions:

1. How participation in reflective discussions with a group of Iranian pre-service teachers shape their professional identity as teachers?
2. What are the factors influencing the development of teachers’ professional identity?

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in a 240-hour teacher education program at a higher education institute in Tehran. The content of the course was selected according to a syllabus from the

Ministry of Education with minor modifications to the materials by the teacher educator to tailoring the course to the needs of the candidates. The course was in two phases. The first one allocated to the theoretical issues of language teaching and the second phase was a sort of integrating theory into practice. As part of the class activities of phase one, student teachers were supposed to watch videos on different teaching methods, analyze their teaching techniques, discuss reflectively, and make comments. Collectively, ten videos on language teaching methods were presented during five months in the phase one. As part of the class activities of the second phase, student teachers were required to role play teaching different language skills and components they learned through the course materials and critically discuss on their peers' and self performances. The purpose of selecting reflective discussions as a pedagogical tool is for the pre-service teachers can believe in themselves as teachers, be able to judge their own as well as peers' teaching, and grow purposefully and professionally. At the starting session of reflective discussions, the teacher educator asked questions after videos and performances as prompts and introduced the task in a systematic way. Accordingly, the student teachers, in pairs, first described the whole classroom events in videos or the performances, analyzed the techniques used by the presenter, discussed on their strong and weak points, and made comments. Leaving comments was in response to the question of "*If you were the teacher of the presented classroom, how would you conduct that criticized part of the teaching?*". A systematic model is presented as it is learned that some of the student teachers may remain baffled at the initial stages of reflective discussions or in Loughran's (1996) words "thinking aloud". Then, the educator provided them with some clear guidelines for avoiding the same problem.

The class met once a week for five hours, lasted for ten months and all student teachers had an equal chance to discuss critically and make comments on the teaching performance. The teacher educator gave feedback and necessary guidelines for each comment to finalize the discussion. The design of the study is presented through a schematic representation in figure 1:

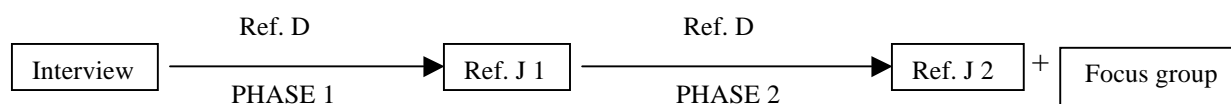


Figure 1: The schematic representation of the research design

Participants

The participants of the present study who were from different university disciplines and degrees were ten Iranian pre-service teachers comprised of three males and seven females enrolled in a ten-month teacher training program certified by the Ministry of Higher Education in Tehran. They were upper-intermediate to advanced level of English proficiency according to a placement test that was made through the English department as an initial requirement of the course. Only one of the candidates had taught in private classes before starting this course and others didn't have any experience of teaching. They were selected through convenience sampling (Best and Kahn, 2006; Farhady, 1995) where the researcher as a teacher educator was conducting the teacher training courses. It should be mentioned that in this study, the researcher is the same as the teacher educator and the names used for the participants are pseudonyms.

Materials

Reflective journals have proved four advantages as fostering self-awareness, constructing and expanding personal understanding, developing reflection and reasoning skills, and engaging in dialog with the teacher educator and peers (Abednia, 2013). To improve the use of reflective discussions (Ref. D), the research instruments are comprised of two reflective journals (Ref. J) at the end of each phase were collected and one focus group discussion at the end of the course was conducted. In addition, to know about the student teachers' initial motivation and their impression about the first day of the course, an initial interview was conducted at the end of the first day of the course asking two questions: *Why have you registered for this course? What is your impression about the first day of the course?*

Data Collection Procedures

To explore how pre-service teachers' professional identity is formed through contributing reflective discussions to teacher education program, after each video presentation, student teachers participated in a systematic reflective discussion. To help them go through the process of discussions and avoid confusing about how to start and how to proceed the discussions, the teacher educator gave them clear structured instruction on systematically passing through the stages of: 1- "*Describe*", that is describing the whole event, 2- "*Analyze*", that is identifying the teaching methodology and techniques, 3- "*Discuss*", that is discussing on different aspects of the teaching methodology, and 4- "*Reflect and Comment*", that is summing up the points discussed in the previous stage and suggesting constructive ways of improvement in response to the question of: "*If you were the teacher of this class, how would you manage the class events or how would you improve the poor section of the class?*". In phase two, as one of the course activities, the student teachers role-played teaching skills and techniques and after each performance, either their classmates' or their own performance, they went through the same systematic procedures of reflective discussions as they did in the first phase. The research instruments were two reflective journals and one focus group session. At the end of the first day of the course, the teacher trainees were asked to answer two interview questions: *Why did they register for this course? And what was their first impression regarding the class events?* The purpose of asking such questions was to learn about their purpose, expectations of the course, motivation, and their initial impression about the class before going through the stages of the study. The first reflective journal was collected on the last day of the first phase, including five questions and the second one at the end of the second phase consisting of six questions. The questions focused on student teachers' beliefs about the course activities and their own identity formation. Three of the questions in the first journal were also asked in a different form in the second one in order to explore the transition process of becoming a teacher and the construction of teachers' professional identity. Enhancing the efficiency of the study, the teacher educator, conducted a focus group session where the participants shared their ideas about the whole program, the materials and the techniques used, at the end of the second phase that is the end of the program.

Data analysis

The data were subjected to a thematic process (Moustakas, 1990) and were conducted in two stages. Initially, to have a background information before starting the training period, the participants' answers to the first two interview questions were analyzed based on two themes: 1- their motivation to register for the course; 2- their first impression of the first day class events.

Then, the questions of the two following reflective journals and the focus group were categorized under two main themes of “the effectiveness of reflective discussions” and “the formation of their teacher identity”; the answers were analyzed separately for each, and compared in terms of the content (Weber, 1990) to explore the changes upon the student teachers’ identity formation over time.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

As the purpose of the present study was examining the process of student teachers’ professional identity construction throughout a teacher training course contributing reflective discussions, only the two reflective journals, and the focus group were analyzed and the reflective discussions were taken as a pedagogical tool to facilitate the process of identity formation and the first interview at the beginning of the course was regarded as a background information before going through the two phases of the program. Therefore, the data collected from three sources after each phase of the program were read over and over, analyzed upon the participants’ ideas on the two main themes of the “*effectiveness of reflective discussions*” and their “*identity formation*”, and themes were identified accordingly and separately.

Cattley (2007) proposes that applying frameworks to the analysis of data can help the researcher to determine indicators of professional identity. Given that such a framework will facilitate the identification of teachers’ professional identity formation, the researcher used content analysis on a model which was comprised of integrating Fund et al.’s (2002) multi-dimensional classification scheme with Sutherland et al.’s (2010) professional model (Table 1). According to the defined items, the questions and answers of reflective journals and the focus group were subjected to be categorized as *Identifying*, *Analyzing*, *Critical Evaluating*, and *Problem Solving*, to investigate the changes in the cognitive process and the development of teachers’ professional identity over time. The table was designed into two columns: *Theoretical and Linkage*. *Theoretical* introduces the nature of the evaluation category, and the linkage describes the application of the theoretical aspect in the research steps.

Table 1: Professional focus model: description of categories

Categories	Theoretical	Linkage
Identification	Discusses an issue and/or experience from personal/theoretical perspective.	Discusses classroom techniques. Teacher identity is present, but not prominent.
Analysis	Identifies contributing personal beliefs/reactions and discusses relationships between these to issue and/or experience.	Examines the interaction between personal belief/reaction to issue and/or experience and relevant educational concept. Implications on the efficiency of reflective discussions.
Critical Evaluation	Evaluates reactions to the issue and/or experience in terms of their personal beliefs about teaching/learning.	Evaluates/reconsiders their beliefs/reactions using relevant educational concept. Evaluating the course activities.
Problem Solving	Discusses the possible solutions or identifies possible course of actions from the personal perspective.	Discuss possible solutions or courses of action justified by reference to relevant educational concepts. Suggestions for improving the course.

First, the interview with the participants was recorded and analyzed to save a record of their initial motivation for becoming a teacher and initial impression before starting the course.

Interview

The interview about student teachers' motivation and their first impression of the course was recorded and transcribed for the analysis. The results indicated that they, unanimously, loved the profession of teaching and all of them had a positive impression about the starting session of the term. Almost all of them claimed not having any previous experience of teaching before joining the program. The followings are some examples: (all the names are pseudonyms.)

I don't have any experience of teaching, but I love teaching English. (Shirin)

The subject of teaching is completely new to me. I like teaching English and learning about modern technologies and methodologies in language teaching. (Baran)

I like to learn how to teach and I like to teach besides my professional major. (Dina)

Since it was the first session and they didn't have any idea about the contents of the course, some signs of the low self-confidence were recognized on four of them.

I have an old dream of teaching English. I want to be a trained teacher and learn its methods, however, I'm worried about being a good teacher. At the end of this session, I felt that I can be a good teacher with your help. (Arash)

I love teaching, but I don't know whether I can be a qualified teacher. At the end of this session, now I feel that the course would be satisfied and effective. (Sina)

I was not sure to be a teacher because I was afraid of not being able to manage the activities. This session made my heart full of joy in a way that now I feel I can be a good teacher at the end of the program. (Tina)

Becoming an English teacher has been my childhood dream. This session was really good, however, a little stressful about the idea of not being able to be a good teacher. But I will do my best. (Taban)

Reflective Journals

Reflective journals have been commonly used in teacher education programs to help student teachers to think about their own teacher selves through a process of identification and analysis around the world (Abednia, 2013; Farrell, 2004). To avoid participants' confusion about what to write and how to write in the journals and to guide them, six questions for the first journal and five for the second one were designed carefully as reflection prompts. There wasn't any limitation on the length of the answers to questions. The first journal was to be completed at the end of the first phase and the second one at the end of the second phase that was actually the end of the course. Each phase lasted for five months and the questions in both journals were focused on two main themes of "the effectiveness of reflective discussions" and "the teacher identity construction". The questions and answers were read carefully and classified according to the developed four-dimensional model and coded. Each participant's answers to the questions of the first journal were analyzed in terms of the four developed categories and compared to the similar types of the questions and answers in the second journal to determine matches and mismatches

and to detect any changes in the process of their identity formation. The content analysis also examined the existence of self-perception and self-confidence of becoming a teacher in constructing teacher identity during the program.

The first question of the first journal asked about the student teachers' motivation to become a language teacher. The purpose of asking this question similar to the ones the researcher had in the interview was to find any changes in their motivation under the influence of the course materials. Almost all participants claimed that they loved teaching and they believed that teaching was an interesting challenge and dynamic. The analysis of answers to this question showed an increasing motivation to continue the course as it proceeded.

Now, I have a good feeling of becoming a teacher and I love teaching more than before. (Arash)

First, I was afraid of being a teacher. Gradually, I liked it and found it enjoyable.

(Elnaz)

I love teaching and helping people. (Amin)

It's a nice feeling of self-confidence and usefulness. (Shirin)

Identification

The fifth question of the first journal and the first question of the second one asked student teachers to reflect upon the course sessions and especially the techniques used by the teacher educator and identify the parts which were effective in the formation of their teacher identity or were interesting to them. To increase the credibility of the study, these two questions were designed to elicit the same idea in two ways: first directly and then indirectly to find the changes in personal concepts relating to their identity formation. As a result, in response to the question five of the first journal: "Which activities helped you in the formation of your feeling as a teacher during the course?", eight of the pre-service teachers raised issues such as group discussions and giving feedback after role plays as the most effective techniques in the gradual construction of their identity as a language teacher. Only Amin and Shirin gave priority to writing lesson plans and maintained:

Writing lesson plans caused me to think of a real teacher. (Amin)

Writing a lesson plan for an imaginary class is one of the activities that made me think like a teacher. (Shirin)

To answer the first question of the second journal as "Which activities were interesting to you as a language teacher?", there was not a consensus among the participants. They mentioned almost all activities. Dina believed that the presentations were the most interesting activities while Baran, Hira, Elnaz, Sina, Tina, Taban, and Arash named watching videos about teaching methods, linking to teachers' forums, giving assignments according to the introduced websites as their interesting activities. In addition to the activities mentioned by others, Amin and Shirin liked discussions.

To me, the interesting activity of the course were discussions. Through discussions, I could share my own ideas with others and get feedback which taught me a lot. (Amin)
Presentations and discussing possible solutions in a class and different methods used in that situation were interesting activities. (Shirin)

Analyzing

Student teachers' professional identity can be constructed through the promotion of the self-description (Winslade, 2002, p. 35). The ability to describe selves is developed through the processes of critical and analytical reflection that play a central role in the development of teacher learners' professional knowledge and identity (Shulman & Shulman, 2004) and can be observed in their language (McLaughlin & Oliver, 1998). The second type of the questions asked about the participants' personal reaction about the efficiency of reflective discussions in the process of the formation of professional identity. Questions two, three, and four in the first journal intended to ask the student teachers analyze the steps they passed and compare their feelings as a teacher during the previous phase under the influence of the discussions. To make sure that student teachers understood about their own changes and could reflect them in their writings, the term "reflective discussions" was used explicitly and implicitly in the questions. In the question two of the first journal, student teachers were asked to compare their feelings as a teacher to that of the first day of the course: "*How are you feeling now as a teacher comparing to the first session you attended the class?*" Almost all of the participants regarded reflective discussions as an opportunity for emerging their latent self-confidence and they felt some sorts of changes in themselves as teachers in terms of their organization and attitude toward teaching and knowledge of teaching.

Now, it's more than what I used to think about teaching. Now, I know what is the meaning of teaching. (Dina)

I have learned a lot of techniques that I can use in my own classes. (Arash)

I feel more confident now. (Shirin)

Well, many things have changed since then. I'm more organized now. I know many strategies for facing different problems and for the students' needs. (Amin)

I feel more confident, I know how to behave in class and how to select materials.

Now, I'm aware of many things happening in the class time. (Hana)

To avoid fallibility of single items, Dornyei (2010) suggests the need of more than one item to address each identified content area, all aimed at the same target but asking about a slightly different aspects of it. Accordingly, question three of the first journal asked about the participants' feeling of becoming a teacher more directly leading them to their changes after class discussions: "*How class discussions after watching sample classes were effective on your feeling of becoming a teacher?*". Also, the fourth question asked, somehow the same idea in a different way: "*How talking about the strong points and weak points of your classmates' presentations played a role in the formation of your teacher identity?*". The participants regarded discussions and role plays very helpful in the formation of their teacher identity and they felt a change in their ability to teach.

First, role plays made me nervous, but after passing the time, now I think I have a lot of good abilities and ideas as a teacher. (Arash)

Also, questions three and four of the second journal which was given to the participants at the end of the program, asked about describing the changes in student teachers' selves as teachers: "How are you feeling as a language teacher now? Compare your feeling and attitude towards becoming a teacher with that of the starting day of classes." and "Describe your feeling in each step of changing from the beginning of the term." Analyzing participants' answers to these questions obviously shows the changes in their beliefs and identity. Studies show that teachers' awareness of their own teaching beliefs and areas of strength, improve their teaching practice. In addition, doing reflective tasks can increase teachers' self-awareness (Abednia, 2013).

At the beginning, I was shocked and confused. There were lots of new experiences. After a while, I could get used to them. I was changing my mind by getting knowledge about teaching. Now, I feel more responsible as a teacher. It's a nice feeling. I belong to a community of teachers and it's encouraging. (Arash)

First, I wasn't sure that I'd made a right decision. Gradually, I became more motivated. The peek of the changes in me was after accomplishing the classroom observations. Now, I feel more confident about being a language teacher. (Shirin)

Passing the course gave me more confidence in teaching. It made me more aware of the job. (Elnaz)

At the beginning, I had no idea about being a teacher. Moving from phase one to phase two, and doing more discussions and activities, gradually, I felt as a teacher. (Hana)

The responses to the questions about this section revealed evidence of changing and growing a sense of self-confidence, responsibility, motivation, and self and professional awareness in preservice teachers.

Critical Evaluation and Problem Solving

Pedagogical problem solving proved to be one of the primary benefits of writing reflections in Greiman and Covington' (2007) study. According to the created model, at the evaluation and problem solving level the student teachers were asked to reflect upon their own personal beliefs about the course activities and to discuss possible solutions and suggestions for improving the course. This type of question appeared at the end of both journals in different wording as a final remark: "Please evaluate the strong and weak points of the term. If you were the teacher of this class, how would you improve the sessions?" While teacher learners felt satisfied with the course materials, they suggested taking more time for classroom discussions.

Nice management of the sessions motivated me to follow all the sessions and the new techniques to develop my characteristics as a teacher. (Arash)

They were all merits! Suddenly, I realized that I'm able to think like a teacher. (Amin)

Responses show that following a regular exercise on critical reflection and discussion about the details of teaching can grow pre-service teachers professionally to achieve the ability of evaluation and judgment over teaching and curriculum.

Focus Group

Given the dynamic, authentic, and the multivocal nature of the focus group, it was implemented as a final data collection instrument to uncover pre-service teachers' perceptions of professional identity in a friendly atmosphere to reveal hidden factors in the process of its construction, and to put individual ideas into a collective practicum with all participants. . The focus group meeting, involving ten participants, took place at the last session of the program. The whole session was audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed upon the same identified themes as in journals. The discussions centered on the "*reflective discussions*" and the process of student teachers' "*professional identity construction*" to answer the research question and lasted for one hour.

In order to identify and evaluate the student teachers' reaction to this ten-month program, I encouraged them to reflect on their learning throughout the course. This allowed me to discover how they felt about the activities and their involvement in the teacher education program and how the course had influenced in shaping their teacher identity. The session started when the teacher educator (the researcher) shared an overview of the whole program from the first session to the last and reviewed the activities and pedagogical tools, focusing on the discussions after the performances and videos. The first question was: "*Try to remember your perception of becoming a teacher the first day you started the course. Then, focus on your teacher identity today that is the last day. How can you identify and describe the changes?*" and the second one was about their understanding of the factors involved in the forming their teacher identity: "*What are the factors that have shaped your identity as a teacher?*"

Not surprisingly, in discussions about the first question, eight participants regarded themselves as teachers with a high level of confidence that can be enhanced by having a positive feeling of taking risks in dealing with the problems about their teaching role (Walkington, 2005). This supports Izadinia (2015) who mentions that feeling positively about one's abilities as a teacher can impact on the pre-service teachers' identity formation. However, two of them showed more stress about teaching in their real classes that can be attributed to the dynamic nature of the student teachers' identity during its formation. As Tina mentioned:

At first, I thought teaching was so easy to handle. Now, I notice that it is a very sensitive task. A teacher should be really an organized and a professional person. I don't know whether I can be a good teacher.

Comparing Tina's first impression about teaching as her "old dream" with her idea in the last day of the course, reveals that her initial emotional stress about the starting point of learning to teach has been subjected to some fluctuations during the process of shifting from personal to professional identity. The same happened to Arash who obviously presented some fluctuations in the process of his identity construction. First, he started with a low confidence: "*I'm worried about being a good teacher.*" Then, as the course readings and techniques were progressing, he

said that he understood the meaning of “teaching” and believed that he achieved lots of good teaching skills and techniques to incorporate into future classes. Furthermore, he acknowledged the benefit of class discussions and the course precise schedule in putting him in a controlled context and forming his characteristics as a teacher. However, he felt stressful in discussing the first question.

Teaching is a sophisticated task as well as a sensitive responsibility that needs years of practice and experience. I feel there is a long distance to be a standard teacher.

In discussions about the second question, some of the participants found reflective discussions to help them think as a teacher while others took observation reports as a central factor in the formation of their professional identity. They also added other activities such as peer evaluation, role plays, videos, linking to international teachers’ forum, and lesson plans as important factors in shifting from student teachers to teachers. Among the participants, Taban named both observation reports and reflective discussions as strong stimuli for the construction of her teacher identity that made her think of creative techniques for classroom activities.

Focus group came to an end with student teachers’ suggestions for further programs such as incorporating more time for their presentations in different language levels and reflective discussions afterward. The focus group revealed that through participation in professional development, teachers expanded a range of positive and negative skills with implications for teacher education programs. For instance, self-confidence, self-awareness, decision making, professional knowledge, critical thinking and commenting, and a sense of feeling like stressful to start in the profession. Finally, it was found that the focus group can be used both as a facilitator in constructing teachers’ professional identity and a data collection tool in further studies.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the development of teacher identity is a very complex and dynamic procedure that requires in-depth studies for exploring the factors and changes at the practicum. Although, teacher educators can benefit from the effectiveness of the program components, techniques, and pedagogical tools if they incorporate organized practices in the teacher education program. Practicing organized stages during the teacher training courses will organize the teacher students’ mind, enhance the cognitive processes of teacher identity formation, and will help pre-service teachers maintain their professional identity. Supporting Hatton and Smith’s (1995) classification system who identified three stages of reflection as *descriptive, dialogic, and critical* in students’ reflective utterances, a four-dimensional systematic cognitive model was designed to stabilize teaching practices and to stimulate the formation of professional identity of teacher students. Therefore, the student teachers went through the four levels of *Describe, Analyze, Discuss, and Reflect and Comment* as a systematic procedure after each performance, either on videos, their own practices, or peers’ performances. The schematic representation of this model is depicted in figure 2.

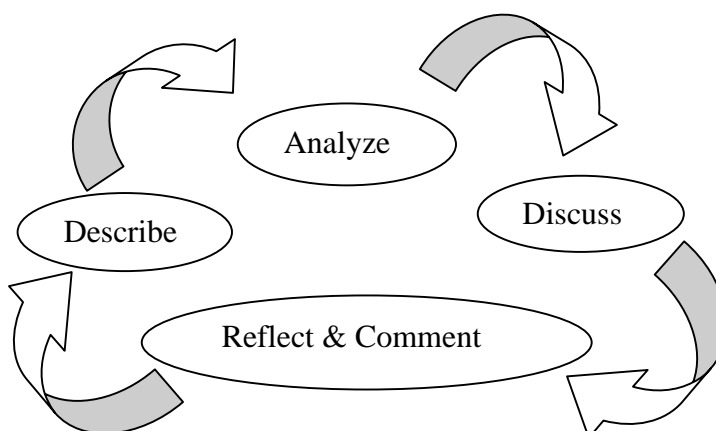


Figure 2: A Schematic representation of a systematic model for classroom Reflective Discussion

CONCLUSION

The present investigation examined the role of systematic reflective discussions after videos and performances on teacher students' professional identity construction. However, the question "how teachers' professional identity gets shaped?" is not easy to answer. It is a complex concept, including many cognitive, affective, and social factors such as the ability to control the practices, language, tools, values, beliefs, and contextual interactions may also lead them to a profession. It is actually a continual flux and unstable. Considering the complexity of the process of identity development in pre-service teachers, teacher-learners in this study, through one interview, two reflective journals, and one focus group session, presented a level of responsibility, organization, confidence, teacher voice, cognitive knowledge, professional competence, awareness of selves and the job, and skills of judgement, evaluation and problem solving which were supported as components of teachers' professional identity (Cattley, 2013; Izadinia, 2013; Abednia, 2015). The participants of the present study were found to consider reflective discussions to have a primary impact on the formation of their teacher identity. They also mentioned other pedagogical techniques such as linking to international teachers' forum, course readings, preparing lesson plans, observing in-service teachers' teaching and commenting to help them to shape their teacher identity. However, it seems none of the participants valued the psychological, contextual, and administrative factors like the teacher educator's motivation and attitudes, timetabling and the organization of the class time, the syllabus of the program, and the rapport she created between the student teachers and herself as the core of their identity formation. Furthermore, the relationship between the pre-service and in-service teachers at the time of classroom observations may also affect the changes in their identity. The data analysis revealed the changes in the level of growth towards a more professional status in the teacher learners' contributions in selecting classroom activities. They showed abilities for making decisions, planning lessons, and developing professional competence. In addition, the components of teacher identity like self-confidence, organization, the ability of judgment, and feeling of accountability were clustered in the findings of the present study. As it was realized at the final class sessions, the student teachers were able to select materials for the class to help their own knowledge promotion. Emerging this

skill proves the fact that reflective discussions can lead to teachers' autonomy, self-awareness, and decision making skills to emerge in the beginning teachers.

In line with above-mentioned findings and the developed model, it is recommended that systematic reflective discussions need to be integrated into teacher training courses across the program to shape the pre-service teachers' professional identity. Also, teacher educators create a motivating context for teacher-learners, giving them dare to freely discuss their ideas and generate creativity through systematic reflective discussions. As Pennington (1990, p. 133) argues about professionalism, he suggests that student teachers be trained on both required skills and the ability of the judgment. Making judgments by pre-service teachers about strong and poor practices will enhance their confidence and the ability to take the risk to challenge opinions (Walkington, 2005). In the present study, classroom observations were considered as one part of the required assignment and did not include in the analysis. Future studies can add the analysis of the student teachers' report on the classroom observations, as Geyer (2008) strongly advises incorporating both observation and evaluation as essential techniques into the teacher education programs.

Concentrating on the development of professional identity in student teachers and understanding the details of its process over teacher education program will assist teacher educators to prepare pre-service teachers for the complexities of teaching. In this process, the outstanding role of teacher educators and teacher education curriculum developers cannot be ignored. An implication of this is that the teacher educators select and conduct the classroom activities encouraging pre-service teachers in shaping their new identity as teachers. Developing the ability of reflection in teacher learners is the responsibility of all teacher educators. Furthermore, curriculum and teacher education materials developers will benefit from this knowledge to design and develop supportive programs, which can help teacher educators in their practice. A Supportive teacher education curriculum is recommended to include pedagogical tools to enhance the feeling of self-confidence and risk-taking abilities to challenge the problems of the teaching profession and help the pre-service teachers grow intellectually and educationally. As a result, throughout the journey of the professional identity construction, they will be able to pass through the transitional stages, moving from a dependent student teacher with a low level of confidence to an independent teacher. Along with this process, they will shape ability in teaching to grow a sense of becoming a teacher that can reflect critically upon their own practices, identify the contextual challenges, evaluate and judge their experiences, and can solve their own problems. An appropriate teacher education program should include professional development to deal with difficult students and the threats to professional identity. Furthermore, beginning teachers need to be equipped with psychological and educational skills in order to be able to suppress the frequency of stress and misbehavior at the first year of teaching.

The dynamic nature of the professional identity and the variation in factors affecting the identity formation of the student teachers suggest the limitations of the study. The limited number of candidates enrolled in this program can be extended and examined in more teacher education centers in different contexts. Also, the pre-service teachers' comments on the observation

sessions can be analyzed and taken into consideration to discover the changes through their practice and interaction with in-service teachers.

REFERENCES

- Abednia, A. (2012). Teachers' professional identity: contributions of a critical EFL teacher education course in Iran, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28, 706-717.
- Abednia, A., Hovassapian, A., Teimournezhad, S. & Ghanbari, N. (2013). Reflective journal writing: exploring EFL teachers' perceptions, *System*, 41, 503-514.
- Antonek, J.L., McCormick, D.E. & Donato, R. (1997). The student teacher portfolio as autobiography: Developing a professional identity. *Modern Language Journal*, 81, 15-27.
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 107-128.
- Best, J. W., & Kahn, J. V. (2006). Research in education. (3rd Ed.). New York: Pearson.
- Britzman, D. (2003). Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach. (Revised ed.) New York: State University of New York Press.
- Cattley, G. (2007). Emergence of professional identity for the pre-service teacher. *International Education Journal*, 8(2), 337-347.
- Chitpin, S., & Simon, M. (2009) Even if no-one looked at it, it was important for my own development: pre-service teacher perceptions of professional portfolios. *Australian Journal of Education*, 53(3), 277-293.
- Cole, A. L., & Knowles, J. G. (2000). Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Cook, J.S. (2009). Coming into my own as a teacher: identity, disequilibrium and the first year of teaching. *New Educator*, 5, 274-292.
- Costa, A. L., & Kallick, B. (2000). Getting into the habit of reflection. *Educational Leadership*, 57, 60-62.
- Dornyei, Z., & Taguchi, T. (2010). Questionnaires in second language research: constructing, administering, and processing. New York: Routledge.
- Estola, E. (2003). Hope as work-student teachers constructing their narrative identities. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 47(2), 181-203.
- Farhady, H. (1995). Research methods in applied linguistics. Tehran: Payame Noor University Press.
- Farrell, T.S.C. (2004). Reflective practice in action: 80 reflection breaks for busy teachers. CA (USA): Corwin Press (Sage Publications), Thousand Oaks.
- Findlay, K. (2006). Context and learning factors in the development of teacher identity: a case study of newly qualified teachers during their induction year. *Journal of In-service Education*, 32(4), 511-532.
- Fletcher, S. (1997). Modeling reflective practice for pre-service teachers: The role of teacher educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 13 (2), 237-243.
- Fund, Z., Court, D., & Kramarski, B. (2002). Construction and application of an evaluation tool to assess reflection in teacher-training courses. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 27 (6), 485-499.

- Gee, J. P. (2000). Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. *Review of Research in Education*, 25, 99-125.
- Giroux, H. A. (1992). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education*. NY: Routledge.
- Ghasedi, F. (2013). *The role of role model in construction of EFL teachers' professional identity*. Presented in the 11th TELLSI International Conference, Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad- Iran, October 30.
- Greiman, B.C., & Covington, H.K., (2007). Reflective thinking and journal writing: examining student teachers' perceptions of preferred reflective modality, journal writing outcomes, and journal structure. *Career Tech. Educ. Res.* 32 (2), 115-139.
- Hatton, N., & Smith, D. (1995). Reflection in teacher education: towards definition & implementation. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 11 (1), 33- 49.
- Huling-Austin, L. (1989) Beginning Teacher Assistance Programs: An Overview, in Huling-Austin, L. Odell, S. J. Ishler, P. Kay, R. S. and Edelfelt R. A. (eds), *Assisting the Beginning Teacher* Reston, VA: Association of teacher Educators, pp. 5–18.
- Huling-Austin, L. (1990) Teacher Induction Programs and Internships, in Houston R. W. (ed) *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, pp. 535–548.
- Izadinia, M. (2013). A review of research on student teachers' professional identity. *British Educational Research Journal*, 39 (4), 694 – 713.
- Izadinia, M. (2015). In search of a lost identity: Iranian women and their identity issues. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 16(2), 128-140. Available at: <http://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol16/iss2/8>
- Kremer-Heyon, L. (1988). Reflection and professional knowledge- A conceptual framework. ED 296971.
- Larson, M.L., & Phillips, D.K. (2005). Becoming a teacher of literacy: the struggle between authoritative discourses, *Teaching Education*, 16(4), 311–323.
- Lee, I. (2000). Using dialogue journals as a multi-purpose tool for preservice teacher preparation: How effective is it? *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 31, 73-97.
- Loughran, J. (1996). *Developing reflective practice: Learning about teaching and learning through modelling*. London: FalmerPress.
- Maclean, R. & White, S. (2007). Video reflection and the formation of teacher identity in a team of pre-service and experienced teachers. *Reflective Practice*, 8, 47–60.
- McDonough, J., Shaw, C., & Masuhara, H. (2013). *Materials and methods in ELT: A teacher's guide*. (3rd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- McLoughlin, C., & Oliver, R. (1998). Maximizing the language and learning link in computer learning environments. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 29(2), 125–136.
- Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology, and applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Olsen, B. (2008). Reasons for entry into the profession illuminate teacher identity development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(3), 23–40.
- Pennington, M. C. (1990). A professional development focus for the language teaching practicum. In J. C. Richards and D. Nunan (eds.) *Second language teacher education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 132–151.

- Poulou, M. (2007) Student-teachers' concerns about teaching practice. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 30, 91–110.
- Richards, J., & Lockhart, C. (1994). Reflective teaching in second language classrooms. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Samuel, M., & Stephens, D. (2000). Critical dialogues with self: developing teacher identities and roles a case study of South African student teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 33, 475–491.
- Schepens, A., Aelterman, A., & Vlerick, P. (2009). Student teachers' professional identity formation: between being born as a teacher and becoming one. *Educational Studies*, 35 (4), 361–378.
- Schon, D.A. (1983). The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action. New York: Basic Books.
- Schon, D.A. (1987). Educating the reflective practitioner. New York: Basic Books.
- Shulman, L. S., & Shulman, J. H. (2004). How and what teachers learn: a shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(2), 257–271.
- Smagorinsky, P., Cook, L.S., Moore, C., Jackson, A.Y., & Fry, P.G. (2004). Tensions in learning to teach: accommodation and development of a teaching identity. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55, 8–24.
- Sutherland, L., Howard, S., & Markauskaite, L. (2010). Professional identity creation: examining the development of beginning preservice teachers' understanding of their work as teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 455–465.
- Tajeddin, Z., & Khodarahmi, E. (2013). *EFL teachers' professional identity: underlying components and factors contributing to its construction*. Presented in the 11th TELLSI International Conference, Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad- Iran, October 30.
- Tapline, M., Fung Ping, D. NG., & Fuqian, H. (2007). The impact of a collaborative model for curriculum restructuring on teachers' professional growth. In Tony Townsend & Richard Bates (Ed) *Handbook of Teacher Education* (523-538). The Netherlands: Springer.
- Tomlinson, B. (2013). Applied linguistics and materials development (ed.) New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Townsend, T., & Bates, R. (2007). Handbook of teacher education. Globalization, standards, and professionalism in times of change (Ed.). Netherlands: Springer.
- Journal of Education for Teaching*, 36(2), 53–168.
- Vavrus, M. (2009). Sexuality, schooling, and teacher identity formation: a critical pedagogy for teacher education, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 383–390.
- Walkington, J. (2005). Becoming a teacher: encouraging development of teacher identity through reflective practice. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(1), 53–64.
- Wanzare, Z. (2007). The transition process: the early years of being a teacher. In Tony Townsend & Richard Bates (Ed) *Handbook of Teacher Education* (343-364). The Netherlands: Springer.
- Webb, M. (2005). Becoming a secondary-school teacher: the challenges of making teacher identity formation a conscious, informed process, *Issues In Educational Research*, 5(2), 206–224.
- Weber, R. P. (1990). Basic content analysis. Newbury Park, Cal.: Sage.

- Weber, S., & Mitchell, C. (1996). Drawing ourselves into teaching: studying the images that shape and distort teacher education. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 12(3), 303–313.
- Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Winslade, J. (2002). Storying professional identity. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*. 2002 (4), 33-38.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IDEATIONAL GRAMMATICAL METAPHOR IN SCIENTIFIC & SPORTS TEXTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS

Elham Seyyedian

*Department of ELT, College of Humanities,
Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran
e_seyyediyani@yahoo.com*

Masoud Zoghi

*Department of ELT, College of Humanities,
Ahar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahar, Iran
m-zoghi@iau-ahar.ac.ir*

Nesa Nabifar

*Department of ELT, College of Humanities,
Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran
nesanabifar12@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

Journalistic writing has been a welcome source of typical language data for metaphor analysis. Since the metaphorical wording explains the situation more interestingly and formally in comparison with non-metaphorical language, it seems that even newspapers are no exceptions in terms of extensive use of metaphors, specifically of grammatical metaphor (GM). Inspired by Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (1994), as an appropriate framework for analysis, this study explores the first type of GM known as ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM). In doing so, a corpus comprising 8 scientific and 8 sports texts of English newspapers (approximately 12000 words), were analyzed, compared and contrasted to pinpoint their similarities and dissimilarities in terms of nominalization and process types. The results revealed that the ideational metaphor has indeed pervaded scientific and sports texts, while indicating some differences. It's hoped that the findings of this study will bring a deeper understanding of GM in the sense that teachers and learners could recognize the importance of GM in the process of reading / writing instructions.

KEYWORDS: Grammatical Metaphor- Ideational Grammatical Metaphor- Systemic Functional Grammar- Nominalization

INTRODUCTION

Since special English is used in the press, so knowing the features in news English can help us get more accurate information around the world, and can fully enjoy the fastness and convenience

of the information age (Wu & Tang, 2010). One of these features is grammatical metaphor which is proposed first by Halliday, who treated it as an important component of the theory of system language functions and made significant contribution to the metaphor study. According to his theory of grammatical metaphor, grammatical metaphor includes two types – ideational metaphor and interpersonal metaphor, nominalization is the most common grammatical metaphor form, especially in the science and technology discourse and news discourse.

Through the work of Halliday (1994) and his colleagues, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is recognized as a very useful, descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic meaning making resource. One of Halliday's major contributions to linguistic analysis is showing how simultaneous strands of meanings are expressed in clause structure. Systemic functional linguistics studies the grammatical metaphor from the point of view of expressing the grammatical meaning, and they consider that the metaphor is not limited in the vocabulary level, but is often seen in the syntax level.

Ideational grammatical metaphor is the first type of grammatical metaphor. Nominalization as the most common form of ideational grammatical metaphor, makes action or process become concept and also, it reduces the number of clauses and more information is compressed into each nominal group. Nominalization can turn a dynamic process (*verbs*) into a static entity through re-categorization and thus provides us with a different way of construing the world, or of conceptualizing experiences from a different angle (Murar, 2004). Due to efficiency and convenience of being able to compact large amounts of information into a single word, nominalization is a widely exploited linguistic technique in news, scientific and political discourses (Choi, 2006). As Halliday has argued in his IFGs (Introduction to Functional Grammar; in all three editions of 1985, 1994, 2004), each nominalized or metaphorical wording in the metaphorical domain has its congruent wording in the congruent domain. The metaphorical domain explains the situation in more interesting and more formal ways in comparison with the congruent one.

Through the function of the grammatical metaphor in the building of the news discourse, we can comprehend more about the news features and understand the news texts. The study of the uses of grammatical metaphor is particularly useful in revealing how processes are changed into objects. Grammatical metaphor in this case changes not only the grammar of the texts but also the reader's reaction to texts. In this spirit, it seems that journalistic genre especially scientific and sports texts have been an interesting area for analysis and discussion, and since using grammatical metaphor in newspapers satisfies with readers' curiosity and excitement, it sometimes causes difficulties for readers to understand. In IGM, lexico-grammatical features are re-arranged to put forth a certain view of reality, i.e. they constitute an alternative way of constructing a picture of reality. One type of clause is expressed as another type and the processes and qualities are construed as if they were entities, through the process of nominalization (Halliday, 1994). Halliday (1985) defines that Nominalization is the single most powerful resource for creating GM. By this device, processes (congruently worded as verbs) and properties (congruently worded as adjectives) are reworded metaphorically as nouns; instead of functioning in the clause, a Process or Attributor, the function as Thing in the nominal group (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Cehan, 2004).

Halliday (1994), Vandenberg et al. (2003), and Taverniers (2006) maintain that traditionally metaphor is viewed as variation in the use of words, i.e. variation in meanings and hence the consequence of lexical or lexico-semantic processes. This is a view *from below*, taking the words as starting point and then saying something about the meanings these words realize (this has now come to be known, in a more accurate sense, as lexical metaphor). Metaphor is, however, employed in SFL in a relatively new sense to refer not to *the variation in the use of words* with a transferred meaning but to *variation in the expression of meaning*, following a SFL to the study of grammar proposed by Halliday (1985, 1994). Unlike the former view, this one is a view *from above* where the starting point is a particular meaning and the relevant question is how it can be expressed or realized. Taking this from *above view*, it is recognized that metaphorical variation is lexico-grammatical rather than purely lexical, and that lexical selection is just one aspect of lexico-grammatical selection or wording; the other aspect is grammatical (Vandenberg, et al., 2003). The two alternative perspectives are visually represented in figure 1 (based on Halliday's figure (1994/1985, p.342)) (as cited in Taverniers, 2003, p.6).

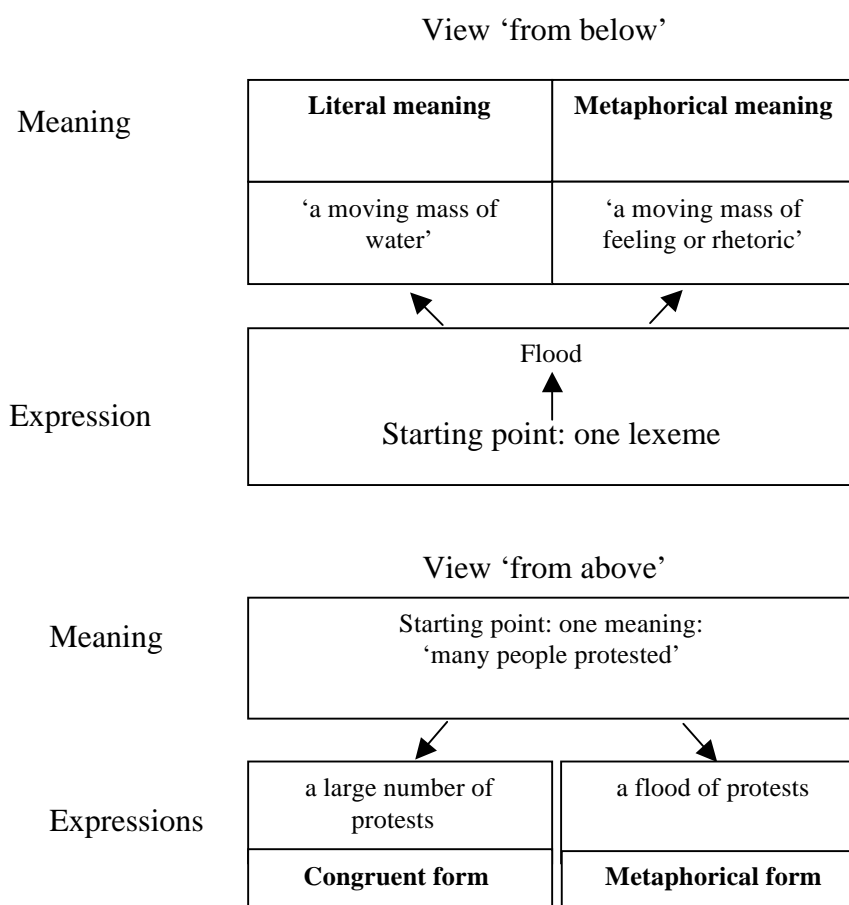


Figure 1: Two perspectives on metaphor (after Halliday 1994/1985, p.342)

Processes are central to transitivity. They center on the part of the clause which is realized by the verbal group and by nominalization; processes (congruently worded as verbs) and properties

(congruently worded as adjectives) are reworded metaphorically as nouns. Processes are also regarded as what *goings-on* and suggest many different kinds of goings-on which necessarily involve different kinds of participant in varying circumstances, while participants and circumstances are essential upon the doings, happenings, feeling and beings. Processes can be subdivided into different types.

Table 1: Overview of Process Types (Adopted from Halliday, 2004)

Process type	sub-category	
Material :	'doing'	
Action	'doing'	bodily, physically, materially
Event	'happening'	
Behavioral :	'behaving'	physiologically and psychologically
Mental:	'feeling'	
Perception	'sensing'	
Affection	'seeing'	emotionally, intellectually, sensorilly
Cognition	'thinking'	
	'emotive'	
Verbal:	'saying'	lingually, signaling
Relational:	'being'	
Attribution	'attributing'	
Identification	'identifying'	equal to, or some attribute of
Existential:	'existing'	there exist

The significant and important role of GM has always been a great area of research and investigation for many researchers. Halliday and Martin (1993), in a seminal study conducted a survey based on GM on scientific texts and found that when the lexical density goes up to some extent, the passage becomes difficult to read.

Holtz (2009), in her major study, has done a research titled *nominalization in scientific discourse: A corpus-based study of abstracts and research articles*. The corpus used in her work contains 94 full English scientific journal articles compiled from 12 sources covering four scientific domains, i.e., computer science, linguistics, biology, and mechanical engineering, and comprising over 420,000 words. The results indicate that Nouns are the most frequent lexical word both in abstracts and research articles. Nominalization occurs much more often in abstracts than in research articles, and that the difference in this occurrence is statistically significant. Moreover, abstracts generally show a much wider vocabulary range concerning the use of nominalizations than their research articles.

In another study, Hadidi (2012) analyzed a corpus comprising three business and three political texts to see how many instances of ideational metaphor are used and what the respective frequencies are. His findings revealed that ideational metaphor has pervaded political and business texts and is used approximately with the same frequency in both text types. In a similar study, Tabrizi 2013 analyzed a corpus comprising 5 political and 5 health texts of English newspapers in terms of IGM. Based on the findings, both text types include all types of processes, but the frequency and percentage of nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in political texts are more than health texts in English newspapers.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, as it seems, less research has focused attention on the analysis of newspaper texts from SFG perspectives. It is also worth mentioning that to date there are few comparative studies related to GM and IGM and none as the researcher knows has used the theories of the SFG to compare the nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific and sports texts of English newspapers, and nearly all of the studies have exclusively investigated one text type, and if there are any, they have confined themselves to a small number of texts.

Most of the times, readers relate metaphor to the lexical domain of language and literature and don't know the important role of metaphor in a grammatical sense. And also, they think that there is only one way to convey their intended meanings, as a result, they express their meaning in informal and simple way. It is believed that identifying and comparing IGM in texts of English newspapers raise readers' awareness regarding the role and function of GM in written text and help them to know different ways of expressing the same meaning and convey their meanings in a more interesting and vivid way.

The principle purpose of this study firstly was to identify the ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific and sports columns of English newspapers on the base of Halliday's (2004) framework and then to investigate how meanings are constructed and interpreted by application of ideational metafunctions in English newspapers across two text types, to highlight the nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor to determine their processes and to compare them with each other, and also the congruent mode of each clause will be given to uncover the difference between two text types.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the above arguments, the following research questions and hypotheses were posed:

RQ#1. Is ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts?

RQ#2. Are the process types of IGM likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts?

H1. Ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) is likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts.

H2. The process types of IGM are likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts.

METHODOLOGY

In the following section, the corpus, i.e., the kinds of materials, and instruments, i.e., the kinds of model or models used to analyze the texts, procedure and design of the study will be discussed.

Corpus

Due to the paramount importance of selecting authentic and native texts in scientific and sports writings, an effort was made to choose those texts randomly from various sources of English newspapers, such as *Washington Times* (2013), *Washington Post* (2013), *New York Times* (2012) and *International NewYork Times* (2013). Because of time constraints, only 8 scientific and 8 sports texts, approximately 6000 words of each text type, were used as the corpus in order to pinpoint and analyze the frequency of metaphorical expressions (Nominalization) and process types for each nominalized word, and also to compare and contrast to find similarities and discrepancies between two text types in terms of IGM. This research was a comparative study and both text types should comprise the same number of words to be investigated appropriately. Thus, it was the same number of words that acted as our yardstick and enabled the researcher to say, for instance, how many instances of GM were used and which process type was dominant in either of the text types.

The design of the present study was descriptive-analytic which concentrated on the frequency of occurrences of IGMs and their congruent wording and process type in scientific and sports texts. It should be mentioned that in analyzing the data (identification and interpretation of IGM instances), this study employed the qualitative research method. Moreover, in order to find out the frequency, process type, role and function of IGM through SPSS software the quantitative research method was adopted.

Instruments

In order to compare and contrast possible similarities and dissimilarities and also to find congruent and metaphorical expressions as well as process types, in these 16 texts (approximately 12000 words) of scientific and sports texts, it was essential to choose a model or models to analyze the data. Therefore, the ideas of Martin, Matthiessen and Painter (1997) and Halliday and Matthiessen (1999) provided a reliably comprehensive groundwork to be utilized as the main theoretical foundation of the present research. According to Martin et al (1997), 6 process types in English are as followed:

- 1) Material: material clauses construe doings and happenings.
- 2) Mental: mental clauses construe a person involved in conscious processing, including processes of perception, recognition and affection.
- 3) Relational: relational clauses construe being and do this in two different modes – attribution and identification.
- 4) Behavioral: behavioral clauses construe human behavior.
- 5) Verbal: verbal clauses represent processes of saying.
- 6) Existential: existential clauses resemble relational clauses in that they construe the participant involved in a process of being , but differ from relational ones in that there is only one participant.

According to Halliday (1994), each metaphorical wording must have its equivalent congruent wording. So, in this research not only process types but also congruent domains of extracted IGM instances were discussed and displayed.

Procedure

To identify the instances of IGM in scientific and sports texts, the researcher read the texts thoroughly and pinpointed IGMs (nominalized wordings). It was noticed that nominalization is the most dominant feature of both scientific and sports texts that leads to IGM. After establishing and extracting IGMs, an effort was made to render metaphorical expressions in congruent expressions because elaborating both the congruent and metaphorical domains lead us to fully grasp the concept of transitivity system and IGM. It is worth noting that unpacking metaphorical wordings into congruent forms were based on inventories represented by Eggins (1994), Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (1999), Martin et al. (1997), and Thompson (2004). Comparing metaphorical and congruent wording indicated that in most of the cases both of them allow us to explain the same situation, but the metaphorical wording describes the situation in a more encapsulated, brief, precise and concise way. Since IGM is closely tied with transitivity system which enables us to construe the world of our experience into a limited set of process types, an attempt was made to identify process types in all the extracted and rendered IGM instances.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As mentioned before, the main purpose of the current study is to analyze, compare and contrast a corpus comprising 8 scientific and 8 sports texts to pinpoint their similarities and dissimilarities in terms of nominalization and process types, approximately 6000 words in each text type. These texts were analyzed in order to find out the number of IGM's instances and their respective frequencies in two text types. Furthermore, the data has been investigated to find out the role and function of IGM in these texts.

IGM in Scientific Texts

Scientific texts are generally concentrated on highly technical terms, and they are troublesome to understand due to their complexity in forms and meanings. The language of science is, by its essence, a language in which theories are built and its features are definitely those that make theoretical discourse potential. There are two types of resources in Scientific language: lexical and grammatical. Lexical ones include technical terminologies that scientific realm continuously construct i.e. technicality. Grammatical resources include constructing organized nominal categories so that they can be merged to construe a particular form of reasoning and sequential argument. Scientific genre is a highly nominalized discourse. Nominalization is indispensable since it is engaged both in technicality and rationality.

The following table shows samples of IGMs selected randomly from analysis of 8 scientific texts. In each table, in addition to the metaphorical wording, the probable congruent form, type of process and its frequency in per text are represented as well:

Table 2: Samples of IGMs extracted from 8 Scientific Texts

No.	Metaphorical wording	Congruent wording	Process type	Frequency in each text
1	that discovery	something which was discovered	Material	2
2	heat exposure	to expose to the heat	Material	1
3	suggesting that	and suggest that	Verbal	1
4	enthusiastically recommending	recommended enthusiastically	Verbal	1
5	leave us in the dark	darkens our view	Material	1
6	have trouble understanding a ...	not to understand a ...	Mental	1
7	epidemic of daydreaming	most of people daydream	Behavioral	1
8	loneliness	to be alone	Relational	1
9	individual registration	to register individually	Material	2
10	anatomical comparisons	to compare anatomically	Material	1

In the examples above, the processes (such as *discover*, *expose*, *register* and *compare*) become nouns (*discovery*, *exposure*, *registration* and *comparison*). It is worth noting that nominalization, as a form of GM, allows a large amount of information to be packed into a comparatively small space (such as, a noun group). This has the effect of *condensing* information within the sentence; it contributes to *language economy*.

Out of 658 nominalizations in total 8 scientific texts, 492 are material, 110 are relational, 15 are mental, 32 are verbal, 6 are behavioral and 3 are existential processes. By comparing the congruent and metaphoric versions in above instances, it implies that unpacking a text often involves re-inserting human actors often rendered unnecessary, by nominalization. The ability of nominalization to condense meanings is also clearly shown when we simply compare the length of the original nominalized text with the length of the unpacked version. Significantly, this unpacked version has lost much of its prestigious sound: it now seems very much more ordinary (and perhaps more accessible) than the original text (Eggins, 1994).

IGM in Sports Texts

Academic writing and adult writing frequently use nominalizations, and the sports discourse also is not excepted from this phenomena. As everybody knows, sports news has always been a great area of interest and entertainment, especially for adults. In these texts, lexis and grammar are re-arranged in a way to capture the mind of readers. Journalists in sports columns of some newspapers especially the ones analyzed in the current study, have used IGM to a great extent, so the application of grammatical metaphor comes to be one of the important stylistic features of English sports texts, since, sports texts must be motivating enough in capturing, arresting and getting the readers' attention and bringing them to the world of sports.

The following table represents samples of IGMs selected randomly from the analysis of 8 sports texts:

Table 3: Samples of IGMs extracted from 8 Sports Texts

No.	Metaphorical wording	Congruent wording	Process type	Frequency in each text
1	patriot's vulnerabilities	patriot is vulnerable in s.th	Relational	1
2	for a long gain	to gain success for a long time	Material	1
3	little choice	can be chosen by little chance	Material	1
4	tears in Naples	Naples cried	Behavioral	1
5	disbelief	not to believe in something	Mental	1
6	Neymar's movement	Neymar moved	Material	3
7	creativity	to be creative	Relational	1
8	no wasted motion in her legs	She moves very effectively and professionally	Material	1
9	exclusiveness	to be exclusive	Relational	1
10	Kidd said in a statement released by ...	Kidd stated something which was released by ...	Verbal	1

The instances of IGM in 8 sports texts indicated that nominalization was also utilized in these types of texts. In these 8 texts, there are 351 IGMs in which 269 go for material, 36 for relational, 28 for mental, 14 for verbal, 3 for behavioral and 1 for existential.

Frequency of IGM instances in Scientific and Sports Texts

In order to find out the frequency of IGM in these texts, the Chi- square test was found as an appropriate statistical procedure. The data were analyzed and conducted in SPSS program and tables and graphs were also extracted from SPSS too. Table 4 shows the number of IGMs observed in scientific & sports texts:

Table 4: The number of IGMs in scientific & sports texts

text type			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
scientific	658	504.5	153.5
sports	351	504.5	-153.5
Total	1009		

As shown in Table 4, the total frequency of IGM instances in scientific texts is 658, while in sports texts it is 351. Results of chi-square test revealed that there is a meaningful difference in the frequency of IGM in these two text types. So the hypothesis H1, indicating that *Ideational grammatical metaphor (IGM) is likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts*, was confirmed.

The comparison of process types in scientific and sports texts

A Chi-square test was used to compare and contrast the process types used in these texts. The following tables show the frequency and percentage of Process types in scientific & sports texts as well as the results of Chi-Square Test:

Table 5: Process types in scientific & sports texts

text type * Process type Cross tabulation

			Process type						Total
			Behavioral	Existential	Material	Mental	Relational	Verbal	
text type	scientific	Count	6	3	492	15	110	32	658
		Expected Count	5.9	2.6	496.3	28.0	95.2	30.0	658.0
		% within text type	.9%	.5%	74.8%	2.3%	16.7%	4.9%	100.0%
	sports	Count	3	1	269	28	36	14	351
		Expected Count	3.1	1.4	264.7	15.0	50.8	16.0	351.0
		% within text type	.9%	.3%	76.6%	8.0%	10.3%	4.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		9	4	761	43	146	46	1009
	Expected Count		9.0	4.0	761.0	43.0	146.0	46.0	1009.0
	% within text type		.9%	.4%	75.4%	4.3%	14.5%	4.6%	100.0%

Table 6: Chi-Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.706 ^a	5	.000
Likelihood Ratio	24.009	5	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.399	1	.121
N of Valid Cases	1009		

a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.39.

As seen in Tables 5 and 6, the results of chi-square showed that there is a meaningful difference in the process types which exist in these texts. According to the results, in addition to the employing the material and relational types to a great extent in these two types of texts, the mental process type in sports and relational one in scientific texts occupy a large space. Figure 2 displays the frequency of IGM in scientific and sports texts:

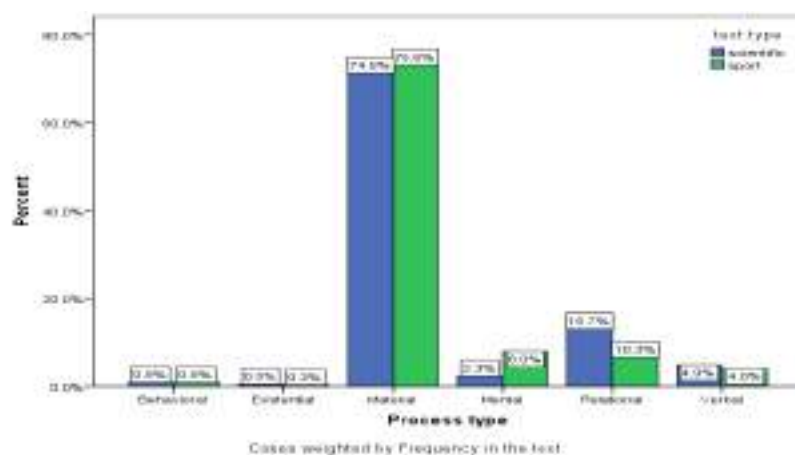


Figure 2: Frequency of process types in both scientific & sports texts

From 658 instances of IGM which were extracted from eight scientific texts, 74.8% are material, 16.7% relational, 2.3% mental, 4.9% verbal, 0.9% behavioural, 0.5% existential process types were obtained. The scientific texts represent the dominant textual forces of material and then relational process types than any other types.

351 instances of IGM were extracted from sports texts. Out of this number, 76.6% of them have material processes, 10.3% of them are relational, 8% mental, 4% verbal, 0.9% behavioral and 0.3% of them are existential. It should be stated that in each of the text types of the study, there aren't exactly the same numbers of GMs, but, the dominant process types in both are material (actions and doings, 492 in scientific , 269 in sports), and relational (based on being and having, 110 in scientific, 36 in sports).

So, regarding the use of all six process types in both of the text types and also having the material, and then relational process types, as their dominant process types; and on the other hand, some differences in the frequency of process types of IGM in two text types, can lead us to conclude that, the hypothesis H2, indicating that the process types of IGM are likely to be used more frequently in scientific texts than in sports texts, was confirmed.

Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in each text type

The following Table and Figure show the frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in the scientific and sports texts:

Table 7: Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in two text types

text type		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	scientific	110	65.1	65.1	65.1
	sports	59	34.9	34.9	100.0
	Total	169	100.0	100.0	

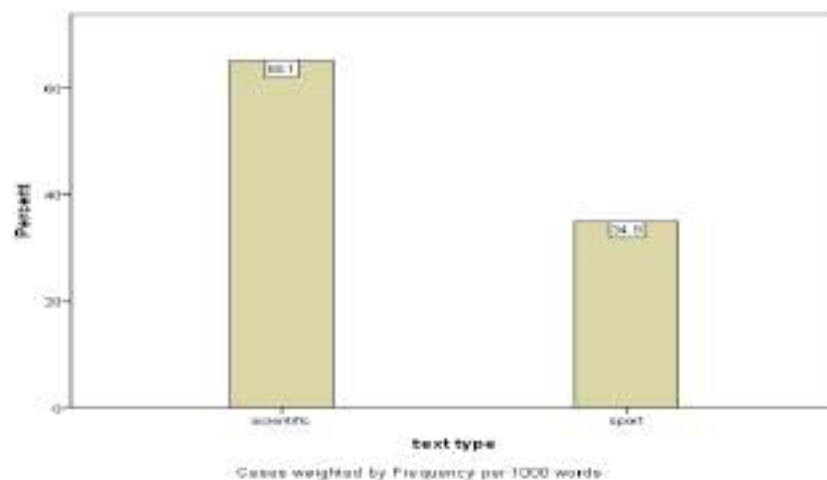


Figure 3: Frequency of IGMs per 1000 words in two text types

As it's evident in the above table and figure, scientific texts on the whole, have employed 110 instances (65.1%) of the IGM, and sports texts have employed 59 instances (34.9%) of IGM per 1000 words.

Discussion

Ideational grammatical metaphor is an incongruent representation of the experiential meaning in the configuration of the clause. Logical grammatical metaphor refers to ideas that are organized in an incongruent form at the level of discourse. Texts with a high degree of GM tend to be considered prestigious, abstract, objective, academic and formal.

In scientific texts, IGM plays a significant role and has a special ground in these types of texts; however in sports texts, the instances of GM are of a low level of frequency compared to the scientific ones. Nominalization has been used in both text types, turning the process (verb) into concept (noun). As a result, the tone of writing seems more formal and abstract.

This research finds support in the research findings of Halliday (1985), that the ideational grammatical metaphor or transitivity analysis should bring out a material process type. A rather obvious expectation that was construed by the analysis of congruent wording in scientific and sports texts was the higher frequency and dominant textual force of material process types in both of the text types. The results of the present study revealed that both scientific and sports texts of English newspapers employ IGM and approximately make use of all the six process types, but the level of IGM manifestation in scientific texts is higher than that in sports texts (scientific: 65.2 & sports: 34.8 percent). Furthermore the material and relational process types were found as the dominating textual forces in both text types and low frequency of other process types.

Considering the frequency of IGM per 1000 words in both texts, the findings also showed the high frequency of the material and relational processes compared to other processes.

Although the material and relational processes were regarded as the most frequent and dominant process types, it was found that the mental process in sports texts and relational process in scientific texts occupied a large space.

The next finding that the study reached was that not always a noun form standing as a sample of GM would be raised out of a verb form, but sometimes a noun form which has no verb form, plays the role of a GM. For example, in the following sentence, 'tear' is an example of GM which stands for the verb of 'crying'.

'But that goal will go down as beautiful in Dortmund's history- and it reduced Gonzalo Higuain, Napoli's Argentine striker, to *tears* in Naples'.

In the congruent wording of the above sentence, 'cried' is the verb form offered for 'tears'.

Furthermore, in some cases instead of verbs, the adjectives are nominalized. For example, the word *flexibility* doesn't have verb form. Rather, it is nominalized form of the adjective *flexible*. This is also true about the word *difficulty* from adjective form *difficult*.

CONCLUSION

In the current comparative study, based on systemic functional approach, a functional analysis was carried out in an attempt to identify IGM elements, in English newspapers across scientific and sports texts.

Nominalization- a typical process, leading to grammatical metaphor is a striking feature of scientific and sports texts, making the writing more interesting, lively, convincing and colorful. Based on the findings which address proposed research questions, nominalization has been used in both of the text types, turning the process (verb) to a concept (noun). Both of the scientific and sports texts, include all types of processes, but the frequency and percentage of nominalization of ideational grammatical metaphor used in scientific texts, was more than sports texts in English newspapers. So, it can be concluded that, the type of text affects on the manifestation of IGM. In other words, the manifestation of IGMs is text-specific; since, the same number of texts from each text types (8 texts from each category), with approximately the same number of total words (6000 words of each category) were under analysis.

It was also noticed that, the occurrence of a GM in each text, increases the general volume of information, the clause or the sentence expresses: the greater the number of included nominalizations, the greater the volume of the information expressed by the sentence. Thus, GMs are crucial, ideal for the journalistic discourse especially scientific and sports texts which place high quality on the transference of information in an economical and condensed way. In each text, the goal is the conveyance of the intended meaning to the reader or the audience in a vivid, tempting and interesting way. Another conclusion drawn from through the identification of GM throughout the 16 texts (8 texts from each category), was the advantage of application of GM in increasing the lexical density. In both of the text types, the purpose of using an ideational metaphor is to render the lexis and grammar in the way the journalist wants in order to inform or produce a certain effect on his/her reader or audience. Without ideational grammatical metaphor both written texts would sound artificial and informal.

Grammatical metaphor instances in scientific texts of this study, serve several important functions like condensing, compacting, abstraction and creating technical and professional terms as well as lexical density, assuming the job of initiating the reader into certain economic world views or rigged states of affairs, in a quick, compact and desirable manner. GM happens in science, to be a powerful device to condense information about the context of situation. The condensing feature just corresponds to the characteristic of the news discourse that is using fewer words in a sentence to express more messages and also creating technical, expert and professional terms that are available to the beauty of clause and absorbs the reader's attention to follow the writing.

Grammatical metaphor in sports texts serves several functions such as condensing, compacting, encapsulation and produces certain effects on the reader's mind causing more ambiguities.

Limitations and delimitations of the study

Owing to grammatical metaphor usage in languages which is really wide and diversified, it is beyond both the scope of this study and researcher's personal capabilities to address the other types of grammatical metaphor such as interpersonal metaphor and also all texts of English newspapers. Instead, the present study is just restricted to the analyzing scientific and sports texts of English newspapers regarding ideational grammatical metaphor in SFL.

As is well-known, in statistics, the sample population, is of vital importance to the validity and credibility of research itself. However, the number of texts for analysis is to some extent limited and only eight texts were selected randomly from each category among the aforementioned newspapers. So, one should be very cautious in generalizing the results to other scientific and sports texts of other English newspapers or other genres and even one should choose more texts in both text types to expand his or her study scope. On the other hand, the study has approached the phenomena of grammatical metaphor only from a single theoretical framework, that is Halliday (2004).

REFERENCES

- Cehan, A. (2004). Language metafunctions in classroom discourse. *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, 4, 265-272.
- Choi, Y. A. (2006). Discourse analysis: A linguistic study of the French press's representation of the political crisis in Tahiti (2004-2005) - In *le figaro, le monde and la liberation*. France: University of Canterbury.
- Eggins, S. (1994). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics*. London: Continuum.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (2nd ed.). London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Martin, J.R. (1993). *Writing Science: Literacy and Discursive Power*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, M. I. M. (1999). *Construing experience through meaning, a language based approach to cognition*. New York: Norfolk.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (2004). *The Language of Science*. (edited by Jonathan J. Webster. The fifth volume of a series of the Collected Works of M.A.K. Halliday). London/ New York: Continuum.
- Martin, J. R., Matthiessen, C. M. I. M., & Painter, C. (1997). *Working with functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Murar, I. (2004). On grammatical metaphor. *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, 4, 115-123.
- Taverniers, M. (2003). Grammatical Metaphor in SFL: A Historiography of the Introduction and Initial Study of the Term. In A. M. Simon-Vandenberg, M. Taverniers, & L. J. Ravelli (Eds.), *Grammatical Metaphor: Views from Systemic Functional Linguistics* (pp. 5-33). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/cilt.236.02tav>
- Taverniers, M. (2006). Grammatical metaphor and lexical metaphor: Different perspectives on semantic variation. *Neophilologus*, 90(2), 321-332.
- Thompson, G. (2004). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.

- Vandenberg, S. Taverniers, M., & Revelli, L. J. (2003). *Grammatical metaphor: views from systemic functional linguistics*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Wu, J., & Tang, L. (2010). Grammatical metaphor in news English discourse. *Journal of Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Research in Theoretical Linguistics*, 4(1), 13-29

APPLYING CRITICAL THINKING TO IMPROVE TRANSLATION QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH TRANSLATION STUDENTS

Fatemeh Goharkhani Asli

¹Department of English Language, Ataturk University, Erzurum, Turkey

Leila Ali Akbari Hamed

Department of English Language, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

Corresponding Author: fatemeh@atauni.edu.tr

f.goharkhani@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to explain the relationships between the critical thinking and translation quality to clarify the critical thinking abilities of undergraduate students and to provide insight into this relationship. Explanatory research design, among mixed research designs, was used. Data were collected from 106 undergraduate students in the department of English Language Teaching at Ataturk University in Turkey. In the first phase of the study, a questionnaire was conducted to the students to test the relationship between critical thinking skills and translation. In the second phase, students were interviewed to explain the effect of critical thinking abilities on their translation quality. For quantitative data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Quantitative data were analyzed with MINITA package program. The independent variables in the study are gender and the dimensions of critical thinking. The dependent variable is translation quality. For quantitative data, paired t-test and correlation analysis were conducted. As the qualitative data, textual analysis was done. The results of the study show that there is a positive relation between critical thinking skills and translation quality. Moreover, according to the results, critical thinking increases the translation quality of undergraduate students. Moving from these results, it is implied that critical-based activities in courses contribute to the translation performance of students and these activities help students to reflect on their translations with a critical perspective. At this point, this study recommends the teachers to use critical thinking –based techniques in their courses and to teach their students how to use their critical thinking skills.

KEYWORDS: Critical thinking skill, language learning, Translation theories.

INTRODUCTION

There is not a constant definition of CT, and the definitions of critical thinking have been changing (Huitt, 1998). Several definitions of critical thinking have been introduced in the education field. Fasko (2003) reported that “perhaps a hybrid definition would facilitate a synthesis of these various perspectives” (p.8). Beyer (1995) took into account critical thinking as the processes of 'making reasoned judgements' (p.8). Kurfiss indicated that critical thinking is an investigation whose aim is to see the sights of a situation, phenomenon, question, or problem to

arrive at a conclusion about it and to integrate all available data that can be convincingly justified (Kurfiss 1988; cited in Ab Kadir, 2007). Critical thinking is purposeful, reasoned, and goal-oriented included in problem solving, inference formulation and decision making procedures (Halpern, 1999).

Metacognition is considered, by Facione (1990) to be a core skill which has impact on a learner's critical thinking ability, and impacts on a learner's academic success (Facione 1990; cited in Deborahm 1993). "Metacognition is being aware of one's thinking as one performs specific tasks and then using this awareness to control what one is doing" (Jones & Ratcliff, 1993, p. 10; cited in Srinivasan & Crooks, 2005). Critical thinker engages in certain types of conversations and relations with others (Burbules, 1999). They think critically about what the others say and do not believe whatever they hear or see without pondering about it.

Indeed, the critical thinkers, use both the disposition (or propensity) and the relevant knowledge and skills to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism (McPeck, 1985). That is, not only are they prone to question things, but they have relevant knowledge and understanding to do productive performances. The term critical thinking refers to the use of those cognitive skills which lead to the approach a desirable outcome (Halpern, 2002). According to two conceptions of critical thinking, i.e. 'pure skills' and 'skills plus tendencies' (Siegel, 1988, p.6), the teaching approaches of critical thinking can be classified into two groups; (1) the teaching of critical thinking referring trainable and assessable reasoning skills and processes, and (2) teaching of critical thinking as well as dispositions and awareness along with critical thinking. Study demonstrates that it is important to involve students actively in different critical thinking processes, such as analysis of ideas through discussion, reflection and writing to make it significant (Solon, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical thinking has pivotal role in some key skills such as problem solving and decision making (Kallet, 2014). According to scholars, CT skills can be taught directly or explicitly but as teaching CT needs high capacity and confidence of both students and teachers, applying CT won't be that easy. So, teachers have to make the students ready to think critically and creatively in order to achieve their objectives. They can form discussion groups such as debating team and jigsaw groups to increase the students' interaction, debate and reflection (MacKnight, 2000). Similarly, Yuretich (2004) believed that teaching critical thinking is the teaching of reasoning skills, for example, analysis, synthesis and evaluation and let the students do active learning. Through applying active learning strategies, students were given the opportunities to process and evaluate information through discussion with each other. Therefore, giving students a critical thinking opportunity, for instance, allowing time to pause, reflect on, analyses and discuss an issue in a context to support critical thinking, is the key to critical thinking education. Also, in terms of teaching, engaging students in different types of reflection, exchange of information and group discussion in a context are main strategies for developing students' critical thinking skills (ibid).

On the other hand, utilizing different critical thinking skills by teachers or students and as a method of teaching can increase the efficiency of translation classes and it helps to enrich the quality of translation. Since last decades, translation has been taken into account as a novel discipline along with its theories, techniques, principles, and approaches. And the new perspectives to translation substituted with the old ones i.e., per se literary translation training. The colossal development of cybernetics, electronics, computers and the sciences of information require any training to cover most possible types of translation-interpreting (Gonzalez, 2008). Ho (2005) advised that translation studies should be carried out based on studying the cause-effect relationship between translation research and translation practice.

On the other hand, according to Zainudin (2012), translation is an activity of mediate meaning from a source language to a target language. The ability to choose the correct and appropriate translation technique is a prominent skill to translators; therefore, it is essential for translation students to be aware of what particular technique should be used and why. The new approaches to teaching translation include theories of translation regarding text type and function (Newmark, 1988). It means that in most of the places, English translation is being offered in various universities. And the “read and translate” strategy is the most favorable method (Gonzalez, 2004).

Indeed, translation instructions and consequently putting theory into practice are not usually taught to the students in class. What is asked from the students in most classes is reading and translating without pondering about what they are translating i.e., literary translation. Nowadays the world enquires competent and proficient translators in the most cases such as politics, commerce, and economy and so on. Hence, training competent translators is vital. Translation studies theories open new windows toward translation education. They contribute to the increase of efficiency in translation teaching, which leads to bringing up more qualified translation graduates.

These theories include linguistics, functional and theories of cultural turn. Toury's model, as one of the theories of cultural turn, focuses on the fact that translation is between complete equivalence with the source text and complete acceptability in the target language through norms (2011). Toury (2000) declares that norms are not constant entities and sometimes, some kind of changes have occurred during translation process due to nature of norms. Sometimes, these changes occur more quickly, and sometimes the process may take longer, and this does not mean that translators are passive. Rather, many of them help shape the process of changing.

Translator choices in the process of translation are monitored by the norms. It is clear that incorporating theoretical components into translation process “accelerate and enhance the scope of the student's progress, helping him/her to make appropriate decisions and manipulate appropriate strategies and tactics” (Gile, 1991, p.185). Ennec (1996) states that not only is critical thinking applicable to individual decision making but also to group decision making as well. While engaging in CT, students require monitoring their thinking process, evaluating their progress, making sure about accuracy and making decisions about the use of time and mental effort (Halpern, 2003). Darray (1999) concludes that the author constructs a text through his ideas

and images. The translator strives to transfer the meaning from SL to TL. S/he tries to translate as if the reader would not be able to feel that as a translated text; i.e. translator requires diagnosing a distinction between assumptions and facts. He needs to be capable of differentiating facts from inferences and evaluate the author's point of view.

Hence, according to Gaber (2002), CT contributes to activate the translator cognition and let the translator be able to utilize his/her mental activates in order to have a perfect performance during the translation process. Translation is a type of decision-making process categorized into some prominent activities such as: planning translation, analyzing information, translation, revision, editing, and proof reading reviewing, completing translation and delivering translation (Darwish, 2004). Dahroug (2007) also states that training students to strive consciously to use their CT skills to understand and manage their translation process is so important. That is exactly what CT believes on it. Commeyras (1989) stated that in order for evaluating possible interpretations to determine the meaning of the text, the learner has to comprehend the text via reasoning skill. Reasoning is one of the main characteristics of critical thinking and its necessity to use in translation is felt, as well. So, the students' need to use it as they read a text such for clarifying what they mean, giving reasons, evaluating reasons, elaborating, supporting their evidence and so on. Translation, especially translation of journalistic texts, directly relates with a variety of cognitive or critical thinking abilities. In other words, critical thinking ability is the one that deals with deep understanding of reading and translating.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. is there any relationship between translation quality and development of critical thinking ability in translation education?
2. To what extent does critical thinking empower translation quality of undergraduate student's translations?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a concurrent validity study between a general critical thinking skills test, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), and translation test outcome evaluation. In this study, explanatory research design, among mixed research designs, was used. In the first phase of the study, a questionnaire was given to the students to test the relationship between critical thinking skill and translation. In the second phase, students were interviewed to explain the effect of critical thinking abilities on their translation quality. For quantitative data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Quantitative data were analyzed with MINITA package program. As to qualitative data, textual analysis was done.

Participants

106 undergraduate students (65 female, 41 male) in the department of ELT at Ataturk University in the spring of 2014 participated in the current study.

Data collections Instruments and procedure

The students, in the first phase, were given the critical thinking skill questionnaire and they were asked to translate five paragraphs consequently. The questionnaire consisted of 34 questions and 45 minutes time to fill in. Within a week they were taught CT skills and method of translating via CT skills. The study lasted from April until June. The instruments used in the current study were CCTST (California critical thinking test), a test for translation including paragraphs from Oliver Twist and BBC, tutorial course design and interview. The CCTST makes available a collection of scale scores describing strengths and weaknesses in different skill areas. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test gives scores on these scales: Evaluation, Inference, Deduction, Induction, Analysis skills and an overall critical thinking score (Facione, 1990). There are two methods of teaching critical thinking. One of them is teaching CT directly or overtly. It means that the teacher explains the definition of CT, its skills and dispositions and elaborates the prominence of learning CT not only in the students' academic life but also in their everyday life. This method mostly is taught in psychology courses. As CT is approximately abstract and hard to explain. Most of the teachers prefer to teach it directly in class. Test takers can get 0 to 34 scores in the test. Total scores ranging between 10 to 20 are considered as norm level. The common score is 16 with 4.45 SD. The reliability of the questionnaire was carried out by Delphi strategy and its validity was measured. In second part of the disposition test, 9 decision-making and problem solving questions were asked from the students to answer in Turkish. In the 2nd part, the students were asked to give feedback about the test. In this study, direct method of teaching CT was used. It took 30 minutes. The definition of CT and why it is used in our academic life especially in reading and translation were presented. Indeed, the presented PowerPoint slide at the beginning could draw the students' attention to the topic and made them follow the lesson eagerly. Firstly, a general question asked from the students to get them involved in the topic and some of the students' positive answers broke the ice and led to the pleasant interaction during the lesson.

Another method of teaching CT is indirect teaching. On the other hand, the students can learn CT skills covertly and indirectly; that is, students are able to know what CT skills are subconsciously during learning their own course. It is similar to what occurs in learning and acquisition distinguishes. In CT indirect teaching, teachers make students acquire skills without knowing exactly what happens in learning. This method of teaching needs much more time and experienced teachers, as well.

In this study, direct method of teaching CT was used. It took 30 minutes. The definition of CT and why it is used in our academic life especially in reading and translation were presented. Indeed, the presented PowerPoint slide at the beginning could draw the students' attention to the topic and made them follow the lesson eagerly. Firstly, a general question asked to the students to get them involve in the topic and some of the students' positive answers broke the ice and led to the pleasant interaction during the lesson.

After taking second translation test, some volunteer students were given an interview. The conducted interview was recorded and the students' feedback was analyzed consequently. As interview is one of the most widely-used instruments in qualitative research, it is used to make researchers provide the opportunity to collect data concerning the stages or the processes. As it

can be inferred from the interview, the participants mainly focused on efficient changing created by teaching CT skills in tutorial and its positive effect on their translation. Under such categories and codes, it was concluded that most of the participants believed in CT beneficial effect in their translation.

Data analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to evaluate the research questions. The data were analyzed using MINITAB statistical package. The independent variables in the study are gender and the dimensions of critical thinking. The dependent variable is the translation quality. Paired t-test and correlation test were conducted. According to Fisher (1925), 0.05 level of significance could be used as the alpha level to test each hypothesis (Cowles, 1982).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The total score reveals one's overall reasoning and, consequently, critical thinking skill level. The total includes the sum score of analysis, inference, and evaluation, which are the key skills in critical thinking. The CT overall scores of the translation students on the CCTST are summarized in figure 1. The mean score of the students on CT skill is 17.05 with the standard value of 5.20. The minimum and maximum scores are 5 and 29, respectively.

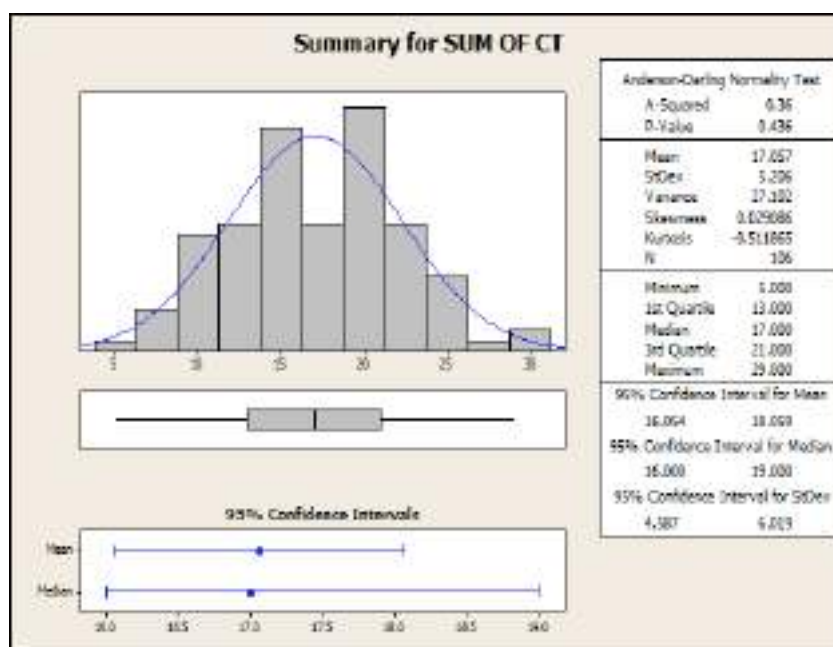


Figure 1: The CT overall scores of the translation students on the CCTST

The total translation score of the students on the translation tests were summarized in Figure 2. The mean score of the students is 99.35 with the standard deviation value of 39.46. The minimum and maximum scores are 21 and 223 respectively. The coherence scores' distribution with 99% confidence is normal.

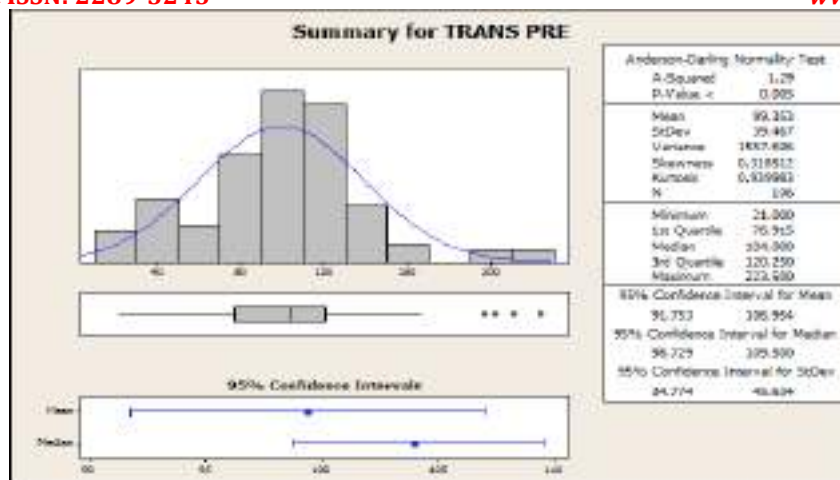


Figure 2: Results of translation test before CT course

The translation scores of the students after CT course translation tests are given in figure 3. The mean score of the students on the word is 165.19 with the standard deviation value of 27.28. The minimum and maximum scores are 93.0 and 217.1, respectively. The post translation scores' distribution with 90% confidence is normal.

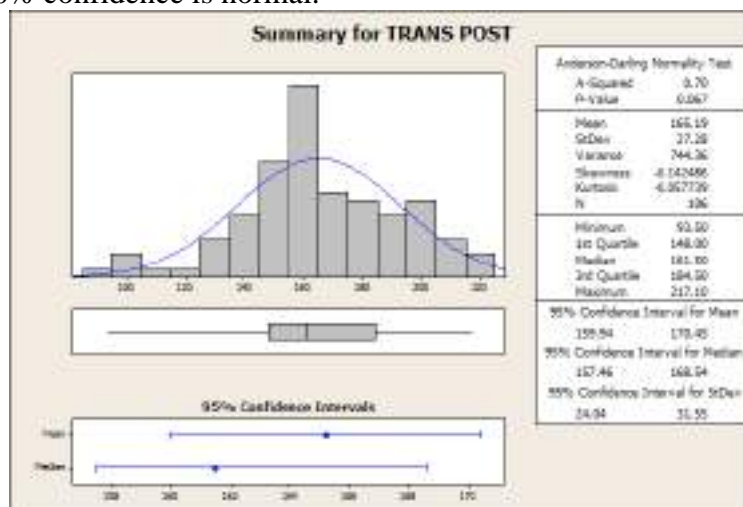


Figure 3: Results of translation test (overall) after CT course

Paired t-tests were used to compare the extent of changes in Translation quality before and after attending short CT training. Figure 4 shows the average pre- and post-test scores for all participants included (n=106). An overall increase in the scores is again seen from pre-to post-test, with very similar findings to the previous figures. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to find out the effect of the training on participants' knowledge. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores (M=99.35, SD=39.47) and post-test performances after training (M=165.19; SD=27.28); $t(106)$, $p < .001$. The mean of total score advanced.

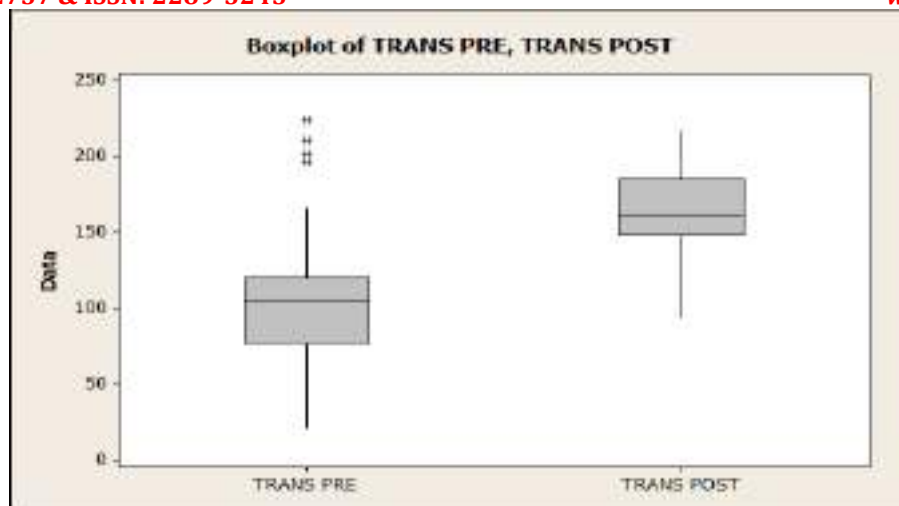


Figure 4: Comparison of pre-and post-test scores on translation quality

Discussion

The comparison of average pre- and post-test word scores for all participants shows an overall increase in scores from pre-to post-test. A paired-samples t-test was taken to determine the effect of the CT training. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training.

The pre- and post-test scores for all participants demonstrate an overall increase in scores seen from pre-to post-test. A paired-sample t-test was prepared to determine the effect of the training participants' knowledge. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training. In pre-test performance, students mostly translated traditionally. It means that word by word was preferred in the first test. Students translated the texts according to their surface meaning (denotative meaning). While in the second test, there was an obvious change in their performance. Indeed, the change was the result of tutorial and the presented CT skills, Interpretation, as one of the main skills was clarified and activated students' cognition to what they had already known; this is what we call background knowledge and it contributes to reading comprehension and translation consequently. Under the umbrella of CT, students' picked equivalents changed, as well.

Paired t-tests were used to compare the change in translation quality before and after attending short CT training. The average pre- and post-test scores for all participants show an overall increase in the scores. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to determine the effect of the training on participants. There was a significant difference between pre-test scores and post-test performances after training. The participants' understanding about the paragraphs was different on the shadow of presented tutorial. Pre-test results show that the participants could not mostly grasp the text coherence according to their translation equivalents. However, post-test results indicate that the participants could get the most delicate concept and such an understanding could lead to a better performance in the post-test performance.

In showing the probability of any relationship between translation quality and development of critical thinking ability it can be said that who has higher score in CT skill presents better performance in translation as well. On the other hand, translation theories are indirectly related to CT skills. For instance, according to Toury model, translation is a decision making process and norms play key roles in this process. Indeed, preliminary norms lead to the choice of what to translate in the first place and operational norms direct decision making during the translation process (Herman, 1991). In comparing the CT skills and translation process, it can be inferred that the same procedure takes place. On the other hand, overlapping CT skills including deductive inference, inductive inference, and inference to value judgements leads to decision making process results from Toury norms (Ennis 1987; cited in Aloqaili, 2012). Students' performance in evaluation is high, which means that students are capable to evaluate the text in order to critique or judge the value of its components syntactically, semantically and pragmatically, as well. On the other hand, evaluation skill makes the students evaluate the text and choose the best alternative according to their interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results of the study, it is recommended to teachers to tutor CT skills in translation courses. It means that applying CT skills in translation classes can enhance the quality of students' performance and make them think critically about their own translation and reflect on it to present a good performance. Findings show that there is correlation between translation theories and critical thinking skills. As translation theories effect on translation performance, critical thinking can be impressive, as well. On the other hand, if teachers apply critical thinking skills in their translation classes and make students learn how to utilize such skills in translation activities, they will encounter with high quality performance of translation. Also, it can be inferred that learning translation technique equipped with logical thinking instruments, would expand the translators perspective and it would not limit them with traditional style of translation per se.

REFERENCES

- Ab Kadir, M. A. (2007). Critical thinking: A family resemblance in conceptions. *Journal of education and human development*, 1(2), 1-11.
- Aloqaili, A. S. (2012). The Relationship between reading comprehension and critical thinking: A theoretical study. *Journal of King Saud University-Languages and Translation*, 24(1), 35-41.
- Commeyras, M. (1995). What can we learn from students' questions?. *Theory into practice*, 34(2), 101-106.
- Cowles, M., & Davis, C. (1982). On the origins of the .05 level of statistical significance. *American Psychologist*, 37(5), 553.
- Darwish, A. (2004). Towards a Formal Accreditation of Translation Quality Assurors. RMIT University, Victoria, Australia
- Dourish, P. (2008, May). Points of Persuasion: Strategic Essentialism and Environmental Sustainability. In *Persuasive Pervasive Technology and Environmental Sustainability*,

- Workshop at Pervasive (pp. 19-22).
- Facione, N. C., & Facione, P. A. (1994). The "California Critical Thinking Skills Test" and the National League for Nursing Accreditation Requirement in Critical Thinking. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED380509)
- Fasko, D. (2003). Critical thinking: origins, historical development, future direction. *Critical thinking and reasoning: Current research, theory and practice*, 3-20.
- Gile, D. (1991). Basic theoretical components in interpreter and translator training. In C. Gonzalez, E. (2008). Essential Activities in Translator-Interpreter Training. *translation journal*, 12(2).
- Halpern, D. F. (1998). Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Disposition, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring. *American Psychologist*, 53(4), 449.
- Halpern, D. F. (1999). Teaching for critical thinking: Helping college students develop the skills and dispositions of a critical thinker. *New directions for teaching and learning*, 1999(80), 69-74.
- Halpern, D. F. (2002). *Thought and knowledge: An introduction to critical thinking*: Routledge.
- Halpern, D. F. (2006). The nature and nurture of critical thinking. In R. Sternberg, R. Roediger, & D. F. Halpern (Eds.). *Critical Thinking in Psychology* (pp. 1-14). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press
- Halpern, D. F. (2002). *Thought and knowledge: An introduction to critical thinking*. Routledge.
- Hermans. T. (1999). *Translation in systems: Descriptive and systematic approaches explained*, Manchester: st. Jermoe.
- Ho, G. (2005). Globalization and translation: Towards a paradigm shift in Translation Studies. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Auckland: Auckland.
- Huitt, W. (1998). Critical thinking: An overview. *Educational psychology interactive*.
- Kallet, M. (2014). *Think Smarter: Critical Thinking to Improve Problem-solving and Decision-making Skills*: John Wiley & Sons.
- McPeck, J. E. (1985). Critical Thinking and the 'Trivial Pursuit' Theory of Knowledge. *Teaching Philosophy*, 8(4), 295-308.
- Newmark, P., (1988), *A Textbook on Translation*, Prentice Hall, New York.
- Solon, T. 2003. Teaching critical thinking: the more the better! *The Community College Enterprise*. 9 (2): 25-38.
- Srinivasan, S., & Crooks, S. (2005). *Does Gender Influence Critical Thinking Attitudes?* Paper presented at the Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference.
- Toury, G. (1998). A handful of paragraphs on 'translation' and 'norms'. *Current Issues in Language & Society*, 5(1-2), 10-32.
- Yuretich, F. R. (2004). Encouraging critical thinking: Measuring skills in large introductory science classes. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 33(3), 40-46.
- Zainudin, S.I. (2012). Translation Techniques: Problems and Solutions. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Science*.